Grace Community Presbyterian Church

Missions of Grace (MoG)

Policy Manual

###### A. Purpose

**A-1. Definition of Missions:**

The Church, which is God's possession and the body of Christ, exists for the glory of God (I Peter 2:9, 10), the upbuilding of the saints (Eph. 4:11-13), and the proclamation of the gospel to all peoples (Mt. 28-.18-20). It is primarily to this last goal that the missions work of the Church is directed. However, in the proclamation of the gospel the goal is ultimately the glory of God and the upbuilding of God's elect in all nations.

# A-2 Scriptural Purpose of GCPC’s Involvement in Missions

1. The primary purpose of missions is the *glory of God*

**Psalm 83:18** Let them know that you, whose name is the LORD-- that you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

**Psalm 72:17-19** 17 May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed. Praise be to the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvelous deeds. Praise be to his glorious name forever; may the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.

**Habakkuk 2:14** For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

**Ezekiel 38:23** And so I will show my greatness and my holiness, and I will make myself known in the sight of many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.'

**Matthew 28:18** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

**Ephesians 1:9-12** And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

**1 Corinthians 15: 24-25, 28** Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet…When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

2. The establishment and upbuilding of the Church is a part of the overall purpose of bringing glory to God.

**Matthew 16:18** And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

**Ephesians 1:22, 23** And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

**Ephesians 2:20-22** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

3. The proclamation of the gospel and the conversion of the nations are a necessary part of the upbuilding of the Church.

**Colossians 1:13, 14** For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**2 Corinthians 5:11** Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience.

**2 Corinthians 5:14, 15** For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

# A-3 Goal Setting

The primary goal of Grace Community Presbyterian Church regarding missions is to bring to God the glory that is His due from all people. Subsumed in this goal is the conversion of people and the establishment of Reformed churches in every people group. Specific sub-goals may be set from time to time by MoG. As approved by the Session, these sub-goals are specific steps that are to be taken to accomplish the overall purposes of the Church regarding missions.

# A-4 Flexibility of Policy Interpretation

It is our intention that these policies be followed. However, we recognize that the complexities of mission work in the modern world may warrant exceptions. Such situations will be considered on a case by case basis by the Session, considering the recommendation and counsel of MoG.

# B. Structure

The MoG will be composed of a Chairperson, and members in good standing of GCPC, and will report directly to and under the oversight of the Session. The GCPC Session will appoint at least one Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder who will serve, ex officio, as the Elder Liaison between MoG and the Session.

**B-1 The Chairperson of MoG will:**

1. Be primarily responsible for the overall management of MoG, as described in this policy. The Chairperson will be approved by the Session and will serve a 2-year term, which may be renewed with the Session’s approval.
2. Chair the MoG meetings and provide oversight for any and all MoG sub-committees.
3. Together with the Elder Liaison, communicate with the Session on all missions-related topics or questions and will work in cooperation with them and be accountable to them.
4. Provide oversight of MoG at GCPC, stimulate creativity and organizational efficiency in missions-related matters, and foster missions involvement at GCPC by working with the MoG seeking to carry out the responsibilities listed below. Those responsibilities fall under two very broad categories:

First, the responsibilities of the Chairperson and the MoG toward the missionaries and the mission agencies are:

1. To set up a network within the church body for specifically and efficiently maintaining contact with our missionaries so we will know their status and needs at all times. This involves regular reading of prayer letters, faxes, and emails received and coordination of written responses sent. This also includes oversight of contacts made with the individual mission agencies under which our missionaries serve.
2. To consider financial support commensurate with our missionaries' needs and our church's resources. We will seek to show good stewardship in determining our response to the many pressing needs of missionaries that arise in a given year and in consolidating support for missionaries in our presbytery and for those we currently support to help reduce their travel time during Home Ministry Assignment.
3. To provide organizational oversight and formulate a coordinated network for stimulating intercessory prayer for missionaries by the church corporately and individually. This involves setting up a structure of informed people who can coordinate missionary prayer efforts through the appropriate channels in our Church (bulletin prayer lists, submitting prayer needs for missionaries for our corporate prayer services, social media, etc.)
4. To schedule interviews with missionaries seeking support whenever possible. This is to ensure that they are following the overall goals and criteria for support of our mission program.

