



Missionary Support Policy

May 5, 2007

You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. – 3 John 1:6

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to articulate the policy of Grace Bible Church (GBC) in regard to support of missionaries. For the sake of this document, a “missionary” is defined as an individual whose primary ministry is to those outside of our local church body.¹

II. VISION

To advance the Great Commission by being a church where those we support are cared for, prayed for, and provided for faithfully and sacrificially through the involvement of the whole church.

III. STRATEGY

A. “Sending Church” or “Supporting Church”

GBC is committed to working alongside those with whom we enjoy close relationships, including doctrinal, philosophical, and personal harmony. We see two distinct types of relationships that GBC will have with missionaries we support. GBC will either be the Sending Church or a Supporting Church.

1. *Sending Church*: In this relationship, GBC is the missionary’s “home church.” GBC will work closely with a mission agency in assisting, encouraging and advising the missionary. GBC will take an active role in training and discipling the missionary before they go to the field, and offering counsel, prayer, and accountability when they are on the field. GBC will provide Direct Corporate Support (sect. IV. A.) and will assist the missionary in raising the remainder of their support.
2. *Supporting Church*: In this relationship, GBC is coming alongside a different sending church to serve as a secondary source of prayer, accountability, and potentially financial support. GBC may provide Direct or Indirect Corporate Support (sect. IV.).

B. Significant Support to a Limited Number

In both of the above types of relationships, our fundamental strategy will be to give significant support to a limited number of missionaries rather than less support to a larger number of missionaries. We believe the benefits from this strategy are:

¹ We do believe that all Christians are called to the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ (Mat. 28:18-20) and that in that sense it is right to speak of all Christians as “missionaries.” However, for the sake of clarity in this document the term “missionary” will be used only of individuals whose primary ministry is to those outside of our local church body.

1. Deeper involvement in the missionary's life and ministry, not only by the leadership of our church but also by our members.
2. Greater accountability of the missionary to our church.
3. Diminished need for the missionary to visit supporting churches.

IV. TYPE OF SUPPORT

GBC will support approved missionaries in two ways:

A. Direct Corporate Support:

The church provides regular financial support (sect. V. D.). The church also prays frequently for the missionary, maintains regular communication with the missionary, and commends the missionary to GBC members for personal financial support beyond funds contributed by GBC.

B. Indirect Corporate Support

The church does not provide regular financial support (though periodic monetary gifts may be given). The church commends the approved missionary to GBC members for personal financial support, prays frequently for the missionary, and maintains regular communication with the missionary.

As a general principle, GBC encourages individuals within the church to be involved financially in personally supporting ministries according to their own conviction, including those the church has designated for corporate support or those the individual investigates themselves.

V. IMPLEMENTATION OF SUPPORT STRATEGY

A. Priorities

1. GBC is committed to recognizing, training, sending, and supporting those within our own body who have potential to be effective missionaries (Acts 13:1-3). Our first priority is to support those God has brought into our body.
2. We desire that all ministries we support would be directly advancing the ministry of the local church in their field of service.
3. Our focus is to support "essential ministries" of the church, which we define as ministries without which the church cannot exist (e.g. Bible translation, church planting, and church leadership training).
4. We also seek to focus on those candidates who will partner in the ministry of those missionaries already supported by GBC.

B. Selection of Missionaries and Candidates

GBC seeks to follow the Acts pattern of sending only qualified members to the mission field. In missionary families, both husband and wife should meet all qualifications.

1. **The Relationship to GBC** – the following chart highlights qualifying criteria and the type of consideration that may be given for missionary candidates based upon their current and prospective relationship with GBC. Satisfaction of the qualifying criteria

does not guarantee missionary support, but rather is viewed as prerequisite for support. At the discretion of the elders, candidates may begin the process of evaluation before meeting qualifying criteria, but support will not be finalized until criteria are met.

	Qualifying Criteria	Type of Consideration
GBC ATTENDEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time: more than two years • Membership: member • Ministry: significant involvement employing the same skills and gifts that will be used in the overseas ministry 	Consideration for “ sending church ” relationship.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time: less than two years • Membership: member or non-member • Ministry: some involvement 	<p>Asked to wait until they have been more involved in the church and qualify for a “sending church relationship.”</p> <p>May be considered for a “supporting church” relationship (see below).</p>
NON GBC ATTENDEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time: more than two years at their sending church • Membership: member of a like-minded sending church • Ministry: Proven track record of church ministry employing the same gifts and skills that will be used in the overseas ministry. • Recommendation: Highly recommended both by a GBC member and the leadership of their own church. 	Consideration for “ supporting church ” relationship only if 1) no missionaries currently supported by GBC are in need of additional support; and 2) there will be no conflict with the support of potential “sending church” missionary candidates.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-GBC attendees who do not qualify for “supporting church” relationship. • All unsolicited requests 	<p>No consideration.</p> <p>If a candidate in the future becomes qualified for a “sending church” or “supporting church” relationship, they may be considered at that time.</p>

2. **Spiritual Qualifications**

- a. *Salvation & Maturity:* All candidates must demonstrate clear profession and evidence of God's saving work, spiritual maturity, consistent Christian lifestyle, evidence of the fruits of the Spirit, continued spiritual growth, and a servant spirit.
- b. *Qualifications for leadership:* Men serving in church planting, preaching, or theological training ministries must qualify as elders (cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9).

