

Frederick Church of Christ

Missions Team Handbook

(Rev 0, 4/30/10)

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Purpose

This document provides guidelines, policies and procedures to the members of the Missions Team (MT) of the Frederick Church of Christ (FCoC) for recommending, approving, managing, and terminating congregationally-funded mission works.

The funding of a mission work results in a significant level of fiduciary and legal responsibilities that are implicitly accepted by the congregation and its leadership. The processes and procedures in this document assist in the proper management and disposition of mission works. In addition, they provide a means to protect the congregation if a contentious or legal situation occurs.

This document:

1. Assists the MT in evaluating proposed mission opportunities.
2. Assists the MT in proper stewardship of mission funding.
3. Develops accountability in FCoC missions ministry.
4. Maintains consistent policies and procedures as MT membership changes.
5. Provides a method for new MT members to quickly familiarize themselves with MT policies and procedures.
6. Facilitates information dissemination and coordination to the congregation and its leadership.

Revisions

The Missions Team shall review the Handbook at least once per calendar year, updating as necessary.

Missions Team Objectives

The Missions Team objectives are:

1. Spread the Gospel globally to as many people as possible while remaining within the authorized budget allocation.
2. Instill a mission spirit and a desire to support worldwide missions with funding and personal service by each individual member of the FCoC congregation.
3. Involve every FCoC member personally in actual mission activities or in service to missions supported by FCoC.
4. Encourage school age members of the FCoC congregation to be involved in missionary activities.
5. Provide a response to every candidate mission work request for financial support.

Missions Team

The Missions Team shall consist of at least six and no more than twelve volunteer members from the FCoC congregation.

The MT shall have an Elder Interface and the positions of Chairperson, Treasurer, and Mission Correspondent.

A Mission Team member shall hold only one office at a time.

Nomination for MT Membership

Candidate MT member's name may be submitted to the MT for consideration by a member of the FCoC congregation.

After discussion of the candidate at the next MT meeting, the candidate shall be invited to join the mission team upon receiving a majority of votes of the MT members.

Termination of Membership

Membership in the MT can be terminated at any time for a number of reasons including but not limited to: relocation, retirement, health, lack of time, lack of interest.

If a member of the MT wishes to be released from his or her responsibilities, a written or verbal request shall be submitted to the MT and shall be included in the MT meeting minutes.

If the departure of an MT member causes an officer position to become vacant, then a new election shall be held at the next MT meeting to provide a person to fulfill the responsibilities of that office for the remainder of the calendar year.

Elder Interface

The Elder Interface provides spiritual oversight of the MT. The Elder Interface is responsible for monitoring the MT actions to ensure that they are in accordance with the direction and intention of the spiritual leadership of the FCoC. The Elder Interface has the right and duty to periodically examine the status of each approved mission work.

Chairperson

The Missions Team Chairperson has the responsibility to manage the MT and represent the MT at the meetings of the Elders.

The Chairperson shall call regular meetings of the Mission Team.

When requested, the Chairperson shall present the status summaries of the various mission works to the Elders.

The Chairperson shall receive and file all formal documents that pertain to the MT including, but not limited to:

- MT meeting minutes
- Annual Status Report for each active mission work
- Nomination forms for consideration of funding new mission works
- Mission Disposition: MT decisions regarding approval/disapproval of mission work.
- MT Notification Letter to candidate mission works.
- Maintains current list of members

Treasurer

The Treasurer has the responsibility for developing and tracking the Missions budget.

The Treasurer shall provide updates (reports) regarding the MT conformance to the approved Missions budget at each MT meeting.

The Treasurer shall identify any issues regarding forecast expenditures and bring them to the attention of the MT.

Missions Correspondent

The Missions Correspondent has the responsibility of being the PR interface between the Missions Team and the FCoC congregation.

