

Missions Policy

2016-17 Edition

Community Bible Church

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1.0 Our Missions Theology

1.1 Why is missions an essential emphasis of the church?

1.1.1 God supremely loves, guards, and promotes the glory of His Holy Name.

In Isaiah 42:8, God says “I am the Lord; that is My Name; I will not give my glory to another, nor My praise to graven images.” In Isaiah 48:11, He says “For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act, for how can My Name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another.” In these verses, God wants us to understand two fundamental things about Himself. First, He is uniquely glorious and worthy of praise. Second, He zealously guards this unique status. If God were to allow anything else to be held in the same regard as Himself, He would not simply be diminishing the value of His Name, making it quantitatively less than what it is. God would be profaning it, making it qualitatively different from what it is. His Name is holy; to share His Name by allowing the glory of His unique worth to be shared would be to profane it and make it unholy.

1.1.2 God glorifies Himself by proclaiming salvation through His Son to every people on earth.

God has decided how to best glorify His Name. He has decided to glorify it by making salvation through the cross of Christ the focal point for all human history and for every people on earth. Jesus says in John 12:27-32 that He came to the hour of His death to glorify the Father’s name through being lifted up and drawing all men to Himself. Romans 3 states that the public display of Christ as a propitiation, His being lifted up on the cross, demonstrates His righteousness in justifying the one who puts his faith in Jesus and not his own righteousness.

Concluding the book of Isaiah, He tells us that His people will take His glory to the nations. “I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations.” God is neither ambiguous nor vague about the message that they will proclaim. Isaiah 66 follows statements like Isaiah 49:6: “He says, ‘It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel. I will also make You a light of the nations so that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth.’” They will proclaim salvation in God’s Servant, the one who was “pierced through for our transgressions” (Isaiah 53:5).

1.1.3 The exaltation of the Son in the saving of sinners from every tribe and tongue and people and nation is the primary objective and pursuit of the Father throughout Scripture and all of redemptive history, and therefore is guaranteed not to fail.

The cycle of creation and fall, renewal and repeated fall of Genesis 1-11 demonstrates God's unique power and goodness, and man's fallenness. Both the removal of Adam and Eve from the garden and the Noahic flood show God's determination in response to man's sin to guard His own holiness in His relationship to man, and man's lack of desire and ability to return to God. This culminates with rebellious man building a tower to their own glory in defiance of God and God creating scattered nations and confusing their languages. In this light God gives the astounding promise of Genesis 12:3 to Abraham to bless all the nations of the earth through Him. God fills out the shape of this blessing throughout the rest of Scripture. The Old Testament covenants highlight both God's faithfulness and man's failure and need for a redeemer. In the midst of man's failure, God continues to look ahead to the cross of Christ as the justification of the believer and the basis for His forbearance (Romans 3:25). Not only will the people of the covenant receive a new covenant based on His forgiveness of their sins (Jeremiah 31:31-34), but every family of the earth will worship because of the redeeming work of the Son (Psalm 22:27). Examining the entirety of the Old Testament, Jesus stated that it looked ahead to His redeeming work (Luke 24:47). At the consummation of the age in Revelation 5, we see Jesus claiming the right to rule over the earth, proven by His purchase of people with His blood from every tribe and tongue and nation.

From Jesus' own words, we see both the centrality and the guaranteed success of this work. When He tells the eleven to go and make disciples of all nations, he is telling them to do the work of bringing to Himself all those who have been purchased by His blood, and He invokes His complete authority in heaven and on earth. Having all authority to do whatever He pleases, this is what pleases Him above all else. He states that He Himself will be present with us in the accomplishment of this task. If, with complete authority, He both mandates and accompanies the work, it cannot fail.

1.1.4 The Son is most exalted in the clear preaching of the gospel, accompanied by a corporate testimony to its life-changing power, and most exalted in the whole earth as His church sends people with the good and glorious news of His gospel to plant churches among every people on earth.

The testimony of the Thessalonian church is striking among the New Testament epistles for how they both received the gospel and became heralds themselves not just in their city or the surrounding regions, but everywhere that the believers of Thessalonica went. What made their witness so effective? Paul states that when he and his companions preached the gospel, it "did not come [to the Thessalonians] in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in full conviction, just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake" (1 Thessalonians 1:5). This is no different from his witness to any other church. What is different here is the exemplary response of the Thessalonians - they "became imitators of us and of the Lord ... an example to all the believers ... in every place" (1

Thessalonians 1:6-8). Paul says believers from all over reported to him how they “turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God” (1 Thessalonians 1:9). The life-changing power of the gospel not only drove the Thessalonians to be missionary evangelists wherever they went, but it was itself a convicting testimony to the truth of their witness.

1.1.5 God has one mission and so must His people.

As part of their missions ministries, churches may support many different people involved in different aspects of gospel ministry all over the world. But every church must acknowledge that the theological foundation for their different missions is the singular mission of God: to glorify Himself through the exaltation of His Son, in the redemption of His bride, from among all peoples.

1.1.6 God mandates missions for every believer for all of human history.

Jesus’ missionary commission in Matthew 28 is not limited in scope to the apostles, to the global church or local churches as entities, or only to the shepherds of the church. This commission is for every believer in every era until Christ returns. There are several clear indications of this within the text itself. First, the command was to make disciples of all the nations, which the apostles did not complete before their deaths. Second, Jesus said that as they went He would be with them not to the end of their lives, but to the end of the age. Christ is still sending His gospel out through His people, and He is still with us as we go. The Great Commission is not limited in person or time to the apostles or their era. But neither is it fulfilled as the global church as a whole, or even select representatives of local churches, goes to the nations and makes disciples. Third, Jesus tells us that making disciples involves baptizing them. We do not baptize churches, we baptize individual believers. And we do not baptize just some believers. Every believer is baptized. Every believer is a disciple. Every believer is taught “to observe all that I commanded you,” which includes the Great Commission itself.

1.2 What does missions look like for the church and the individual believer?

1.2.1 Missions has one primary goal. It is not to bring the gospel to as many individuals as possible, but to establish worshiping church communities among every people on earth through the preaching and teaching of the gospel.

As he tells the Romans of his plans to visit them, Paul states: “...from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Romans 15:19). This does not mean that every person had received the gospel, or even that every person had heard it. As he explains in the subsequent verse, the full preaching of the gospel means that in every region he had visited there were now churches of people who name Christ as Savior and Lord. Wherever Paul went, he left believing churches established in his wake. Jesus Christ, upon affirming his deity to the disciples, said “I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18). Christ’s command to go and make disciples means more than making converts. It is taking

those who do respond to the gospel and helping them to grow into maturity in Christ within the context of the local church. In Ephesians 4:11-16, Paul tells them that as the leaders preach and teach, the church is equipped to serve Christ and build itself up, growing into maturity, in every respect becoming more like Christ the head.