3. Doctrinal Compatibility

- a. *GBC Doctrinal Statement:* Candidates must be in agreement with the affirmations of the GBC Doctrinal Statement or have only such disagreements as determined by the Board of Elders to be acceptable.
- b. *Agency Doctrinal Statement:* The doctrinal statement of any sending agency or supported ministry must not be in disagreement with the affirmations of the GBC Doctrinal Statement or have only such disagreements or omissions as determined by the Board of Elders to be acceptable.
- c. *Other issues:* The applicant's views on selective doctrinal matters not addressed in the GBC Doctrinal Statement will be investigated and evaluated on a case by case basis as the elders see fit.
- d. *Biblical Foundation:* All candidates (husbands and wives), no matter what kind of ministry, must possess and articulate a strong biblical foundation. Elders will meet with candidates to assess their ability to clearly, accurately, and simply explain the gospel and basic Christian doctrines. Candidates should demonstrate at least an introductory knowledge of the content and message of the Old and New Testaments.
- e. *Disclosure:* Missionaries are expected to fully disclose any changes in views subsequent to the time of application. Dishonesty, by omission or otherwise, will result in disqualification from or termination of support.

4. Training, Experience, and Education

- a. In general, all candidates must demonstrate their qualifications and abilities (experience/education) for ministry in the specific area that they have chosen. Those who are sent must be equipped to excel in what they do.
- b. Candidates who plan on being involved in Bible teaching ministry, whether from a pulpit or in an academic setting, must:
 - i. Possess at least a Bible degree from an evangelical college or seminary, or demonstrate a comparable level of biblical knowledge.
 - ii. Demonstrate diligence and giftedness in teaching through ministry involvement.

5. Philosophical Compatibility

- a. The elders will discuss with candidates their views on the following philosophical issues, and will factor responses into their consideration of the candidate.
 - i. Gender roles
 - ii. Accountability
 - iii. The church & culture
 - iv. The indigenous church

- v. The role of contextualization in ministry
 - vi. Language learning
 - vii. Relationship to national church leadership
 - viii. The role of preaching in the church
 - ix. The role of worship in the church
 - x. Styles of evangelism
 - xi. The place of social issues in ministry
 - xii. The seeker-driven movement
 - xiii. The emerging church movement
 - xiv. Ecumenism
 - xv. Spiritual warfare
 - xvi. The role of the family in overseas missions
 - xvii. The importance of missionary communication
 - xviii. How to distinguish between primary and secondary matters
- b. *Other issues:* The applicant's views on philosophical matters not mentioned above will be evaluated as the elders see fit.

6. **Type of Ministry**

See Sect. V. A. 3. for the emphasis on "essential ministries." This consideration does not exclude other types of ministry, but could be used to prioritize between a number of otherwise equally worthy candidates.

7. **Mission Agencies**

- a. Applicants who have already chosen a mission agency or organization should be prepared to discuss the philosophy, administrative principles, and ministry practices of that agency. Applicants should also furnish a policy manual from the agency for GBC to review.
- b. Applicants who have not yet chosen an agency should contact the elders for referral to agencies with whom the church currently has a relationship.

8. **Single women**

GBC will consider single female missionaries for support with the following limitations:

- a. Candidates must adhere to the limits Scripture places on the ministry of women.

- b. For purposes of safety and accountability, we require that single women work as a part of a team including other missionaries supported by GBC.

C. Procedure for Approval of Support

Note: if at any step in the process the elders determine support of a particular candidate will not be possible, they will notify the candidate appropriately and the process will not continue.

1. A candidate either contacts or is contacted by the elders about the possibility of support.
2. The elders will examine the candidate's relationship with the church (Sect. V. B. 1.).
3. The candidate will receive an application including a preliminary questionnaire, GBC doctrinal statement, and GBC External Ministry Support Policy. The application should be completed and returned to elders along with any ministry presentation materials (pamphlets, DVD, etc.).
4. The elders will conduct a review of candidate's qualifications (Sect. V. B.). This will also begin a process with the candidate of assessing their spiritual maturity and qualification for the ministry they will be doing.
5. The elders will conduct a series of interviews to assess the candidate's ministry plans and qualifications.
6. The elders will make a decision on whether to provide corporate support, and whether this is to be Direct or Indirect Corporate Support (Sect. IV.). Candidates will be notified in writing of the church's decision. If Direct Corporate Support, the candidate will also be notified of the level of support.
7. Those accepted for support will be presented to the church body.