Second, the responsibilities of the Chairperson and the MoG to the congregation are:

1. To identify a variety of means of keeping the congregation informed of the progress and needs of the missionaries which GCPC supports.
2. To foster the education of the congregation about missions--both the biblical mandate for it and the actual functioning of missions on the field.
3. To provide oversight in seeking to develop in the congregation a spirit of involvement in missions, a spirit that involves personal witness, a world vision for God's glory, and intercessory prayer. This would include involving more of our congregation in MoG work, in housing and/or feeding visiting missionaries, helping with particular needs as they arise, etc.
4. To work with missions’ agencies and our missionaries to determine opportunities to pursue for members of the congregation to actually participate in missionary activity.
5. To propose, oversee and manage the annual mission budget as approved by the Session; and to make any recommendations for needed changes to that budget.

# B-2 Make up of Missions Committee

The number of persons serving on the MoG shall be set by the Committee according to need. The members of the MoG will be the Chairperson and church members in good standing with an expressed interest in missions. At least one member of the Session will be appointed as Elder Liaison to the committee.

1. The Chairperson is responsible for the following duties:

1. preparing the agenda for all MoG meetings
2. directing recruitment of people to serve on MoG and its sub-committees
3. appointing the sub-committee chairpersons, coordinating and overseeing the work of the sub-committees and serving as an ex-officio member of all sub-committees
4. overseeing the review and maintenance of the MoG Policy Manual. This includes assuring that the updated master copy is maintained in the church office.

2. Recording Secretary- will be elected from members of MoG. The Recording Secretary’s responsibilities are:

1. taking minutes at meetings
2. submitting the typed minutes to the Chairperson prior to the next meeting.
3. Submitting approved minutes to the Session.

3. Elder Liaison – Appointed by the Session. The Elder Liaison’s responsibilities are:

1. Advising the Chairperson and MoG on Session direction/views, or where Session input/approval is needed
2. Together with Chairperson, updating the Session on MoG regularly (no less than once every 6 months)

# B-3 Manner of Selecting MoG Members

The MoG is responsible for selecting nominees to serve on MoG. The members of MoG should be representatives of various ages, backgrounds and both sexes. Nominees should be only those members of GCPC who have demonstrated:

## Spiritual maturity

1. Active church participation
2. Understanding of Reformed theology
3. Authentic interest in missions’ activities

### **B-4 Term of MoG Service**

Each member of MoG agrees to serve a term of two years, which are renewable upon the approval of the Session. MoG membership may, at MoG’s discretion, be divided into classes with overlapping terms of service to assure continuity on MoG.

# B-5 Frequency of MoG Meetings

The MoG will usually meet once a month on a day suitable for members of MoG. Members shall be notified in advance by the Chairperson.

# B-6 Sub-Committees

Any GCPC member in good standing may serve on one of the sub-committees of MoG or assist MoG in a volunteer capacity. The purpose of any sub-committee is to establish a group whose specific focus is fulfilling one of the duties of MoG (for example, “communications” or “missionary hosting”). Each sub-committee may have as many members as is necessary for the efficient performance of its assigned functions. Sub-committees will be formed as needed.

# C. Development and Qualification of People for Missionary Service

# C-1. Development Goals

Grace Community Presbyterian Church encourages members who are seeking the Lord's will in their lives regarding missions as a vocation. GCPC will also encourage members of GCPC to consider summer or short-term missionary service with approved boards. The Session and/or MoG provide information and counsel to prospective participants. As evidence of this support GCPC commits itself, through MoG, to prospective missionaries as follows:

1. To participate in prayer with any GCPC member seeking God's will in his or her life with regard to a missionary vocation.
2. To counsel, encourage, and provide opportunities to minister in ways designed to strengthen the candidate's abilities.
3. To assess and evaluate the candidate's gifts and calling to missions and to either recommend or discourage them in pursuing further assessment by an approved missions board. (For clarification of approved mission boards, see C-4)
4. To assist an approved candidate, the Chairperson will guide him/her in the application process to an approved mission board.
5. To commission the accepted candidate and to commit itself to the provision of ongoing spiritual, financial, and prayer support.
6. To continue through MoG and in conjunction with the mission board to provide counseling, encouragement, and within its power, to monitor effectiveness on the field.

