

# Missions Committee Guidelines

(Revision 3.0, August 28, 2007)

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## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidelines to the members of the Missions Committee of the Frederick Church of Christ for recommending, approving, managing, and terminating congregationally funded mission works.

The Mission committee Guidelines will define some of the means by which our congregation can demonstrate the love and care of Christ our Lord for the saints who put

their own lives and the lives of their families on the line for the cause of Christ. The funding of a mission work results in a significant level of fiduciary and legal responsibility that is implicitly accepted by the congregation and its leadership. The processes and procedures contained within the Mission Committee Guidelines will also assist in proper management and disposition of mission works and will provide a means to protect the congregation in the event of the occurrence of a contentious or legal situation.

## **Missions Committee Guidelines - Revisions**

The Missions Committee Guidelines were developed to provide a proposed framework to effectively manage the missionaries and their families that serve the Kingdom. The MC should review and revise the guidelines as necessary, but at a minimum, once per year in order to ensure that the guidelines do not inhibit the work of the Spirit, but instead enhance the missionaries' abilities to serve. The first issue of the guidelines is intended to serve as a straw man to stimulate creative discussion and to modify the document according to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

## **Missions Committee Objectives**

The objectives of the Missions Committee is as follows:

1. Instill within the FCoC body a missions spirit and a desire to support missions work around the world both with funds and personal service
2. Spread the Gospel to as many people as possible within our funding constraints
3. Involve every member personally on actual mission activity or in service to missionaries supported by our congregation.
4. Encourage our young people to be involved in missionary activities.
5. Provide a response to every request for financial support.

## **Structure of the Missions Committee (MC)**

The Missions Committee will consist of at least 6 and no more than 12 volunteer members from the congregation. The initial members will be appointed by the eldership of the congregation in order to kick off the effort. Subsequent members will be nominated and then appointed to the MC by the Elders of the FCoC.

### ***Elder Interface***

The Elder Interface will provide spiritual oversight of the MC and will be responsible to monitor the actions of the MC to ensure that the actions of the MC are in accordance with the direction and intention of the spiritual leadership of the FCoC. The Elder Interface has the right and duty to periodically examine the status of each of the approved mission works. The MC must be prepared at any time to present a written record of the history and current status of each of the mission works that are funded by the congregation.

## ***Chairperson***

The Chairperson has the responsibility to manage the MC by calling regular meetings of the MC and to conduct organized, efficient and meaningful meetings. Prior to the scheduled meetings, the Chairperson will issue an agenda of the items to be discussed during the meeting so that the MC members can be properly prepared to address the agenda items. The Chairperson is the person responsible to represent the MC at the meetings of the Elders (as requested) and to present the summary of the status of the various mission works to the Eldership of the FCoC.

The term of the chairperson will be 1 year (Calendar Year). Initially the Chairperson will be appointed by the Eldership in order to initiate the MC. After the expiration of the term of the appointed Chairperson, nominations will be accepted and an election held among the members of the MC. The person with the most votes will be elected Chairperson for the following calendar year.

## ***Vice Chairperson***

The Vice Chairperson will have back up responsibilities for the Chairperson whenever the Chairperson is unable to function in the capacity of a Chairperson.

The term of the Vice Chairperson will be 1 year (Calendar Year). Initially the Vice Chairperson will be appointed by the Eldership in order to initiate the MC. After the expiration of the term of the appointed Vice Chairperson, nominations will be accepted and an election held among the members of the MC. The person with the most votes will be elected Vice Chairperson for the following calendar year.

## ***Secretary (elected or appointed?)***

The Secretary is responsible for documenting the summary of discussions in the MC meetings and to issue formal minutes of the meetings that will be kept in the permanent MC files.

The Secretary will be responsible to receive and file all formal documents that pertain to the MC including, but not limited to:

- Minutes of the meetings
- Monthly Status Report for each active mission work
- Nomination forms for consideration of funding new mission works
- Mission Disposition – decisions of the MC regarding approval / disapproval of the mission work.
- MC Notification Letter to the candidate mission works.

The minutes of the meetings, along with the various other documents will be kept in the MC files and will be available to any FCoC member who has an interest in viewing the activities of the meetings.

