

Hillcrest Missions Committee Policy and Procedure Manual

Definition of Missions:

*We will help others fulfill in their settings
the Great Commission that Hillcrest must fulfill in our setting.*

What we call “missions work” should be “foreign” to our location, but it should not be “foreign” to our thinking. “Missions work” is the act of extending to other settings the work Hillcrest does in our own setting. That means that an understanding of “missions” in other settings begins with an understanding of what God has called Hillcrest to do in our setting. In our setting, *we help people find Jesus and follow him up the discipleship H.I.L.L.* “Missions support” simply means supporting work in other settings designed to help people find Jesus and follow him.

Meeting human need is a big part of this assignment. You cannot “Invite Your World to Life” and “Love the Fellowship for Life” without offering help to those in need. In our setting, we know that people in and around our church would benefit from things such as family counseling, money management, and recovery programs that target addiction. In other settings, we know people would benefit from things such as hygiene kits, school supplies, and fresh water wells.

The Scope of “Missions”

*While Hillcrest performs Great Commission work
targeting people our church naturally reaches (our THEMs),
the Missions Committee will recommend and oversee our church’s support for any
Great Commission work beyond the natural reach of the church.*

- **In Austin**, this includes work designed to reach people who are not likely to be reached by our church due to challenges such as language barriers, socio-economic differences, and distance from our church. While we will do everything we can to overcome these challenges as we invite people into Hillcrest, our Missions Committee will also support ministries that target groups in Austin that our church is less likely to reach. The Austin Baptist Association will be our primary, but not our exclusive, partner for Missions Committee work in Austin.
- **In our state and nation**, this includes Great Commission work such as (but not limited to) campus ministry, church starts, children’s homes, border ministry, interfaith witness, church leadership training, chaplaincies, relief work, and so on. The Baptist General Convention of Texas will be our primary, but not our exclusive, partner for Missions Committee work in Texas. The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention will be our primary, but not our exclusive, partner for Missions Committee work in North America.
- **In our world**, this includes Great Commission work such as (but not limited to) missionary training and support, church starts, church leadership training, health clinics, relief work, Bible translation, and so on. The International Mission Board

of the Southern Baptist Convention will be our primary, but not our exclusive, partner for Missions Committee work internationally.

As the Missions Committee decides which projects to recommend support, the Committee will give attention to these three broad fields of missions work.

The missions committee will maintain relationships with representatives of secondary (para-church, direct action partners, etc.) in order to evaluate and report on those missions activities.

Funding Decisions:

The Finance Committee and the Ministry Staff will recommend how Hillcrest should spend funds dedicated to fulfilling the Great Commission in our church's setting. The Missions Committee and the Ministry Staff will recommend how Hillcrest should spend funds dedicated to fulfilling the Great Commission in other settings.

All funds given to and through Hillcrest should be used to fulfill the Great Commission, so it is not right to say that funding Hillcrest ministries is “spending money on ourselves” and funding work in other settings is “spending money on others.” Every dollar we receive should be used to fulfill the Great Commission. Whether the work we support is in the Balcones neighborhood or in the Bosnian nation, our funds help people find and follow Jesus.

However, as a rule of thumb, we should assign no more than 90% of undesignated receipts to Great Commission work in our own setting, and no less than 10% of undesignated receipts to Great Commission work in other settings. The Bible is silent about the amount a church should set aside for extending Great Commission work to other settings. However, since we teach our people to tithe their income to the Great Commission work in our setting, it makes sense to “tithe” our church's income to Great Commission work in other settings.

Of course, this assignment of funds only applies to undesignated receipts. We occasionally call for designated giving to our local Great Commission work (such as building funds, van funds, and love offerings). In addition, we occasionally call for designated giving to Great Commission work in other settings (such as the Lottie Moon offering, food pantry donations, and Angel Tree gifts). The Missions Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Ministry Staff will work together in establishing and promoting these designated offerings.

The Missions Committee Assignment:

*To recommend ministries for the missions budget,
to promote the missions offerings,
to make sure the missions mandate is taught,
and to enlist Hillcrest in missions activities.*

First Assignment: To Recommend Ministries for the Missions Budget

*The Missions Committee will review each ministry
in its budget annually on the basis of four things:*

Is the work we support evangelical, effective, efficient, and engaging?

First, is the work we support evangelical? This is a question about the beliefs held by the leaders of the projects and organizations—and a question about the beliefs they will instill in those they reach. While there are many organizations led by those who profess to be Christian, an “evangelical Christian” has four major distinctions. He or she believes the Bible is God’s Word, Jesus is who he claimed to be, salvation is only by grace – in other words, you can’t earn your way to heaven – and everybody needs to hear the good news. The Missions Committee should ensure that it recommends support for work led by evangelical Christians.

Second, is the work we support effective? Before the Missions Committee recommends that Hillcrest support an individual, project or organization, the Committee should determine how to make an annual evaluation of their effectiveness. The annual review should use relevant criteria, including answers to the following questions:

- Do they have a statement of vision and goals that they are successfully reaching through their actual activity?
- How much of each dollar is spent on mission activity vs. overhead expenses?
- For missions activities that we support directly
 - Is the relationship with HBC and our level of involving growing or declining?
 - Is a representative available to bring an annual report to HBC members?

Third, is the work we support efficient? Sadly, when it comes to using financial support, some organizations will be *well-meaning* but *wasteful*. The Missions Committee is responsible to ensure that the projects and organizations we support practice good accountability in their finances.

