

**First Baptist on Fifth**  
**Missions Committee Guidelines**  
**2018**

## **Purpose of the Committee and Approach to Process**

The Church Manual and Policies of First on Fifth states that the purpose of the Missions Committee is to “Promote missions and administer the mission funds of FBC including trusts, bequests, or other grants restricted to the missions activities of the FBC.” The following document is intended to provide greater clarity for the Missions Committee and congregation as to why and how the committee accomplishes that purpose. They are designed to assist the Missions Committee to faithfully lead the congregation to focus time, energy, and attention as we attempt to be the people of God that embody God’s care and love for all creation.

Christian mission is the ongoing work of the commandment to love God and love neighbor.

The role of the Missions Committee is to guide the church to unity in the practice of missions. The following details how the Missions Committee works to bring together all the differing parts of our body into a whole.

The Missions Committee makes all decisions regarding partnerships, funding, and ministries of missions paying prayerful attention to:

- The admonitions of Christ to his disciples and the shape of faithful missions as told in the stories of Scripture
- The guidance of the Holy Spirit
- The needs, desires, and callings of the congregation
- The capacities and resources available within the congregation at First on Fifth

Knowing that our world and congregation change over time, the Missions Committee will continually keep a posture of discernment in leading and organizing the church for the work of missions in our community and world. As a church, we recognize that all things have seasons and the committee’s role is to read the seasons of our times and lead our church to timely, faithful witness in the form of missions.

## Scriptural Goals of Missions

Four Scriptural goals frame our understanding of the shape and direction of Christian mission: charity, community, justice, and transformation. Our church's statement of faith reads, "The Scriptures, as related by the Holy Spirit to our contemporary situation, are our authority in all matters of faith and practice." In order to understand what the mission of loving God and our neighbors ought to look like, we begin with the authority of Scripture and seek ways to relate the practices of mission found there to our present situation.

No single goal is exclusive to the others. Together they provide a broad understanding of the obligations that we have as Christians to each other and to our world. Throughout Scripture, the command to love is typically given to a groups of people to do together. Though our church body is made up of many parts, the role of the Missions Committee is to coordinate those parts into a whole that embodies the full life of missions in our world.

The term "goals" provides balance between specificity of outcome and flexibility of method. Over time, the ways we, as a church, accomplish each of these goals may change based on our church's capacity and the needs of our community. However, the goals of charity, community, justice, and transformation remain.

Each goal below describes the theological conviction that informs it and provides the Scriptural basis for that conviction. It then moves to spell out what that conviction means in terms of particular obligations to specific peoples. Obligations are not a new rule to be obeyed or disobeyed. They are a sign of Christian freedom: because we know longer live under the power of sin and death, we are freed to live in loving obligation to our neighbors in our world just as Jesus himself did.

**1. Charity** - Christ's presence has been promised to us in the life of the poorest and neediest of our society. When we love them by giving directly to satisfy their needs, we have loved Christ. Believing this, we are obligated to the poor, needy, and oppressed and ought to give to them in as much as we are able.

- Matthew 25:31-46
- 1 John 3:16-18

Goals The immediate provision of life-sustaining needs particularly food, housing, and medical care to those whose income is insufficient to provide for such needs.

**2. Community** - Through Jesus, God healed the divisions that existed between humanity and God. God then invites people to be reconciled to one another. In Scripture, the early Christians lived this reconciliation according to a particular pattern: preaching and prayer, organized redistribution of goods to those in need, reconciled belonging and equality. Believing this pattern to be the one upon which we ought to model our own communal life, we are obligated to our local Christian community to organize our common life together in a way that each member can worship God freely, no member of the community lives in need, and we live in reconciled, life-giving community with one another.

- Acts 2:37-42
- Acts 4:32-37, 6:1-7
- 1 Corinthians 11:17-22

Goals Greater participation in prayer and worship, rising equality through the sharing of our goods within our congregation, amongst other churches or our neighbors, and reconciliation marked by unity over division.