## ***Treasurer (elected or appointed?)***

The Treasurer will provide monthly updates (reports) regarding the MC conformance to the approved budget and will identify any issues regarding the forecasted expenditures.

## ***Nomination for MC Membership***

Nominations for membership in the MC should be submitted to the Elders at the FCoC.

## ***Induction of MC Members***

## ***Term of MC Membership***

The term of the membership in the MC will be 1 year beginning January 1 and ending December 31 each year.

## ***Termination of Membership***

Membership in the MC can be terminated for a number of reasons including but not limited to:

Relocation

Retirement

Health

Lack of time

Lack of interest

If a member of the MC wishes to be released from his or her responsibilities, a written request to do so can be submitted to the MC and included into the minutes of the MC meetings. If no written request is forthcoming, but a verbal request has been put forth, the MC will record the request in the minutes of the meeting.

If the departure of an MC member causes one of the officers positions to become vacant, a new election must be held to provide a person to fulfill the responsibilities of that position for the remainder of the term of the office.

## **Responsibilities of the Committee**

### ***Meetings***

The MC will meet at least once per month to ensure continuity of the missions effort. A sample of the agenda is as follows:

#### **Missions Committee Agenda**

- Opening Prayer
- Review of the minutes of the previous meeting and submission of the minutes for record into the MC files.
- Review and discussion of any outstanding Action Items from the previous meetings
- Review of each of the active Mission Works – review of the monthly status report from the POC and identification of any significant events that require attention of the MC. The Status report for each mission work is provided to the Secretary for inclusion in the MC files.

- Summary discussions and wrap up
- Closing Prayer

## ***Missions Training***

The MC will encourage its members to become engaged in formal and informal training to enhance the effectiveness of each of the MC members. Training in the forms of Books, Videos, Lectureships, Field Visits, etc. will be encouraged and in some cases funded by the congregation.

A recent study indicated the following:

1. The requirements for mission committee membership are inadequate. Most of those on mission committees have not read a book, attended a seminar, or taken a course on missions. They have not visited the mission field nor led someone to faith in Jesus. The churches of Christ have minimal requirements for committee membership. It seems the elder (quoted earlier) was correct when he said, "We are the most ill-prepared organization in the world responsible for doing the most important task in the world."

## ***Nominating a Mission Work***

Nominations for mission works can be submitted to the elders or directly to the MC for consideration. The individual submitting the nomination must complete the **Mission Work Nomination Form** and provide copies to each MC member. The MC will then review, analyze and verify the information to determine the appropriateness of the request and the financial ability for the FCoC to respond to the request.

There are three basic types of support for mission works. Sponsoring Congregation, Supporting Congregation, Individual Support.

A **Sponsoring Congregation** acts as the primary interface and primary contributor to a specific mission work. Most, if not all of the funds that are contributed to the mission work are funneled through the sponsoring congregation. The sponsoring congregation is the primary point of contact for management and maintenance of the mission work.

A **Supporting Congregation** contributes to a mission work by providing designated funds to a Sponsoring Congregation.

**Individual Support** is designated support provided by an individual directly to the mission work or designated funds that are supplied by an individual and funneled through a Sponsoring Congregation.

For purposes of this document, we will address Sponsoring Congregation and Supporting Congregation funding of mission works.

Types of Contribution Commitment – **Special One Time; Regular Dedicated** (Annual Commitment) Funding.

The MC will accept and consider nominations for mission work candidates for all types of support and financial commitment.

## ***Approval / Disapproval of a Candidate Mission Work***

A designated MC member or concerned member of the congregation will present the candidate mission work to the MC for discussion and vote during the regularly scheduled MC meetings.

The MC will discuss and consider the candidate mission work and will approve, disapprove or request additional information for reconsideration.

The MC Secretary will document the reasoning and justification for approval or disapproval of the candidate mission work.

The MC Chair will present the MC findings to the Elder in Charge and submit the MC's recommendation package to the elders for formal disposition.

The MC Secretary will formally notify the candidate mission in writing of the decision of the missions committee regarding their request for funding.

The MC Treasurer will assess the impact of a particular mission on the mission budget.