Fourth, is the work we support engaging? In other words, does it *engage* the interest and passion of Hillcrest members? In addition to funding missions ministries coordinated by other organizations, we want to get HBC members directly involved. Among all the worthy ministry projects and activities, is this one that will get HBC members excited and involved? Is there a champion to lead it?

Second Assignment: To Promote the Missions Offerings
*The Missions Committee will oversee the promotion
of designated missions giving*

As a church we will promote three designated missions offerings each year:

- Annie Armstrong Easter offering – proceeds support NAMB missions activity
- Mary Hill Davis offering (September) – proceeds go to the BGCT missions activity
- Lottie Moon Christmas offering – proceeds go to the IMB missions activity

The Women on Mission will lead in the promotion of these offerings, and will work with the Pastor to determine the giving goal for each offering.

The missions committee will assist the WOM as necessary to coordinate the promotion schedule and to communicate the purpose and goal of these offerings to the church.

Missions Promotion
*The Missions Committee will establish best practices for sharing
missions opportunities with the congregation.*

Effective communication is essential for missions offerings, education, and enlistment.

The committee has many channels for communicating with the congregation:

- Sunday school announcements
- Beacon articles
- Pulpit announcements
- Bulletin announcements
- Church web site
- Pre-worship slide show
- “Snapshots of service” videos
- Mail
- Email
- Posters
- Bulletin boards
- Podcasts
- Phone tree

No single communication method is effective in reaching a multi-generational congregation, and some methods are generally more useful than others for sharing missions-related information. The missions committee will help to define and use the most efficient channels for each situation.

The committee will normally work through the church office to coordinate missions-related communications with the church staff and with those persons who manage the communications medium (Beacon editor, webmaster, etc.). In some scenarios (e.g. sign-up form on the web site), the committee may need to work directly with the medium manager.

Third Assignment: To Make Sure the Missions Mandate is Taught
The Missions Committee will oversee activities that teach the congregation about the purpose and history of missions.

An understanding of the missions mandate is fundamental to building an effective missions ministry. Understanding the missions mandate is the first step of missions discipleship, in which members of the congregation learn about what God is doing in other settings – local, regional, and global.

Note: By referring to *members* or *congregation*, we do not exclude participation by non-members (regular attenders, visitors, members of other churches, and non-Christians). We understand that God can use mission activities to teach and evangelize those who participate as well as those who are the intended target of God's blessing.

The following is compiled from a doctrinal study on missions, and provides a scriptural foundation for this assignment.

The biblical teachings on missions rest on one foundation: the unique all-encompassing love of God. Humans see other people and feel envy, hatred, pride, and need for revenge. God looks at people and sees helpless need and hopeless evil. The call to missions is a call to share God's perspective on the world, recognizing each person's spiritual needs. We answer God's call to go when we share His love with a spiritually bankrupt people.

From the beginning of history, God sought to bring people into a willing, loving relationship with their Maker through personal contact, judgment, and the flood. Then with Abraham, God continued to carry out His purpose through a man, his family, and his descendants. Although He worked through Abraham and his family, God made His purpose clear: He wants to bless the whole human race (Genesis 12:3). In Galatians 3:8 Paul quotes Genesis 12:3 to show that the scriptures foresaw that God would justify all people, not just Jews, by faith in Christ. In Lk 24:44-49 Jesus related His fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies to a missionary challenge in verses 47-49. The seed of missions is here: All nations are to be blessed in Christ Jesus- the God-Man, Son of Abraham and Son of David as well as Son of God.

Like Abraham, each of us is called to "bless the nations" as God's agent in this world. As we learn this truth through teaching and action, we become more aware of the

opportunities God puts in front of us, and it provides the motivation that we need to minister to people who may be very different from ourselves.

With this goal for congregation members, the committee will help coordinate and promote mission education activities that teach:

- A scriptural understanding of missions
- Baptist distinctives and history, for example:
 - What is the NAMB?
 - Who was Lottie Moon?
- How missions works at HBC
 - Opportunities for training
 - Organizing or getting involved in projects
 - Policies and procedures

We will promote missions education through Discover Hillcrest classes, relevant H.I.L.L. classes and other training opportunities in the Austin area.

Fourth Assignment: To Enlist Hillcrest in Missions Activities

The Missions Committee will help identify missions opportunities and make them available to the congregation.

Direct participation in mission projects is the second step of missions discipleship, in which members of the congregation step out in faith to become God's partner in "blessing the nations" through missions ministry.

Mission projects at HBC may take on many forms. They may be organized and supported by individuals, groups such as Sunday school classes, or on a church wide basis. They may be ongoing in nature, or for limited in purpose and timeframe. All HBC mission projects share one attribute: they produce ministry actions that demonstrate God's love for the lost by meeting specific needs, including those caused by poverty, disease, ignorance, spiritual darkness, or a lack of spiritual leaders.

HBC mission projects are led by mission champions. Mission champions are individuals and groups to whom God has given a vision for a particular ministry. Missions champions have individual gifts and ministries, but they have common needs that the missions committee can serve. The main role of the committee is to support the ministry of mission champions by promoting missions education and acting as a clearinghouse for promotion and enlistment.

From time to time the staff (together with the committee and other church members) may organize mission projects that involve travel to other parts of the state, country or globe. In choosing these projects, the ministry and discipleship impact will be balanced with expected expense, time and effort. Geographically, we expect that the frequency will be higher for activities that are closer to home.

It is the desire of the missions committee to ensure that the project leader's travel expenses will be underwritten.

For others who would like to participate but can't afford to pay all their own expenses, the committee can consider scholarships.