The command to make disciples of all nations belongs to every believer and cannot be satisfied through obedience in local evangelism and discipleship alone, because the missions mandate is to repeat globally the process of building one's own local church through preaching and teaching, evangelism, and discipleship.

1.2.2 The missions mandate for every individual believer can only be fulfilled by going or by sending.

The command of Matthew 28:18-20 to make disciples of every nation belongs to every believer.

The question for the believer then is: "How do I fulfill this command among the nations?" This command is fulfilled either by going or by sending. The pattern commended in the New Testament is that the God calls some to the ministry of making disciples among different people groups throughout the earth, and commands the local church body to send them (Acts 13:1-3). Sending is not a single event launching the person out into ministry, but a lifelong support relationship flowing out of a burden for the glory of His name in every place. There are three types of missionary Christians: goers, senders, and the disobedient.

1.3 Who does the church send and support?

1.3.1 The church sends and supports those who are called by God to establish, strengthen, and shepherd churches through the making of disciples and preaching of the gospel.

Acts 13:2 states: "While they [the prophets and teachers of the local church in Antioch] were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" This passage highlights seven key truths about the sending of missionaries. First, it is God who initiates the call. Second, the call was heard not only by the goers, but the senders as well. Third, the call was given to the leaders of a local church, and Paul and Barnabas were sent by that church. The church recognizes the calling of those who go. Fourth, those called to go were in the midst of service when they were called. They were called to something they were already doing in Antioch. Fifth, God called the local church to send out its own. While there is nothing wrong with supporting the ministry of someone else's disciple, the local church needs to raise up and send out its own called men. Sixth, they were among the prophets and teachers of the church. It is instructive that though Barnabas and Saul "had John [Mark] as their helper" (13:5), there is no mention of the Spirit calling John Mark or the church laying hands on him and sending him. The sending emphasis here is on those who are given by God to edify and shepherd the church through speaking gifts. Finally, the Lord calls men, not organizations to gospel ministry. Therefore, our church sends and supports men, not organizations. When we support organizations, we do so because of our association with the men who lead them.

1.3.2 The church sends and supports those who will preach the gospel where it has not been preached.

More than a decade after Paul's initial calling in Acts, Paul tells the Romans in 15:20-21 that he "aspired to preach the gospel not where Christ was already named," citing Isaiah 52:15: "They who had no news of Him shall see, and they who have not heard shall understand." For Paul, because the gospel is clearly to go to every people, he must never stop taking the gospel to where it has not been preached. It is utterly insufficient for him that someone *will* do it. If this is how God has decided to glorify Himself, then he *must* do it. If all believers, whether goers or senders, are under the mandate along with Paul to make disciples of all nations, then we *must* do the same.

1.3.3 The church sends those who will plant and strengthen local churches in communities with a gospel witness.

Though Paul's gospel vision was constantly fixed upon the ends of the earth, he never forgot the places where the Lord allowed him to establish gospel ministries. His epistles are replete with references to his concern and prayers for the saints in these various churches. Not only does he write to them, but he also returns to visit them. When he can't return himself, he sends them shepherds and teachers he has trained in the ministry, such as Timothy and Titus. He tells the Thessalonians, "we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith" (1 Thessalonians 3:2).

1.3.4 The church equips and helps those who support preachers, church planters, and pastors in the building of worshipping church communities among all peoples.

God designs His body to work together to accomplish His purposes, and gives to His children a wide variety of gifts and abilities essential to the building of His body. The church recognizes the vital and strategic role Scripture gives to these faithful servants who help and support those whom God sends. The church is responsible to equip and help these brothers and sisters to use their gifts and abilities to serve our missionaries short- and long-term on the field or support and encourage through their relationships from home.

Paul never travelled alone on his missionary journeys. Even when he wrote to the churches, he included his primary companions. Many of those he traveled with and sent to and received from the churches, such as Timothy, Titus, or Epaphroditus, were shepherds and teachers of the flock in their own right. Others were not. To the Romans, Paul wrote: "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well" (Romans 16:1-2). Phoebe was not an elder or pastor of a local church, but Paul had no difficulties sending this 'servant and helper of many' to Rome with what some have called the most important letter ever written. He also had no difficulties asking the Romans to help her however she might have need. The church today sends pastors and teachers called to preach the gospel and shepherd and edify the church, but recognizes the need to equip and help those like Phoebe or John Mark in their roles as helpers and supporters of the work.

1.4 How does the church send and support?

1.4.1 The church sends and supports in a manner worthy of God.

In 3 John 6, John tells the church to send gospel workers who come to them on their way “in a manner worthy of God.” This does not describe our ability or character in sending (a worthy manner), but rather our estimation of those who stand before us. When we send those who “have gone out for the sake of the Name” (3 John 7), it is as if we are sending God Himself, and we should do for them whatever we would do for God. When we send, we must endeavor to see that nothing hinders the one who is sent from accomplishing the task to which God is calling him. This means financial support generous enough to be meaningful according to the needs of the missionary. This means constant, informed prayer for one another, recognizing that there is no power for ministry apart from the Spirit’s work. This means faithful communication between the missionary and the sending church as an expression of the love which ought to exist among saints. This means personal visitation both by the church to the missionary and by the missionary to the supporting church, for the mutual encouragement which can only be found at such times (Romans 1:16). Finally, this means diligent care and generous hospitality in receiving one another (3 John 5-8), because even a cup of cold water given to someone in His Name is given to Him (Matthew 25:35-40).

1.4.2 The church sends and supports in proportion to its gratitude for the giving of Christ.

“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9). The subject of 2 Corinthians 8 is giving for the poor, but it manifests the theological foundation for the Macedonian generosity evident both in this circumstance and their support of Paul the missionary in Philippians 4. Paul began by calling their response to the need “the grace of God which has been given in the churches in Macedonia” (2 Corinthians 8:1). He finished by stating that this grace was the sincere expression of their understanding of Christ's gracious giving of Himself. The Macedonians gave, and gave in the manner they did, because they understood the grace that had been given to them in Christ. This was expressed in multiple ways. First, they begged for the privilege of giving back in response to all they had received. Second, they surprised Paul by giving **themselves** first to the Lord and then to the need. He was surprised that when the Macedonians heard of the need their first response was to give themselves, not just their money. In one sense, the Macedonians were like the rest of the world in that they could not be separated from their wallets. But for the Macedonians, this meant that they begged to give their money because they had already given their entire lives to the Lord in gratitude for the grace of God shown to them in Christ.

