

MISSIONS POLICY

Jesus Christ's Mission Statement

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matt. 28:19, 20

LBC's Mission Vision Statement:

To Be a Church that Seeks to Fulfill the Whole of the Great Commission as Envisioned and Taught by Christ and Modeled in the New Testament.

Christ's Great Commission is the primary guide for counseling new missionaries and directing our missions programs, financial support, and world focus. It is our mission vision and mandate.

The Great Commission envisions missionaries who are:

1. Engaged in Direct Evangelism: "Make Disciples" (Matt. 28:19; Luke 24:46-47; Acts 1:8)
2. Engaged in "Baptizing" New Converts (Matt. 28:19)
3. Engaged in Teaching "All" that Christ commanded (Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:27; Col. 1:28-29).

Specifically:

- A. Teaching New Disciples the Doctrines and Ethics of Christ and his Apostles (recorded in the New Testament)
- B. Teaching New Disciples to "Obey" and Live the Christ-like Life
- C. Teaching New Disciples to Gather Together According to the New Testament Principles of Church Life

The natural result of evangelizing the lost, baptizing new converts, and teaching them to obey all that Christ commanded is church planting. *This pattern is clearly envisioned and modeled throughout the Book of Acts (Acts 13:1-14:23).* The local church assembly is not a human invention or an option; it is God's will and design for the growth and protection of his blood-bought people.

It is expected that as churches are planted, they be in substantial agreement with New Testament principles of church life and order as modeled at LBC. From its inception, LBC has taught, modeled, and refined these New Testament principles (items 1 through 3 above). It is thus LBC's responsibility to propagate this New Testament church model through its missionaries. In full agreement with the Great Commission, our missionaries are to evangelize the lost and teach new disciples to obey all that Jesus and his apostles taught. This teaching includes the life and practice of the New Testament church.

Because of the high view of the local church in the New Testament, and the uniqueness of LBC's history and global influence in this area, LBC not only has a particular passion for establishing New Testament churches, but also has a particular responsibility to continue this. While these activities do not comprise the totality of its mission strategy, they are a particular focus.

It is acknowledged, however, that God leads people to ministries not comprising the whole of the Great Commission, but still important to Great Commission work. There are many worthy evangelistic efforts, support ministries, and parachurch organizations involved in gospel efforts. There are also many mercy ministries which prepare the way for the gospel. Some from our congregation may desire to serve the Lord in such organizations and efforts. We will evaluate each of these desires on a case by case basis to determine our level of support and involvement in their *personal calling* and ministry.

In assessing missionary candidates, the elders will evaluate the degree to which the candidate understands and engages the Great Commission. The financial support of LBC will be determined according to how the candidate fits into the LBC's vision, strategy, and goals.

The diagram below illustrates LBC Missions strategy:



Present missionaries are divided into five categories and may minister across these categories (which represent the **primary** focus of their ministry):

- **Mercy ministries**
- **Evangelistic outreach**
- **Parachurch ministries**
- **Supporting local churches:**
- **Direct Evangelism & Planting New Testament Churches:**

Note: There are many others that are actively involved in other ministries. We regularly pray for them also.

General Procedures for Seeking Missionary Candidacy - Those seeking commendation from LBC with possible long term financial support (defined as financially supported for a period of 12 months or more).

1. **Initial Meeting with the Elders** - A desire for missionary candidacy should be expressed to the church elders for prayer and guidance. Confirm the person's conversion and baptism.
2. **Counsel and Prayer with the Elders** - The elders will set aside regular times of prayer and group discussion to seek God's guidance and will. The candidate's understanding of the gospel message and doctrine will be initially assessed.
3. **Acceptance to the Pre-Missions, Preparation Program** - An elder will be assigned to personally follow the prospective missionary through the above steps and to guide him or her in specific recommendations. A mentor (non-elder) will also be assigned as an advocate.
 - a. Doctrinal evaluation –by assigned elder or elders
 - b. Suggested readings: one book on global missions, one book on the particular country (secular and spiritual background), one book on personal preparation (spiritual)
 - c. CDs/Recordings appropriate to the candidate's personal needs and needs of the field
 - d. The Taylor Johnson Temperament Analysis Test (TJTAT) or equivalent will be given to shed light on personality and character weaknesses and how they would affect one's mission work
 - e. Discussion with an elder or elders of LBC's church doctrine and mission's philosophy
 - f. Evaluation of the candidate's gifts and past ministries

- g. Recommendations for present ministry experience and training
 - h. Discussion of personal and church financial policies
 - i. Submit a preliminary mission (job description), including a brief essay of how the mission fits into or supports the Great Commission. Note: If this mission changes after the missionary is on the field, we have the right to reevaluate the changes and terminate their commendation if we don't agree. There will be a mandatory reevaluation after one year of any missionary that we send out.
4. **Presentation to the congregation** - The prospective missionary candidate will be presented to the congregation for the purposes of congregational prayer, observation, and guidance.
 5. **Waiting on the Lord**
 - a. Attend Missions Fellowship for at least six months
 - b. Significant involvement in church ministry in order to test the candidate's evangelistic concerns, gifts, and working relationships with people
 - c. Attend elders' meetings for at least six months to be exposed to the work of shepherding and spiritual oversight (if appropriate / applicable to their mission)
 - d. Involvement in short-term missions projects
 - e. Meet personally with any veteran missionaries in the Denver area or who are visiting the Denver area.
 - f. Continual congregational prayer for God's will and guidance
 6. **Congregational survey** - Upon elder approval, the congregation will be surveyed in writing to determine its acceptance of the candidate.
 7. **Formal acceptance by the elders and the congregation** - Based on positive feedback from the congregational surveys, the elders will give the formal acceptance and commendation of the church to the prospective missionary, and will indicate the degree of financial support.
 8. **Farewell service by the church**
 9. **Ongoing Communication / Support** - The elders will delegate an elder liaison to personally oversee the commended missionary. This would involve phone calls, e-mails, visits, etc. Issues that come up may be discussed in an elders meeting for more wisdom on the particular situation.

General procedures for those seeking to go on short term mission's trips or not seeking commendation of LBC:

1. Will be brought to the elders attention for prayer and any recommendations
2. The elders at that time will recommend them to contact the missions group for prayer and support
3. The missions group will determine the candidates validity and validity of desired ministry
4. If one time or short term financial support is desired, the missions group will determine this (and it will come out of their yearly budgeted funds). As to this fund, the missions group will need to submit a budget proposal every October for the funds that they want to allocate. The elders will need to approve this budget proposal.
5. The missions group will report any decisions regarding #4 to the church administrator-for elders information and prayer

Missions Emergency Fund - Any and all funds in the mission's emergency budget are to be used ONLY for evacuation of our missionaries from foreign lands back to the United States.

Missions Short Term Team Fundraising - Anyone interested in short term mission trips should seek to pay for their full airfare – support letters to family and friends are encouraged. In the event someone cannot afford this and they have exhausted family and friend resources, there are scholarships available from the mission's fund.