

Hollywood Baptist Church

Missions Policy

As a local community of disciples of Jesus Christ, we are part of the worldwide Church, the family of God in Christ. We affirm:

1. That Mission begins in the heart of God. The Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, sets out God's strategy of redeeming fallen mankind.
2. That Jesus Christ's command to His Church to reach out with the Gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit is explicit. This "Great Commission" is set out in Matthew 28 vv18-20; Mark 16 vv 15-18; Luke 24 vv46-49; John 20 v21; Acts 1 v8.
3. That we must therefore be a missionary community, seeking to fulfil the Great Commission in our generation.

Our commitment

We therefore commit ourselves:

- to be **aware** of what God is doing through Mission both locally and across the world;
- to **support** mission prayerfully and financially; and
- to **encourage** our members to become involved in Mission.

Mission Action Team (MAT)

The practical delivery of our commitment to Mission will be coordinated by the Mission Action Team (MAT).

The MAT shall comprise of at least five Church members, one of whom shall act as Chair.

At least one MAT member shall be an elder.

MAT members shall serve for no more than three years, after which they must step down for a further period of at least two years.

The MAT may also co-opt for a limited period, church members or others associated with the Church, whose experience and / or expertise would be of benefit for specific tasks. They may also delegate specific responsibilities or tasks to others as required.

The MAT will be accountable to the elders and to the Church membership.

AWARENESS

We will keep ourselves informed of what God is doing in Mission today through:

- supporting in prayer “Mission Partners”; “Adopted Mission Partners”; “Short-term Mission Partners”; and the Church’s outreach activity;
- publication of a regular “Mission Guide” including local and global issues, for use both by individuals and House (Fellowship) Groups;
- arranging Sunday services at least four times a year to focus on the ministries of mission agencies identified by the Church for particular support;
- arranging one Sunday Service per year to focus on the work of Baptist Missions;
- participating in the annual TEAR Fund Sunday through a bread and cheese lunch; and
- fostering the links with our partner churches in France (Eglise Protestante Evangelique de la Garenne-Colombes) and Spain (Algeciras) through prayer, practical help, participation in outreach, exchange visits etc.

SUPPORT

We will provide prayer and financial support for:

1. Church members formally recognised as “*Mission Partners*”.
2. Individuals associated with the Church recognised as “*Adopted Mission Partners*”.
3. Individuals associated with the Church recognised as “*Short-term Mission Partners*”.
4. Specific *mission agencies* identified by the Church.
5. Local outreach activity.

6. Our partner churches in France and Spain.

In addition, as a Church we aim that our Mission Budget is to be no less than 25% of the total Church budget.

We will provide financial support as follows:

“Mission Partners”

These are Church Members who have been recognised and sent out by the Church into mission outside the regular corporate life of the Church.

We will provide 30% of the annual costs for each individual.

“Adopted Mission Partners”

These are individuals who although not Church Members, have been recognised by the Church as Adopted Mission Partners. Such designation would arise from a recommendation by the MAT.

The level of financial support will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

“Short term Mission Partners”

These are Church Members, or individuals associated with the Church, engaged in short term Mission activity.

We will establish a *Short term Missions Bursary Fund* from which we aim to provide support for their costs. This support will be assessed on a case-by-case basis but should generally be 25% of their costs (15% if earning) if their work is outside the UK; or otherwise a small contribution to expenses.

Mission agencies

We will commit to supporting a number of Christian agencies involved in different types of work and in different areas of the world in order to widen our vision of God's work.

Agencies will be identified by the MAT from the following categories: *Discipleship, church planting, social action, evangelism, and bible translation.*

In addition, we will support the work of Baptist Missions and TEAR Fund.

Local outreach

We will also ensure that the Church's local outreach activity is adequately funded.

Annual Budget

In order to meet our financial responsibilities the MAT will draw up an annual budget to present to the Church for approval at the Annual Church Business Meeting after consideration and adoption by the Church Officers.