The Missions Correspondent shall facilitate and coordinate regular updates to the congregation on Missions Team activities and missions via periodic Missions Moments, bulletin announcements, bulletin board displays, posters, special mailers, etc.

The Missions Correspondent shall oversee the Missions Team website with the help of a web administrator. The web administrator need not be a member of the MT.

Terms of Office

The term of membership in the Mission Team shall be one calendar year with the option of continuing at the end of each year.

The term of each Mission Team officer shall be one calendar Year.

Election of Officers

Before the term expires, officer nominations shall be accepted from the MT members and an election is held among the MT members.

The person receiving the most votes for each office shall be elected to that office for the following calendar year.

Missions Team Responsibilities

Authority of the Missions Team

The MT shall act in accordance with the direction of the FCoC elders and the approved Missions Team Handbook.

Where approval by the elders is required, the MT shall submit a definition of the proposed action to the elders for consideration and approval.

The MT shall have the authority to:

1. Develop and administer the Missions Budget and make recommendations to the FCoC elders for approval.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of currently funded mission works.
3. Investigate the validity and evaluate the effectiveness of candidate mission works.

4. Recommend and provide advice on missions education to all age levels.

Meetings

The Missions Team shall meet at least once per quarter.

MT meetings shall be open to all members of the FCoC congregation.

Before a scheduled meeting, the Chairperson shall issue an agenda of the items to be discussed during the meeting.

To ensure accountability, all MT meetings and actions shall be recorded in minutes, distributed to MT members, and submitted to the elders.

Any vote at a MT meeting shall have a quorum MT members present.

Any status reports for a mission work presented at a MT meeting shall be included in the MT files.

Urgent matters that require immediate response may result in a teleconference, individual phone calls and or email correspondence to obtain consensus on a matter. Documentation and MT notification of the decision will be required.

See Attachment 1 for a sample meeting agenda.

Missions Budget

The MT Treasurer will attempt to integrate all approved works into the Missions budget.

One or more candidate Missions budgets shall be provide to the MT for approval.

The Missions budget shall be approved by a majority vote of the MT members before submittal to the FCoC elders.

The Missions budget shall be submitted to the FCoC elders for approval in September of each year.

See Attachment 2 for a sample Missions budget.

Emergency Funds

The MT shall reserve a portion of the budgeted annual funds (at least 10% of the annual budget is recommended) for use in the event of an emergency request for assistance from a sponsored mission work or from and other mission request the MT agrees to fund.

Emergency funds may be used to assist a sponsored missionary and their family in the event of illness, injury, death, emergency exit due to political instability, etc.; for one time contributions to works not included in the MT budget; or for relief or other emergency situations (such as earthquake or other natural disasters).

If the emergency fund is insufficient to meet the current need, then the MT shall notify the Elders of the situation and provide a recommended course of action for consideration.

Missions Training

The Missions Team shall encourage its members to engage in formal and informal missions training to enhance each member's effectiveness. Training may be in the forms of books, videos, seminars, field visits, etc. In some cases, MT training may be funded by the congregation.

Nominating a Mission Work

Nominations for mission works can be submitted to the elders or the Missions Team for consideration.

A Mission Work Nomination Form (Attachment 3) shall be completed before submission to the Missions Team.

The MT shall review, analyze, and verify the information to determine the appropriateness of the request and FCoC's financial ability to respond to the request.

There are three basic types of support for mission works:

- **Sponsoring Congregation:** Act as the primary interface and primary contributor to a specific mission work. Most, if not all of the funds that are contributed to the mission work are funneled through the sponsoring congregation. The sponsoring congregation is the primary point of contact for management and maintenance of the mission work.
- **Supporting Congregation:** Contribute to a mission work by providing designated funds to a Sponsoring Congregation.
- **Individual Support:** Designated support provided by an individual directly to the mission work or designated funds that are supplied by an individual and funneled through a Sponsoring Congregation.