2.0 Our Missions Vision

- Our mission vision is to preach and teach the gospel of God's passion for His own glory revealed in the sending of His Son to redeem a people for His own possession from every tribe and tongue and nation.
- Our mission vision is to raise up, send, and support those who are called by God, gifted to preach and teach, qualified to shepherd the church, and invested in training the next generation of shepherd preachers and teachers. This includes both missionaries and indigenous pastors and teachers. This also includes both those who plant and strengthen existing churches among those whom have heard the gospel, and those who preach Christ and plant churches among peoples who have not yet heard.
- Our mission vision is to shepherd the entire church body to be missionary senders. Missionary senders communicate faithfully, pray earnestly, care wholeheartedly, give generously, and worship passionately as they see God glorifying Himself amongst all peoples.

3.0 Our Missions Practice: How We Shepherd

3.1 Preaching and teaching the glory of Christ in the whole earth

A vision for the exaltation of Christ in the whole earth begins with seeing the Father's unstoppable passion for exalting His Son in His Word. Therefore, we shepherd the church from the pulpit by preaching the gospel of Christ so glorious that it must go to every people on the earth (Isaiah 49). We regularly set aside time to preach on the topic of missions, but do not limit preaching missions to topical sermons. The theme of missions constantly arises as we expositionally preach through the text of Scripture. Because missions is a major theme of Scripture, we preach God's heart to exalt the Son in the salvation of sinners from the whole earth not only in the pulpit but whenever the Word is opened, in Children's and Student Ministries, Home Fellowship Groups, and in the diverse discipleship and outreach ministries of the church.

Finally, our commitment to preaching the gospel of the glorious Christ manifests itself in those we choose to send and support both short-term and long-term. We encourage those from CBC who preach and teach to use their God-given gifts in short-term trips for the encouragement of our missionaries, the edification of their churches, and the reaching of the lost abroad as well as at home. We encourage our short-term servants to consider long-term commitments to the mission field as the Lord burdens and calls. When we send and support long-term, we emphasize church planters and trainers of the shepherds of the church. Because we support and send missionaries who preach, we encourage our missionaries not only to report on gospel ministry to the church, but preach the gospel to us when they come to CBC.

3.2 Supporting missionaries/pastors as an extension of our local church body

The elders carry the primary responsibility for the care and shepherding of the local church. Because the mission of the Church according to Matthew 28 is to make disciples of all nations, each local church is responsible to proclaim Christ and make disciples both in and also beyond its local community - to go to the nations. In the partnership relationship we have with many missionaries and national pastors, the elders have a similar responsibility to offer care to those who go as they have to those who support from home.

When a missionary is sent to a location on the field, sometimes it will be to a location with an established and mature local church led by a body of elders, other times it will be to help plant a new church or strengthen a weak church. It will be a rare circumstance when one of these situations is not the case. CBC recognizes the Biblical authority granted to the autonomous local church to govern itself through a plurality of elders under the headship of Christ according to Scripture. The local church situation and the needs of every missionary or national leader we partner with in gospel ministry will be slightly different, therefore the care and involvement of the elders may be manifested differently in each situation. Nevertheless, there will be certain constants to the relationship between the elders and our partners in the mission field.

The elders desire to provide encouragement, accountability, and support in the personal walk and ministry of our missionaries and national pastors. Pastoral care is only possible through the maintenance of personal relationships, extending to both the missionary and his wife and family as well. These relationships require frequent communication between the elders and the missionary concerning his spiritual vitality, the health of his family and ministry relationships, his Spirit-enabled fruit in ministry, and his ongoing prayer and financial needs. In addition to regular ministry-related correspondence between the pastoral staff and our missionaries, a CBC elder or designee will be responsible for maintaining a relationship with each missionary. In addition to this regular contact from a distance, it shall be the goal of CBC to meet personally with each supported missionary at least once every other year. The missionary shall visit CBC at least once every four years, preferably with his family, and a CBC elder or designee shall also visit the missionary on the field at least once every four years.

As stated above, Community Bible Church provides assistance, encouragement, and support to whatever extent needed to our missionaries, church planters, and national pastors depending on their individual situations. As one possible example, local church elders might be mature and skilled to shepherd a missionary and hold him accountable in his personal walk and family life, but lack the resources necessary to help a man develop a pastoral training ministry. For those sent by Community Bible Church into situations with no local church elder board we will offer greater support and care. This can take the form of more frequent communication or additional personal visits, involving the missionary in CBC elder meetings, and recommending the missionary seek counsel with the elders in advance of major ministry and life decisions. Finally, through our missions sending agency, Exalting Christ Ministries International, we also have the special privilege of providing financial stewardship and accountability for many (sent both by CBC and other churches) in addition to our fellowship in the gospel ministry. A man who is sent or supported by CBC through ECMI has a dual status in his relationship to us. He is a fellow worker in the gospel whom we come alongside in partnership with respect to his life and ministry, while we at the same time exercise oversight in our stewardship of funds donated to his ministry according to our mandate from the US government.

3.2.1 What a missionary can expect from a ministry relationship with CBC

From our church elders and leaders

- An elder or leader who will maintain an ongoing personal relationship with the missionary (in addition to ongoing ministry-related correspondence with staff pastors)
- A commitment to continuous prayer for the work
- Availability for counsel and shepherding
- Regular communication from us of how the Lord is at work here and how to pray, no less than quarterly
- Financial support as the Lord provides and as needed
- A commitment to seek means of regular involvement with the ministry in the field
- A visit to the ministry at minimum every four years, but hopefully more frequently according to need and available resources

From our church body

- A small group of church members committed to regularly pray for and support the missionary and his ministry

When he is also sent by CBC into a situation with no local elder board overseeing his life and ministry

- A commitment from the CBC elder board to extend any additional care that he needs, including
- More frequent communication and visitation from the elders
- Potential distance inclusion in CBC elder board meetings
- A willingness to function by request as a plurality of elders offering counsel in particular situations (such as major life and ministry decisions or problems)

When he is also sent through ECMI

- The ECMI team available to serve him and his donors' needs in their sending relationship
- Financial accountability for receipt and use of funds donated to his ministry
- Monthly support up to the amount of his budget, including approved one-time expenses, as funds are available
- Monthly reporting of donations and his account status

3.2.2 What CBC expects from a ministry relationship with a missionary

From every missionary we send or support

- He will regularly communicate how the Lord is at work and how to pray, no less than quarterly.
- He will report upon the direction and goals, needs, and vitality of his spiritual life, family life, and ministry to the elders no less than annually.
- He will inform CBC regarding major events or changes in the direction of the missionary's life and ministry, in doctrine, or in philosophy of ministry as they occur.
- He will visit CBC with family at minimum every four years, but hopefully more frequently according to available resources.
- He will prayerfully extend opportunities for closer partnership in the work.