**3. Justice** - We believe that Jesus' Lordship does not end at the personal but extends over all of society and to the ends of the earth. The institutions of our world exist to allocate the goods of our common life together. Though powerful and sometimes slow to change, these institutions are not static and can be moved to work towards more or less just ends. Believing this, we are obligated to our neighbors in our city, state, country, and world to participate in the organizing of people to move to collective action to bring about a more just world loving our neighbors not only personally but also politically and institutionally.

- Jeremiah 29:3-9
- Romans 13:1-10

Goals The holistic growth of all people and the more just uses of the means necessary to sustain their flourishing

**4. Transformation** - We believe that human beings exist in relationships estranged and alienated by the forces of sin at work in our society and in our lives. God calls every person to a life transformed in which their sin is exposed to the healing love of God's grace. The commitment to living a transformed life is called "discipleship." Discipleship is evidenced by the growing of the attitude of Christ which places the needs of others, especially the most oppressed and lowly, above one's own. Believing this, we are obligated individually and communally to commit ourselves to serving the lives of others and inviting all people to share in the life of service and Christ's love.

- Matthew 28:16-20

Goals Growing in commitments to discipleship, baptisms, spiritual formation, joining the life of a congregation, and acts that serve others

# Forms of Missions Engagement

The work of missions compels us to engage with others in our world in a variety of ways. Below are the three forms of partnership by which the Missions Committee provides support, guidance, and leadership to the congregation and partners in the work of missions.

*Blessing and Sending* - The Missions Committee encourages all members to respond to the callings they might hear, and the Committee commits to remain aware of their ongoing missions efforts for the purpose of encouragement and prayerful support. Support in the form of church-wide communication, organizing, and fundraising will be extremely limited based on the capacities of the congregation and the Committee and the direction and needs of the congregation as a whole.

*Active Partnerships* - The Missions Committee offers active support to members engaged in missions and the organizations with whom they serve. This may involve church-wide communication, volunteer recruitment, and the possibility of funding events or projects as well as the active involvement of staff and committee members. All of these will be utilized at the discretion of the Missions Committee as they look toward the broad life of First on Fifth and the variety of needs and commitments of the church.

*Ministries of Mission* - These will be focused ministries of the church to further the mission of Christ in the world. Limited in number, these ministries will represent a significant focus of the church in relation to other partnerships. The primary aim of these ministries will be to minister in ways that are unique to our church's life and capacity and that fulfill needs unmet by outside organizations or other ministries.

# Funding

A critical role of the Missions Committee at First Baptist Church on Fifth is the disbursement of funding to support various agencies and partners in our local and global community.

## Funding for Local Non-Profits and Other Ministries

Local organizations and ministries may apply each year for funding support from our church using the General Missions Funding Application available at First on Fifth or digitally on our website. Applications for funding for the following calendar year will be due by May 1st. The Missions Committee will review applications in anticipation of submitting a budget to the finance committee by mid August. After the budget review by the finance committee, the missions committee will notify applicants of their decision for the upcoming year following the budget approval in the Fall.

These decisions for funding will be made at the discretion and leadership of the Missions Committee as representatives of the congregation. The committee will make decisions balancing the church's commitment to the goals of charity, community, justice, and transformation.

## Funding for Active Partnerships

This funding may be applied for by members of First on Fifth or local non-profits and goes to special project funding, one-time or semi-regular events and missions endeavors. Preference will be given to active partnerships lead by members of the church or the Missions Committee. Funding for active partnerships will be available on an on-going basis. The application for such funding can be found on the First on Fifth website.

Funding for Active Partnerships must be submitted no later than 30 days before it is needed.

## Funding for Global Missions

Global missionaries and overseas organizations may apply each year for funding support from our church using the Global Missions Funding Application available at First on Fifth or digitally on our website. Applications for funding for the following calendar year will be due by May 1st. The missions committee will review applications in anticipation of submitting a budget to the finance committee by mid August. After the budget review by the Finance Committee, the Missions Committee will notify applicants of their decision for the upcoming year following the budget approval in the Fall.

These decisions for funding will be made at the discretion and leadership of the Missions Committee as representatives of the congregation. The committee will make decisions balancing the church's commitment to the goals of charity, community, justice, and transformation.