# C-2 Qualifications for supported missionaries:

A. Qualifications for domestic missionaries:

* Daughter churches of GCPC, or churches established by GCPC members and/or interns.
* Church Planting efforts by MNA in the Fort Worth-Dallas Metroplex or Counties; Tarrant, Dallas, Wise, Denton, Rockwall, etc.
* Church Planting efforts by MNA in our Presbytery.
* Church Planting efforts by MNA in Texas.
* Church Planting efforts by MNA in the U.S., that are designed to reach those people groups that we have established as mission priorities (i.e. Hispanic church planting efforts by MTW in other cities).

B. Qualifications for foreign missionaries:

* Members of GCPC seeking service with MTW, MNA, or agencies with which MTW and MNA have cooperative agreements.
* Members of GCPC seeking to serve with other Reformed agencies.
* Missionaries serving in our designated areas of geographic priority with MTW or MNA or agencies with which MTW and MNA have cooperative agreements.
* Mission efforts designed to provide ancillary support for the works of missions we support (i.e. schools, seminaries, orphanages, etc.)

C-2-1 Support of an individual missionary:

1. If either the husband or wife of a missionary couple is a member of GCPC, they will both be considered as members for support purposes.
2. In providing for support of missionaries MoG must discover from the missions’ agency the total amount of support that the missionary requires. The total of monthly support required plus out-going expenses will be considered total support need when calculating the percentage limits specified above. Priority will be given to meeting the support needs of missionaries currently on budget before adding new missionaries to the budget.

# Qualification requirements for supported missionaries

Because of our commitment to Reformed theology and because of our desire to support missionaries from our own area first, priority for support will be given in the following order:

1. Members of Grace Community Presbyterian Church seeking service with Mission to the World (MTW), Mission to North America (MNA), or agencies with which MTW and MNA have cooperative agreements.
2. Members of GCPC seeking to serve with other Reformed agencies.
3. Members of churches within the North Texas Presbytery who are seeking service with MTW, MNA or other Reformed agencies or those with whom they have cooperative agreements.
4. Members of churches in other Texas PCA presbyteries seeking to serve with Reformed agencies as listed above in1-3.
5. Former members of GCPC desiring to serve with reformed agencies.
6. Children of missionaries supported by GCPC serving with an approved board and willing to furlough in our area.
7. National missionaries or pastors who are working with missionaries supported by GCPC may be supported for a designated period of time.
8. Local or area ministries in agreement with GCPC’s doctrinal position.
9. Independent mission boards that meet the criteria for an approved board set out in C-4.
10. Local or area ministries with whom we can cooperate without compromise.
11. Individuals with whom we have no previous contact, who seek our support for their own missions involvement or service with an approved agency.

# C-3 Doctrinal Requirements for Supported Missionaries

Missionaries supported by GCPC must be committed to Reformed theology. If the missionary will be involved in teaching preaching or church planting, he must subscribe to the same standards required of church officers. That is, he must respond affirmatively to the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system ofdoctrine found inthe Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to the Missions Committee the change which has taken place in your views?
3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principlesof Biblical polity?
4. Do you accept your commission as a missionary of this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the church of which God has appointed you a missionary?
5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity, and edification of the church?

Additionally, if the missionary is to function in the capacity of Teaching Elder, he must be an ordained Teaching Elder in accordance with BCO 20-12 or BCO 20-13 or its equivalent.

If the missionary is to work in a supporting capacity, for example, in administration or maintenance or as a translator, they must respond positively to questions 1, 4, 5, and 6 above. They should also be able to state clearly their understanding of the gospel and the work of God in their lives. This statement should indicate a Reformed theological base.

#### C-4 Approval of Mission Agencies

The Missions agencies of the *Presbyterian Church in America* are by definition approved mission agencies. Mission agencies with which Mission to the World has a cooperative agreement are also approved mission agencies.