When he is also sent by CBC into a church-planting or other situation with no local elder board helping to shepherd him in his life and ministry

- A commitment to the CBC elder board to seek any additional care that he might need, including
- More frequent communication and closer accountability with the elders
- Potential distance inclusion in CBC elder board meetings
- Counsel with the CBC elders as he considers major changes in the direction of his life and ministry

When he is also sent through ECMI

- He will maintain his ministry relationship with ECMI, donors, his sending church, field ministry partners, and others in accordance with the guidelines of the ECMI Missionary Guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
- He will maintain his own relationships with donors to his ministry.
- He will submit an annual budget for ECMI approval.
- He will get approval from ECMI before soliciting funds for extra-budgetary items.

3.3 Shepherd the congregation

One or more elders on the Community Bible Church Elder Board serves as a missions elder. Along with the lead pastor, they oversee the missions ministry of the church. There are two staff positions accountable to the lead pastor with responsibilities associated with the missions ministry. In addition to his role overseeing CBC finances, including the missions fund, the Administrative Pastor oversees CBC's missions sending agency, Exalting Christ Ministries International (ECMI). In this capacity he has shepherding relationships with many of the missionaries CBC has sent. The Missions Pastor has day-to-day responsibility for leading the missions ministry, including leading the meetings of the Missions Leadership Team and the Missions Support Team. The structure of missions oversight and responsibility for CBC is represented in the Missions Leadership Responsibility Flow Chart in the appendix.

The Missions Leadership Team of Community Bible Church meets regularly to discuss shepherding issues related to the missions ministry and either make decisions or recommend decisions to the full Elder Board. Members of the leadership team include the Lead Pastor, Missions Elders, Administrative Pastor, Missions Pastor, and other Elder Board members and church leaders as determined by the Elder Board.

The Missions Support Team of Community Bible Church meets to facilitate the Home Fellowship Group support of our missionaries in the field and plan churchwide missions events. Members of the Missions Support Team include the Missions Pastor, the Missions Representatives from Home Fellowship Groups, and other church members as determined by the Missions Pastor.

4.0 Our Missions Practice: How We Support

4.1 Our means of support

Community Bible Church wants to foster and encourage a churchwide vision to support our missionaries through prayer, communication and care, visitation and hospitality, and financial giving.

We recognize that, as Paul wrote to the Romans, the encouragement of faith between a missionary and supporting church is mutual and not simply one-directional. This mutual relationship is the basis for partnership in ministry. Therefore, just as we want to hear of our missionaries needs and pray for and serve them, we know our missionaries desire to pray for and serve us in the same ways as well.

4.1.1 Prayer

As God extends His fame to all peoples, it is right for us both to praise Him for what He is doing and intercede for this work. Therefore we want to encourage prayer for our missionaries as a priority for the entire church, both corporately and individually. We will do this in four ways:

1. Preaching and teaching emphasizing the importance of individual and corporate prayer
2. Praying for missions ministries we support during the regular meetings of the church
3. This will occur on a regular basis in the pulpit on Sunday mornings and in our Home Fellowship Groups (whether or not there is a 'missionary theme' to the gathering). This will also occur in our various other corporate gatherings for adults and children during the week.
4. Praying for our missionaries as a focus of corporate prayer meetings of the church

Ensuring the congregation has access to the prayer needs of our missionaries through their regular communications to supporters.

But, even as we emphasize prayer before the congregation, we must also emphasize that prayer is not the work of missions any more than prayer is the work of evangelism or the work of discipleship. For those who support missions and missionaries from home, it is insufficient to say that we have fulfilled our role as senders in its fullness because we pray, as we would not claim that we have fulfilled our duty to evangelize the lost by praying for them. Prayer expresses our essential dependence on the One who accomplishes His work in the heart, but it must accompany our work of service to those we send and support as God grants opportunity. Additionally, we recognize that though prayer is not the harvest work, God does not send a worker into the harvest from anything other than a kneeling position.

4.1.2 Communication and Care

In the New Testament epistles and the book of Acts, we see the early church leaders place a high value on mutual support, communication, and care among the fledgling churches throughout Asia and Europe. This should be no less true of us today.

The elders' goal is to seek time with every missionary every quarter to talk with the missionary by the most personal means available. With the understanding that face-to-face meetings are not usually realistic, video chat and phone calls are preferable to e-mails. Every missionary is assigned an elder or designee who has the primary (but not exclusive) responsibility for maintaining our relationship.

The Community Bible Church Home Fellowship Groups will be encouraged to let the missionaries they partner with know how they are praying for them, and what the Lord is doing in Vallejo. We encourage our missionaries to respond and develop these relationships as well, though we know it is not always easy to devote significant time to all relationships with the many demands of life and ministry.

As we communicate with our missionaries, we desire to show our care for them in practical ways as well. This could take the form of care packages, birthday greetings, or any other means of showing love and support between brethren which is feasible from a distance.

4.1.3 Visitation and Hospitality

Because our ministry to and with our missionaries is relational, we want to visit them and extend our hospitality to them here in Vallejo, through pastoral and other short-term trips to them, and receiving them in a manner worthy of God when they come to Vallejo.

Pastoral Trips

We are committed at minimum to making a pastoral shepherding visit (by an elder or leader representing the elders) to our missionaries in the field every four years, and to bringing them to visit us in Vallejo every four years as well. We desire these visits to be more frequent as the Lord provides opportunity. We encourage missionaries to plan visits around the time of the annual Exalting Christ conference for pastors and church leaders in September, or alternatively our annual missions emphasis in February and March.

The primary purpose of a shepherding trip is to spend time with and encourage the missionary and his family, and to see the health of his family, team, and ministry relationships. A shepherding trip can be accompanied by teaching or other service to those in the missionary's ministry, but not in such a way that there is no time to spend with the missionary.

Short-term Trips

In addition to pastoral trips, we believe there is great value in sending those who are part of Community Bible Church to use their gifts to serve the body of Christ outside our local congregation in cross-cultural opportunities. There are several benefits to short-term missions trips for both the sending and receiving churches.