## ***Management and Maintenance of a Mission Work***

Once the FCoC formally accepts the responsibility of funding a mission work, it is the responsibility of the MC to maintain regular contact with the mission and / or the Supporting Congregation to ensure that the missionaries remain encouraged and enthusiastic about the opportunities that God has placed before them. The missionaries must know that they are supported in prayer by their spiritual families back home. Regular and periodic contact with the missionaries will also serve to identify any emergency issues that may require the assistance of the MC.

## **Assign a Point of Contact (POC)**

The MC will nominate, vote on and assign a POC to each funded mission work. The nominated POC must obtain at least majority of the MC voting members approval to become the formal POC for the mission work. The POC will be responsible to complete a written status report every month and submit it to the MC at its monthly meeting. The POC will be responsible to be fully aware of any significant issues regarding the mission work and to elevate all positive, negative and emergency events regarding the mission work to the MC as necessary. The POC should be active in his/her interface with the mission work and send birthday cards, anniversary cards, Christmas presents etc., to demonstrate to the missionaries that they are appreciated by the families at the FCoC. Prayer requests and concerns should be posted in the weekly bulletin, and the bulletins sent to the missionaries by the POC. The POC will represent the mission work at the bi-annual Missions Sunday at the FCoC. The POC will be responsible to organize any visits of the missionaries to the FCoC or the reverse. The POC need not be a member of the MC.

- Complete and submit monthly mission status reports
- Identify any areas of concern (health, funding deficit, family emergencies, etc)
- Schedule annual visits – Video Conferences, Teleconferences and Personal visits.
- Review funding levels quarterly

## **Emergency Funds**

The MC should keep a reserve of 10% of the budgeted annual funds to be used in the event of an emergency request for assistance from a sponsored mission work. These funds would be used to assist the missionary family in the event of illness, injury, death, emergency exit due to political instability, etc.

## **Termination of funding for a mission work**

Termination of funding may be required for a number of reasons including but not limited to:

- FCoC budget shortfall or congregational disaggregation.
- FCoC budget reprioritization
- Missionary decision to exit the mission field (e.g. Missionary health or family emergency issues, burnout, retirement, political non-renewal of visa, etc.)
- Inappropriate or unacceptable practices

Mission works that are discontinued are handled differently based on the reason for termination. The MC will determine appropriate action based on the reason for termination. In some cases special treatment may be required. For example:

In the event that a mission work requires termination, it may be necessary for the FCoC MC to provide a loving transition for the missionary and his/her family. This includes funding transportation of household goods and persons back to their country of origin and funding a restart package upon arrival.

Any termination actions require documented justification to be placed in the monthly status reports. It also requires formal notification to be sent to the mission work.

## ***Missions Awareness and Involvement***

### **Missions Sunday (data, agenda, format)**

### **Teen Mission Trips – Domestic and International**

- List of trips

### **Web Page**

## ***Appendix: Sample Forms***

### **Mission Work Nomination Form (Summary Data Sheet)**

The Mission work nomination form will include the following items:

- Nominator's name and contact information (mailing address, email, phone, etc)
- Recommended FCoC point of contact
- Funding Request: one time, monthly, annual, other
- Funding Type: Support to a Sponsoring Congregation, Sponsoring Congregation, Individual (no sponsoring congregation)
- Summary of Mission Work: History, Objective, past performance, etc.

- List of family members (ages, birthdates, etc)
- List of team members or others that are affiliated with the work
- Resume of primary missionary; education, mission preparation, etc.
- References and contact information; minimum of 3
- Disposition section: this section records the
  - date the request was received,
  - date it was presented and discussed in the MC meeting and name of the person presenting the nomination
  - the decision of the MC
  - The date of the response back to the missionary

### **Monthly Mission Status Report**

The monthly mission status report will include the Summary Data Sheet above with the following additions:

- Emergency contact information
- Monthly mission activity summary (report from the mission)
- Contact report from the FCoC point of contact.
- Did they receive the support check?
- Any problems or concerns physically or spiritually (prayer requests)
- Is family ok?
- Are they scheduled for a trip to the US and if so can they visit FCoC?
- Can they participate in a teleconference with the FCoC congregation on a mission Sunday?
- Birthdays, Anniversaries, special occasions, Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, etc.

### **Sample Notification Letters**

The notification letters are designed to respond to requests for funding in a consistent and loving manner with either a positive response, negative response or a request for further information.