ENCOURAGING MEMBERS TO BECOME INVOLVED IN MISSION

As a Church we have a responsibility to recognise, prepare, send and care for those members gifted and called of God to be involved in mission as their primary vocation. The policy set out below is the normal procedure to be followed in indentifying such people, known as *Mission Partners*.

Eligibility

Those who would be considered Mission Partners should:

- (a) have been in Church membership for a sufficient time to enable their spiritual maturity and gifting to be exercised, and to be part of their call to mission service;
- (b) be entering a sphere of work and ministry for at least at period of one year that both enables and expresses their calling to be involved in mission; and
- (c) wish to involved the Church in recognising their calling and in sending them to their sphere of service.

Selection

This process involves: the elders; the MAT, the Church.

The elders have a primary responsibility to be actively involved in prayerfully indentifying those whom God may be calling to mission and to present them with the challenge of considering this call. However, it is recognised that normally the initiative will come from members who are considering their involvement in mission. Such members shall request a meeting with the elders at which to share their sense of call. The elders shall consider issues of spiritual life; gifting; church involvement; maturity and experience and on this basis refer the member to the MAT.

The MAT will interview the candidates to discuss details relating to training, placement and support.

If considered appropriate, the MAT shall formulate a proposal for the approval of the elders and submission to the Church members to affirm a candidate as a *Mission Partner*.

The proposal shall be brought to a Church Business Meeting for affirmation.

Training

Mission Partners will normally be expected to have had or to be willing to undertake all necessary training to equip them for service. Each case will be treated on its own merits, however forms of training approved by the MAT could include:

- a) preparation at a recognised Bible College or Mission Training College;
- b) participation in a distance learning or correspondence course, normally associated with a college as at a);
- c) a period of practical service; or
- d) a Short Term Programme with a Mission agency.

Appropriate progress reports shall be requested by the MAT both from the Mission Partner while undergoing training, and the training organisation.

Advice, encouragement, counsel and pastoral support shall be provided by the MAT.

Commissioning

Mission Partners will be publicly confirmed in their role at a Commissioning Service at the commencement of ministry.

Pastoral care

In affirming Mission Partners we recognise that the leaders and members of Holywood Baptist Church have an ongoing pastoral responsibility for them. We will continue to offer pastoral care, in consultation with their mission, in the following ways:

- (i) Every Mission Partner will be allocated a “carer” who will be a link between the Mission Partner and the MAT. The carer is responsible for keeping in personal touch with the Mission Partner.
- (ii) Each Mission Partner shall be linked to a specific House (Fellowship) Group from which they will receive practical and spiritual support.
- (iii) Each Mission Partner serving outside of the British Isles should receive one pastoral visit during each term of assignment overseas. Mission

Partners serving within the British Isles should meet annually with the elders and be visited at their ministry location by one of the elders or MAT members.

- (iv) During Home Assignments we require that Mission Partners have at least one third of their time at home assigned to the Church, not including holiday periods. This is to enable relationships to be renewed, support built up, the Church informed about their work, and the Mission Partner to be refreshed physically, mentally and spiritually through fellowship.
- (v) The MAT will liaise with the Mission Partner regarding practical needs (eg housing and transport) during the home assignment.
- (vi) A valedictory service will be held at the end of the period of home assignment.
- (vii) The MAT will maintain close links with the relevant mission agency to enable sharing of pastoral support.

(Note: the above pastoral care arrangements will also be applied as appropriate in respect of “*Adopted Mission Partners*”).

Duration

Mission Partners’ designation shall end either when they formally resign from the agency with which they have been serving and do not take up other service, or upon retirement.

SHORT TERM MISSION PARTNERS

Individuals from within the Church are encouraged to consider participation in short term programmes with the purpose of:

- training for long term involvement
- developing an awareness of mission and the use of gift
- involvement in specific short term mission projects.

Those engaging in such activities should be encouraged to approach the MAT for recognition as *Short Term Mission Partners*.

Short Term Mission Partners will be provided with prayer and financial support as outlined elsewhere in this Mission Policy.

The MAT will assess with the Short Term Mission Partner the appropriateness of identifying a “carer” to provide pastoral support.

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