Short-term missions trips naturally flow out of discipleship in the local church. As people in the body grow in Christ, those who disciple and mentor them seek ways to help them mature in Christ. Missions trips are one of many opportunities to grow in faith as they see the glory of God manifested in diverse ways and new situations. For this reason, like Paul took along John Mark it is good for those who are in a discipleship relationship to go together.

Short-term missions trips encourage the receiving church. We send short-term teams only when the receiving church has specific requests, and we only send people to serve on short-term teams who already serve in similar ways among the local body.

Short-term missions trips help grow long-term relationships with those on the field. As people return from trips, they have great incentive to continue in prayer for and communication with those whom they meet, to share their experience with brothers and sisters in their Home Fellowship Group and the body as a whole, and to continue giving to missions in support of the ministry they have seen happening on the field. For this reason, we target our short-term trips to serve with and among local churches on the field where we already have established relationships.

Short-term missions trips create a long-term missions mindset for those who go. Short-term trips provide a unique opportunity for people to match their theology of the Lord's work to exalt His name globally with their experience of His global work. Those who go see His same saving and sanctifying work in action in a different culture or language. The burden to send workers into the harvest and provide the resources to support them becomes more tangible when the recipients are known to us. Finally, the internal call to go can be matched with an external vision of the need in the field.

Please see the Short-Term Missions Policy in the Appendix for more information.

Hospitality

As missionaries come on furlough or shorter trips to visit, the missions support team will work to ensure their hospitality needs are met. This includes some or all of the following:

- Logistic necessities, such as lodging, meals, and transportation
- Other potential needs, such as a working cell phone or place to study
- Making clear any formal expectations the church has for their time while they are here, such as preaching, teaching, or visiting at elders meetings or home fellowship groups
- Helping with arrangements for social events and tourism
- Providing opportunity for the missionaries to find rest within their schedule
- Providing a schedule of the missionaries' time to the missionary, host family, and others involved in hospitality for the visit

4.1.4 Giving

Philosophy of Missionary and National Ministry Financial Support

We believe the New Testament missionary example is to endeavor to preach the gospel where it has not been preached (Romans 15:23) without neglecting the support and sustenance of the established church (Ephesians 4:11-16). We believe that the local church has the primary responsibility to financially support its pastor and its ministries (1 Corinthians 9:11-14), but also acknowledge that many ministries would be very difficult to sustain without support from the body of Christ in other parts of the world. We also believe that our support of a missionary or national pastor is not merely a commitment to help with regular living expenses, but a commitment to an intimate involvement and relationship with him and his ministry (Romans 1:16). We believe that the command to make disciples as we go into all the world (Matthew 28:18) cannot be entirely satisfied by supporting others sent out by other churches. These four truths underlie our entire philosophy of missionary and national ministry support.

Because we believe in both preaching the gospel where Christ has not been named and edifying local ministries to grow in their ability to do the same:

- We desire to prioritize in our missions budget preaching, teaching, and shepherding ministries which take the gospel to those who have not heard and such ministries which strengthen and edify the local church.
- We will consider sending and supporting bivocational church planters in regions of the world otherwise inaccessible to the gospel or in situations where it is preferable like Paul to set an example of Christ before the church and not be a burden to them (1 Thessalonians 2:9, 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9, 1 Corinthians 9, Acts 20).

Because we are committed to a local church supporting its own pastor and ministry:

- When we support church planting ministries, it is with the intention of gradually reducing our support for the needs of the pastor as the local church grows in its ability to provide for him. The rate at which we might decrease our financial support will depend on providential circumstances as the ministry takes root.
- When we support the ministry of a man who pastors a local church, we desire that the local church support the financial needs of its own shepherd to whatever extent it is able. Then we come alongside to supplement that amount as necessary and help with other essential church expenses. From the start the local church prioritizes in their budgeting the support of those who feed their souls. This is in contrast to the model where the local pastor is completely or primarily supported as a missionary of others and the local church covers operating expenses. In this way the church has a sense of ownership of its own shepherd – he is not a man paid for from the outside.
- We predominately send shepherds and trainers of pastors and church leaders rather than people in other roles. While support roles are essential in the local church, many times they can be filled effectively by the local congregation. We would consider helping send someone in a supporting role when there is a need expressed by the receiving ministry which can't be filled at the time through the means available to the local church.
- Our financial support of missionaries and established local pastors should focus on ministry beyond the daily work of local church pastoring. For example, this could take the form of supporting a full-time trainer of pastors and church leaders, or supplementing a pastor's income to free him up to train future leaders.

Because we are committed to the entire relationship with the missionary or national pastor and not just providing living expenses:

- Our support decisions will take into account the costs for our travel to the field and their travel to us, and any other known expected expenses.
- Our support decisions will take into account the overall capacity of Community Bible Church to extend shepherding, support, and care to the missionary/pastor and his family.
- Because we believe that we must go into all the world:
- We seek to not only support those sent by others, but also to send shepherd preachers and trainers of the next generation from our own congregation to go preach Christ and make disciples.

The Role of ECMI

PURPOSE

Exalting Christ Ministries International (ECMI) exists as a 'missions-sending' ministry of Community Bible Church to help those whom we send and support receive tax-deductible donations for their ministries in accordance with federal law, and to exercise financial stewardship over those donations on their behalf.

ECMI was founded in Spring 2002 because of a burden for and strong commitment to participate in the training, sending, and supporting of men -- both nationals and U.S. missionaries -- who have a passion for Christ-exalting and Christ-centered ministry. They are men who are called by God to spread the Gospel to all the peoples of the earth. Exalting Christ Ministries International exists as a ministry of Community Bible Church of Vallejo, California to help like-minded missionaries meet our mutual, biblical obligation to “make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19).

Our primary focus is to send and support godly men who have been called to plant, establish, and strengthen local churches. This involves the development of local church leadership and the training of pastors and teachers around the world. We help such men meet their financial and other needs as they carry out the work of Christ in their varied ministries and cultures. As we send a servant out, our relationship will continue to mature and deepen in our care for one another.

Missionaries that we send out and support are in agreement with the doctrinal statement of Community Bible Church. In addition to this foundational agreement, hallmark commitments of their ministry will be Christ-centered expository preaching of the Word of God, inerrancy and sufficiency of Scripture, the doctrines of grace, the all-sufficiency of Christ, and the power of the Spirit and the Word.