For all other agencies the following procedure and criteria will be used for evaluation and approval:

1. The doctrinal statement of the agency will be examined. Where it is not in accord with the doctrinal position of Grace Community Presbyterian Church, the agency should be asked to supply written explanations of its position. The agency should only be approved if GCPC can cooperate with them without compromise of its doctrinal position.
2. The purpose and long-range plans of the agency should be reviewed. As far as the committee is able, it should evaluate whether the agency is actually accomplishing its purpose on the field.
3. Consideration should be given to whether the agency evidences good stewardship of its resources and whether it is financially accountable to an independent board. Specifically, does the agency belong to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).
4. Information should be obtained about the history of the agency. This should include:
5. How long the agency hasbeen in existence?
6. What ministries has the agency been involved in and where?
7. How effective have these ministries been?

##### D. Allocation of Missions Giving

##### D-1. Strategy for Distribution of the Budget

D-1-1 General Principles:

A. Because we believe that the work of “gathering and perfecting” the people of God is uniquely the calling of the visible church, it is primarily through the agencies of the visible church that mission activities should be conducted. This means that priority should be given to those mission activities that focus their work on the establishment and growth of local churches.

* This does not mean that we will never support other works that are ancillary to but working in cooperation with the local church. We recognize that local churches around the world need facilities, schools, seminaries, etc., in order to support their work.

B. Because we desire for the mission activities of our church to be personal in nature, and because we desire to be good stewards of the resources of our congregation, as a general rule we will support fewer missionaries more substantially. We will also seek to limit the geographic focus of our support to several key areas, so that we might, as a congregation, develop a working knowledge of those areas, thus promoting personal involvement on the part of our congregation.

D-1-2 General Preference for North Texas Presbytery

Based on the relationship of the Church at Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and later Paul and Silas, we believe that the churches in a specific region (presbytery) are responsible for sending out missionaries from that region (see Acts 13-20). Therefore, it is the expressed aim of Grace Community Presbyterian Church to consider first the support of missionaries called to church planting from one of the churches within the North Texas Presbytery to serve with Mission to the World, Mission to North America or another agency under a cooperative arrangement with Mission to the World. All other factors being equal, considering support for other missionaries will be secondary after support of missionaries from the North Texas Presbytery (as described above) are fully considered. Then missionaries from adjoining presbyteries in Texas may be considered.

In adopting this strategy, it is the express purpose of Grace Community Presbyterian Church to encourage all the other churches in the North Texas Presbytery to take a similar position. The results of such a stand will be:

1. Missionaries on Home Ministry Assignment will not have to travel great distances to visit their supporting churches. This will reduce the funds and efforts that such extensive travel requires.
2. The presbytery will feel a sense of "ownership" and responsibility for the missionaries.
3. The missions’ effort of the presbytery will be more focused and coordinated as all the churches will be involved with care for many of the same missionaries

##### E. MISSION SPEAKERS

Mission speakers should be Reformed in theology, but if their missiological contribution is outstanding and God's blessing on their work is obvious, then non-Reformed, but evangelical, speakers will be considered. However, if the speaker is to proclaim the Word of God at a regularly scheduled worship service, he must be an ordained teaching elder or have an equivalent position in another denomination.

Each mission speaker will be reimbursed for his own and his spouse's travel expenses and be paid an honorarium for their services.

GCPC is not obligated to the ongoing support of a missionary just because that person is allowed or requested to present their work to the congregation.

**F. THE MISSIONARY'S RELATIONSHIP TO Grace Community PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

Grace Community Presbyterian Church expects the missionaries that it supports to maintain regular contact with GCPC, including through MoG. This includes periodic news or prayer letters reporting the status of their work. When the missionary is in the United States on furlough, he/she is expected to visit GCPC at least once. The purpose of the correspondence and visits is to allow the congregation to know the missionary and his work better. This will encourage and enable the congregation to more faithfully support the missionary's work financially and in prayer.

**G. CHANGES TO THIS POLICY**

This Policy was adopted by the Session of GCPC and is current as of April 2018. The Session may, at any time, make changes to this policy and communicate such changes to MoG. MoG may recommend changes to this Policy to the Session, by describing in a written communication to the Session any such recommendations, and the reasons why such changes are necessary or advisable. The Session of GCPC will consider such recommendations, and communicate its decision and any approved changes.