D. Direct Corporate Support

1. Support will begin at the time arranged by the church and the missionary, usually after the missionary concludes pre-field ministry and is directed by the missions agency to commence regular missionary activities.
2. If a candidate has been accepted for support and funds are available, the church may provide a percentage of regular monthly support to support pre-field ministry for a period of not more than one year.
3. In a "sending church" relationship, GBC will provide at least 25% of the missionary's monthly support amount. In a "supporting church" relationship, GBC will provide at least 10% of the missionary's monthly support amount.
4. The support amount will be reviewed at least annually. If possible, support amounts will be increased when necessary to account for increases in cost of living, inflation, additional expenses, attrition of other support, etc.
5. Periodic financial gifts over and above the monthly support amount may be provided at the discretion of the elders.

6. Support will be committed for one missionary term (up to five years). At this time the elders will conduct a formal review of the missionary and their ministry. The elders will make a decision regarding continued support.
7. Support will be reviewed and a decision must be made by the elders to continue or discontinue the relationship if the missionary:
 - a. Requests to change the relationship with GBC.
 - b. Leaves the missions agency or organization.
 - c. Changes the type of ministry and/or field of ministry.
 - d. Deviates from any philosophical or doctrinal position originally communicated to the church.
 - e. Has failed to communicate with the elders for one month.
 - f. Has consistently failed to respond to requests from the elders.
 - g. Has had their spiritual qualification called into question (see sect. IV. B. 2.)
8. The missionary is expected to notify the elders immediately when any changes, as noted above, occur or are contemplated. If support is to be discontinued pursuant to point 7 above, as a general guideline, discontinuance will occur within three months of notification by GBC to the missionary.

Still to come:

Section on church-missionary expectations.



Application for Corporate Support

APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Street Address		Apartment/Unit #	
City	State	ZIP	
Marital Status (check all that apply) MARRIED <input type="checkbox"/> SINGLE <input type="checkbox"/> DIVORCED <input type="checkbox"/> WIDOWED <input type="checkbox"/>			
Phone	E-mail Address		
Location of Ministry	Type of Ministry		

CHILDREN			
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.
Last Name	First	M.I.	D.O.B.

HEALTH INFORMATION
Does anyone in the family have any physical disabilities or specific health problems? Please explain.

EDUCATION (HUSBAND)			
High School		Address	
From	To	Did you graduate? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Degree
College		Address	
From	To	Did you graduate? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Degree
Other		Address	
From	To	Did you graduate? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Degree

EDUCATION (WIFE)				
High School		Address		
From	To	Did you graduate?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
College		Address		
From	To	Did you graduate?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Other		Address		
From	To	Did you graduate?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
		Degree		

CHURCH INFORMATION – FILL OUT THIS SECTION IF YOU ARE APPLYING FOR GBC TO BE YOUR SENDING CHURCH					
Date of attendance:		Are you a member?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	Which people at GBC know you the best?
From	To				

CHURCH INFORMATION – FILL OUT THIS SECTION IF YOU HAVE A DIFFERENT SENDING CHURCH			
Church Name		URL:	
Date of attendance:		May we contact them	YES <input type="checkbox"/>
From	To	to ask about you?	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Contact person name:		Senior Pastor Name:	
Contact person Email		Contact person title:	
		Contact person Phone ()	
What is your connection to Grace Bible Church?			

MISSION AGENCY	
Have you chosen a mission agency or organization? YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
Agency Name:	URL:
Contact person name:	Contact person title:
Email	Phone ()
List any disagreements or concerns with any of the agency's beliefs or policies:	

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

Have you read the doctrinal statement of Grace Bible Church? YES NO

List any areas of disagreement or concern:

Have you read the GBC Policy for Missionary Support? YES NO

Do you have any questions or concerns about the missionary candidate evaluation process?

MEN ONLY

Read 1 Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:6-9. Do you believe you would qualify for the office of elder according to these texts? If no, why not?

REFERENCES

Please list at five references who would be willing to speak with us about your personal qualification and ministry giftedness, including at least one pastor or elder, one person you have discipled, and one person who has served alongside of you in ministry.

Do we have your permission to contact each of the below references to ask about you? YES NO

Full Name	Relationship
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Company	Phone ()
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Address

Full Name	Relationship
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Company	Phone ()
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Address

REFERENCES	
Full Name	Relationship
Company	Phone ()
Address	
Full Name	Relationship
Company	Phone ()
Address	
Full Name	Relationship
Company	Phone ()
Address	

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO ATTACH:
<p>Please attach typed answers to the following questions, one page or less per question.</p> <p>Once per family/single:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What ministry will you be doing on the field? What is the nature of the ministry you will be a part of, and what will be your specific role in that ministry? <p>Each individual:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How has God directed you to serving in missions? Describe family background, salvation, and significant growth experiences and influences. What must a person do to be saved? Describe your ministry experience: What ministries have you previously been involved in, and how have they prepared you for your ministry overseas?

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS TO ATTACH:
<p>Please enclose the following materials with this application, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doctrinal statement from your mission agency Policy manual from your mission agency (If from a different sending church) Doctrinal statement from sending church. Any ministry description materials you have prepared, such as a prayer card, brochure, DVD, etc. Paperwork showing your total support needs and amount already raised.

DISCLAIMER AND SIGNATURE
I certify that my answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.
Signature _____ Date _____
Signature _____ Date _____