PROGRAM

The ECMI missionary-sending agency is under the governance of the Elder Board of Community Bible Church. The Administrative Pastor is responsible for the day-to-day oversight and operation of ECMI. ECMI has its own accounting and banking structure that ensures the proper recording, receipting and care of income, documentation that is adequate and clear, proper and timely disbursement of funds, and the monthly reconciling of accounts. Because we want to direct all of the financial support we receive and manage on behalf of each individual missionary toward that man’s ministry on the field, there are no administrative fees for our service. In some very isolated circumstances (some banking fees, for instance), we do have to pass on hard costs from outside vendors.

For ECMI missionaries who are CBC-sent or supported, a request to ECMI to approve receiving donations and spending funds for a particular ministry need is not the same as a request to CBC to help fund that need.

RELATIONSHIP TO THOSE WHO ARE SENT FROM OTHER CHURCHES

For most of those supported through ECMI, Community Bible Church is their main sending church in the United States. On occasion, we have the opportunity to help those sent by other churches. In these cases, it is important to clarify the role of ECMI as a “para-church” in the care for the missionary. The sending church elder board has the primary God-given responsibility to exercise care for the missionary. The elders and leaders of Community Bible Church come alongside the missionary with the mutual encouragement of our fellowship in the Spirit and the truth of the Word in our specialized support through ECMI, just as we would any other missionary we support. In no case will ECMI help a missionary to be sent to the field who does not have a home church with elders willing to send him.

If ECMI becomes aware of severe or ongoing problems in the life or ministry of a man in the field, ECMI has the responsibility to communicate with the sending church elder board and make sure they are aware. In the rare event that issues remain unresolved, ECMI’s responsibility is to determine if we can continue to facilitate support for the ministry, and for notifying donors if necessary of decisions we make in that regard. If we cannot continue, then

we must determine, in conjunction with the sending church if possible, a reasonable period of time for the cessation or transfer of that support role. The sending church is responsible in their partnership with the man to work through the decision of whether or not they will continue to send him as a missionary, and for notifying donors of those decisions.

Additionally, though we do not charge an administrative fee for our services out of donations received, we still incur expenses in the supporting of a missionary or national pastor through ECMI. These expenses are paid through the Community Bible Church general fund. Because we do not wish to charge an administrative fee to the missionary out of donations received, we may request that the sending church help subsidize the administrative expenses ECMI incurs in sending a missionary to the field.

The missions budget

BUDGETING AND SUPPORT PHILOSOPHY

Giving to the Missions Fund of Community Bible Church is separate from General Fund giving. The elders of CBC set the missions budget by faith according to the needs of those whom He has given to the church to support and what resources the Lord has provided through His people. In general, our commitment to the entire relationship with the missionary means that we will support fewer people with more money and resources.

At times in His providence, the Lord allows us to receive less in missions giving than we pay out in missionary support. These times are reminders of our prayerful dependence upon Him. As we wait upon Him to provide for His ministry through His people, as the Lord allows we will cover such deficits through the General Fund. The elders will notify the congregation and the missionaries and ask them to join in prayer over these matters. If the Lord's response is to allow the deficit to continue, then temporary support reductions will be considered.

At times, in His providence, the Lord allows us to receive more in missions giving than we pay out. This is not His provision against some future unknown need - a 'rainy-day fund.' The Lord Himself is our provision against unknown needs. These times as well are reminders of our prayerful dependence upon Him. In His provision, how can we better support the ministries He has given us? Where can this allow us to bring the gospel where we have not already?

ADDING OR DROPPING A MISSIONARY TO/FROM THE MISSIONS BUDGET

Changes to the missions budget to add or drop a missionary will be based on the following factors:

1. Giftedness of the man for the ministry and evidence of calling

If a man is going to be sent to teach and preach, he must demonstrate that he is both called and gifted. This will be affirmed by his home church, by his preaching or teaching at CBC, and in his meeting with the elders of CBC. His ministry burden, giftedness, fruitfulness in present ministry, and confirmation of calling from both his elders and his wife and children, if any, should all be in alignment.

If there is evidence that this alignment may no longer be present for someone who is already on the mission field, we will work with the man (and his home church, if not CBC) to determine if he should remain in his current ministry, and if we will continue to support him.

2. A lifestyle commensurate with his calling and position in Christ

A man should meet the qualifications for an elder listed in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3 when he is sent into the field and maintain those qualifications at all times in the field.

3. Agreement in doctrine and philosophy of ministry

The man must fill out a doctrinal questionnaire which also includes his philosophy of ministry, noting any known differences from the doctrine and philosophy of ministry of Community Bible Church. He should be ready to reaffirm these views annually or upon request.

4. Closeness of his relationship to Community Bible Church

It is easier for us to send and support those whom we know than those we do not, because we already know the answers to many questions regarding their lives, their doctrine, and their ministry. Equally importantly, we do not need to form a relationship at a distance while the man is on the field.

Maintaining a relationship with one another even at a distance is an essential part of a biblical partnership in the gospel. Even if a man's doctrine and ministry are aligned well with the mission of Community Bible Church, failure to maintain good communication in a ministry relationship with CBC may lead to termination of our support for his ministry.

5. Our capacity to support the ministry both financially and otherwise

Because Community Bible Church maintains a missions fund independent of general fund giving, the status of this fund will be one factor in our decision to begin financially supporting a ministry. In addition to this, we will consider our ability to dedicate time and energy to other necessary areas of ministry support. For example, it takes more time and energy to work with a ministry in a region which is new to Community Bible Church, with someone who is new to full-time ministry or a particular role, or with someone who is in ministry alone and not part of a supporting team on the field.

Once we have made a commitment to partner with a ministry, financial considerations alone will not typically be sufficient for us to drop a missionary who is fruitful in life and ministry, and close in doctrine, philosophy, and relationship with us.

TIMELINE FOR CHANGES TO THE MISSIONS BUDGET

The missions budget is revised annually according to the following timeline:

1. **December and January** – Acquire information. The missions leadership team will:
 - a. Get feedback about the financial needs of currently supported ministries.
 - b. Consider the state of the missions budget.
 - c. Consider potential ministries to add to or remove from the budget.
 - d. Consider supporting expenses such as travel and education as well as living expenses.
2. **February** – Draft a budget.
 - a. The missions leadership team will consider a draft budget.
 - b. After any changes, the budget will be presented at the elders meeting with an opportunity for further revision.
3. **March** – Approve a budget.
 - a. The elders will approve the final budget.
 - b. The budget will then be presented to the congregation at the annual family meeting.

The missions budget may also be revised at any time outside of the annual revision cycle by approval of the elder board. These revisions will be presented to the congregation once approved.

Extra-budgetary needs

As missionaries make extra budgetary needs known to CBC leaders, the size and nature of the need will determine whether a few elders, the missions leadership team, or the elder board will make the decision about whether to help. If CBC does help, it could be through existing church funds, making the need known to the missionary's supporting Home Fellowship Groups, or giving an opportunity to the church as a whole to contribute to the need.

4.2 Our manner of support

Scripture calls every Christian to be a missionary sender. Individually, we are all accountable to seek the Lord of the harvest for workers to send to the whole earth and to pray for the fruit of the work, and to invest the resources of time and money the Lord has given us to send and support those workers as He leads. The focus of the Community Bible Church Mission Practice is how we will support our missionaries when we gather together as a community. The unifying principle of the sections below is that, because missions is at the core of God's self-exaltation, we need to keep missions and our missionaries constantly before our congregation.

4.2.1 In Corporate Worship Services

During the corporate worship services of the church we both have our missionaries preach the Word and we preach missions from the Word, because God has revealed in His Word that the saving work of His Son is too great and glorious to be localized or contained. In addition to preaching, we give regular opportunity for our missionaries to share with the church body what God is doing in the local church and ministries to which He has sent them either in person or through correspondence they have sent. This gives us opportunity to respond in corporate praise and petition during the service in wonder at God's sovereign faithfulness. We do this so that praise will resound back to the God of the whole earth whose unstoppable work of saving grace transcends culture and language differences, whose complete authority trumps all human resistance, and whose Son is on His throne in every place building His church until the work is finished and He returns. We do this as well because He commands us to join together in prayer for the completion of this task and for the needs of those who have gone. Finally, we do this so that the every member of the body will grasp a vision for sending the gospel to all peoples.

In addition to preaching, we frequently include petitions for and praises from our missionaries in our corporate prayer during worship services.

4.2.2 In Home Fellowship Groups

The Home Fellowship Groups of CBC provide opportunities for believers to pray for one another, serve, disciple, encourage, admonish, exhort, and above all love one another with the love of Christ, as well as evangelize the lost. We consider the missionaries whom we send and support as an extended part of our church body because they are serving our local church through our participation together with them in helping to fulfill the Great Commission. Therefore, every missionary whom we send and support is considered an extended part of a CBC Home Fellowship Group.

How a missionary is placed with a Home Fellowship Group

Home Fellowship Groups are encouraged to pray for missionaries whom they have relationships with already. Home Fellowship Group leaders are encouraged to select a missionary or missionaries to pray for who are known to the group. The Missions Leadership Team will then help link Home Fellowship Groups who do not have a missionary to pray for ~~and~~ with missionaries who do not have a Home Fellowship Group. A Home Fellowship Group can have a relationship with more than one missionary, and a missionary can be supported by more than one Home Fellowship Group.

Role of the Home Fellowship Group leader

Every Home Fellowship Group has a leader who shepherds the group under the oversight of the elders. He is accountable to the Lord for the wellbeing of those under his care. Though our missionaries are not present on a weekly basis, they are still an extension of the ministry of our Home Fellowship Groups. The Home Fellowship Group leader should oversee the fostering of a relationship of mutual encouragement in Christ between his group and their missionary, either directly or through the ministry of others within the group.

Role of Missions Representatives

Each Home Fellowship Group should have a person or persons whose role is to facilitate the relationship between the Home Fellowship Group and the missionary. This person, the group's Missions Representative, could be the Home Fellowship Group leader or another person within the group. The Missions Representative is also part of the churchwide Missions Team. The Missions Representative Role Description is attached as an appendix.

4.2.3 In regular church-wide events

In addition to corporate worship services and Home Fellowship Groups, the church body has many other occasions to gather together as a community where missions is a key or primary focus. These include:

- The annual missions emphasis every February and March
- The ECM Conference for pastors and church leaders
- Missions Conferences
- Preaching, teaching, and fellowships in homes as our missionaries come to visit
- Periodic prayer meetings focused on missions and missionaries

4.2.4 In discipleship

As we disciple the next generation of believers toward maturity in Christ, we are responsible to help them “grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). This includes training our people to love missions because they love the God who desires His name be glorified among every people, tribe, nation, and tongue. In a discipleship relationship this can be manifested by noting God's heart for missions as the text of Scripture is expounded, praying for missionary needs, discussing how to support missionaries, reading missionary biographies and missions theology, going on a short-term trip together, and ultimately through the release of the disciple to further ministry repeating the process in the lives of others either within the local church or on the mission field. We encourage our disciples to be open to God leading them to the mission field as an area of service short-term or long-term, just like any other area of church ministry.

5.0 Our Missions Practice: How We Send

5.1 The priority of sending

“Sending” means raising up our own disciples from within our local church, equipping them for the work of service, helping them value the Lord’s priority of valuing His name in the whole earth, preparing them for ministry among a different people, culture, or language group, and releasing them according to their burden and calling to fulfill their ministry. God always has been and always will be a sending God, because the His glory demands it.

It is worth noting that our missionary God sent believers out from the Jerusalem church (Acts 8:1), and the Antioch church (Acts 13:1). The Antioch church in obedience to the Great Commission and the direction of the Holy Spirit sent Barnabas and Paul. The Jerusalem church grew greatly in numbers and maturity during its formative years, but during the first seven chapters of Acts we don’t see the church sending missionaries to surrounding areas. In Acts 8:1 the Lord sends persecution, scattering everyone but the apostles and leading to much evangelism and the planting of churches in the region. If we don’t send like the Antioch church, His grace may be to fulfill His purposes in us just as He did in the Jerusalem church.

5.2 Sending oversight

The CBC elders oversee the preparing and sending of people to teach and minister to our partners around the world as opportunities arise. We see a distinction between sending “full time” workers and “short term” workers. A local church affirms and recognizes one who is called (“set apart by Holy Spirit”) to “full time” mission work by commissioning them and sending them through the laying on of hands of the elders.

5.3 Characteristics of the person God is calling to full-time ministry

A person whom God is calling to full-time ministry is burdened, gifted, trained, tested, mature, confirmed by the local church, and affirmed by the elders. This list is not in strict chronological order, but the evidence of all of these elements should be present and growing over time as the sending date draws near.

- Is the person burdened? Paul said that he was “eager” to preach the gospel to the Romans and “aspired” to preach where the gospel had yet to reach (Romans 1:15, 15:20).
- Is he gifted for the ministry? If he desires to preach or teach, is he fruitful in local opportunities? Is this fruitfulness growing over time?
- Has he been trained? Does he take advantage of opportunities to labor in the study of Scripture? Does he take advantage of opportunities to be discipled and to learn from others?
- Has he been tested and found faithful? Is he fruitful in his opportunities to be a servant leader of others? Does he respond well in trial? Does he heed counsel?
- Is he mature? Does he exhibit the character qualities of the elder-qualified man in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3?
- Will the local church body confirm his fruitfulness? Is he someone others are willing to follow?
- Can the elders affirm his readiness for the work through the laying on of hands?

5.4 The practice of sending: how we prepare someone for the mission field

Christ told his disciples to “beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers” (Matthew 9:38). The next verse, He sent them. As a church, we actively preach and teach our need to send workers into the harvest in obedience to Christ, pray for the needs on the field and in the world, and exhort people to go from the pulpit, in small groups, and in discipleship. We then look expectantly for the response of those whom God is raising up in our midst to send out to preach the gospel and shepherd the flock elsewhere. New believers and believers who are new to Community Bible Church are encouraged to be discipled and to serve the Lord and the body through the ministries of the church. Paul told Timothy to entrust the truth to “faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2). The discipleship relationship and the process of serving will also make the person’s giftedness and burdens evident over time.

Someone desiring to go to the mission field will naturally seek opportunities at CBC to be involved in our support of the missionaries and pastors the Lord has given us and, as opportunity provides, to use his or her giftedness to serve on short-term missions teams.

Someone desiring full-time ministry will desire opportunities to shepherd with the Word in discipleship and teaching others within the various ministries of the church, from children’s and student ministry, to the Encouraging Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, to Adult Training Ministries. We encourage men with this desire to intern in and then lead a Home Fellowship Group. Such groups demand much of the man of God: not only teaching, but shepherding, counseling, discipling, developing other leaders, and in general looking after the well-being of the flock within the group in every way. The fruitfulness of this ministry, both in the number of people and their growth in Christ, will be one key indicator of the Lord’s blessing upon his endeavors.

The desire to shepherd and preach or teach the word will also manifest itself in a desire to be equipped for ministry. In addition to the equipping which occurs through discipleship by mature believers and informally through fellowship and serving with one another in life and ministry together, at Community Bible Church there are three formal avenues to be equipped for ministry. Leadership Training and Development (LTD) is a two year intensive discipleship training for leaders and prospective leaders at Community Bible Church. The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary trains men who are called to plant churches and train leaders both here and abroad. Our Preparation for Pastoral Ministry Training Plan is designed to combine practical ministry application and experience with classroom learning. All three of these areas of equipping might be satisfied through similar experience the prospective full-time worker had prior to coming to CBC.

Finally, the man preparing to go to the mission field as a shepherd of the Lord’s people in the local church should be sent as a recognized shepherd of the flock. If he does not already participate in the elder board meetings of Community Bible Church, in the last two years before his prospective departure he will join the elders as a guest at their meetings, to be exposed to the breadth and the weight of the responsibility of shepherding the whole flock. At his departure, it is the expectation that the elders will lay hands upon him to send him off as a fellow elder.

5.5.1 Shepherding in the choice of ministry

Once someone has demonstrated fruitfulness in life and ministry commensurate with a burden for full-time work, the elders will work with the person to help discern the specific calling the Lord has for him. They will try to help him match his burdens with the opportunities the Lord provides. For the prospective shepherd, his burden, his giftedness, and providential opportunity should align to indicate whether the Lord is calling him to:

- Domestic or international ministry
- Pastor an existing church or plant a new church
- An emphasis on leading a local church ministry, training others for pastoral emphasis, or both
- Serve alongside an existing team or to develop a team from Community Bible Church and other like-minded churches
- Developing gospel ministry in a reached community or preaching the gospel to the unreached
- Bivocational ministry, for example:
 - ❖ In an area politically inaccessible through other means, or
 - ❖ In a situation where economics may indicate it is best for the shepherd to lead through the example of hard work

We recognize that particular individuals may be burdened for domestic ministry while others may go internationally, and some may be called to strengthen gospel witness among reached peoples and others to the unreached, but God's desire to glorify His name in the whole earth means that the local church as a whole cannot emphasize one at the expense of the other.

In the case of potential placement with an existing church or ministry, the Community Bible Church elders will work with the man called and the elders and leadership of the ministry to determine the appropriateness of a fit.

In the case of the development of a team, the elders will work with the man to determine who should be part of the team, what roles they are best suited for, and how to prepare them for the ministry ahead.

For a calling to pastor an existing church, this process might happen relatively quickly. For a calling to a ministry which will require development of a team or ministry partnerships with supporters of the work, this process might take over a year. For perspective, Paul was called to go to the Gentiles in Damascus and sent out as a missionary of the church in Antioch over a decade later.

5.5.2 Shepherding in the development of ministry partnerships

For someone called to a ministry that the local church will be unable to financially support in part or whole, the elders will work with the person to develop ministry partnerships with churches and individuals who will support the work. Barring unforeseen circumstances, we expect that the person would be sent as an ECMI missionary.

This process might include the following steps:

- The prospective missionary will prepare both a monthly ministry budget and one-time sending budget for approval by the elders.
 - ❖ In this process, the missionary should consult with the Administrative Pastor and with people he knows who are in ministry in the region.
- The person will write a one-page letter outlining his or her Christian history, burden, and prospective ministry. This letter will give opportunity for the recipients to invite further interaction and/or support the work.
 - ❖ This letter will be accompanied by a commendation letter from CBC/ECMI.
 - ❖ This letter will be sent to select people and churches known to the missionary and Community Bible Church.
- The missionary will follow up with prospective ministry partners. The elders will help with those ministry partners whom they know better than the missionary does.
- The elders will make a determination based on circumstances how much of the budget should be pledged in support before the missionary can be sent.
- We prayerfully wait for the Lord's provision as part of the indication of calling.

5.5.3 Should a missionary make his needs known?

Through the example of Paul, Scripture indicates that it is entirely proper to mention financial need in conversation and correspondence with those who would normally be predisposed to support the work (1 Corinthians 9). We are not required to withhold mention of need until asked, or to entirely avoid discussion of financial details. At the same time, we believe firmly in the providential provision of the Lord through His people. He who directs the missionary to the field will direct the giving to sustain him. He is glorified as He provides through His people for needs whose specifics He alone knows. We commend to the missionary the middle ground of mentioning financial needs to potential supporters, and then more specifics upon request.