There are two basic types of financial commitment for mission works:

- **Continuing Commitment:** Regular funding is provided from the Missions budget. Commitment is assessed annually when developing the MT budget.
- **One-Time:** A one-time contribution is provided to the mission work. Funding may come from the Missions budget or a special contribution by the congregation.

The MT shall accept and consider nominations for mission work candidates for Sponsoring Congregation and Supporting Congregation types of support and for Continuing and One-Time financial commitments.

Approval / Disapproval of a Candidate Mission Work

A designated Missions Team member or member of the FCoC congregation shall present the candidate mission work to the MT for discussion.

The MT shall discuss, consider, and evaluate the candidate mission work it to determine if

- The proposed work fits within the MT area of focus.
- There are sufficient funds in the Missions budget to support the proposed work.
- The work has been validated as a bona fide mission work (based on reference check results).

Once MT has discussed, considered, and evaluated the candidate mission work, the MT shall conduct a vote during a MT meeting to

- Approve,
- Disapprove, or
- Request additional information for reconsideration of the proposed work.

The reasoning and justification for approval or disapproval of the candidate mission work shall be documented in the meeting minutes.

The MT Chairperson shall present the MT's findings to the Elder Interface and submit the MT's recommendation package to the elders for formal disposition.

The MT Chairperson or designee shall formally notify the candidate mission work in writing of the Missions Team decision regarding their request for funding.

The MT Treasurer shall work with the FCoC person responsible for financial activities to establish the funding processes.

Management and Maintenance of a Mission Work

The MT must be prepared at any time to present a written record of the history and current status of each mission work funded by FCoC. To that end, regular contact with each Mission Work by a dedicated Point of Contact is essential.

Regular Contact with a Mission Work

Once FCoC formally accepts the responsibility of funding a mission work, the Missions Team shall be responsible for maintaining regular contact with the mission and (if applicable) the Supporting Congregation. The goals of regular contact are to

- Encourage the missionaries in the work that they are performing.
- Communicate the prayer support by their spiritual families back home.
- Identify any emergency issues requiring MT assistance.

Mission Work Point of Contact (POC)

The MT shall nominate, and by majority membership vote, assign a Point of Contact (POC) to each mission work funded by FCoC.

The POC shall provide a status on their Mission Work at each MT meeting or as requested.

The POC shall maintain regular contact with the mission work so as to be fully aware of any significant issues regarding the mission work and to elevate all positive, negative, and emergency events regarding the mission work to the MT as necessary.

The POC shall be active in their interface with the mission work. Examples of such activity may include, but are not limited to sending birthday cards, anniversary cards, Christmas presents, etc. to demonstrate the appreciation of the missionary's work by the FCoC congregation.

The POC shall provide any mission work prayer requests and concerns for posting in the weekly bulletin and if appropriate, emailed to the congregation.

The POC shall present the mission work to the FCoC congregation during a Mission Sunday event.

The POC shall be responsible to organize and coordinate any visits of the missionaries to the FCoC or the reverse.

The POC shall be prepared at any time to provide a written record of the history and current status of each mission work funded by FCoC.

The POC shall be responsible for any fundraising activities directly related to their mission work.

Termination of Funding for a Mission Work

Termination of funding for a mission work may be required for a number of reasons including but not limited to:

- FCoC budget shortfall or congregational disaggregation.
- FCoC budget reprioritization.
- Missionary decision to exit the mission field (e.g., due to retirement, health reasons or family issues).
- Inappropriate or unacceptable practices by the missionary.

The MT shall evaluate the reason for termination and determine appropriate action. In some cases, special treatment may be required. For example:

If a mission work requires termination, it may be necessary for the MT to support a transition back from the mission field for the missionary and his/her family. This may include funding transportation of household goods and persons back to their country of origin and funding a restart package upon arrival.

All termination actions shall be documented (including justifications) and in the MT meeting minutes.

The mission work's POC shall send formal notification of termination of support to the mission work as soon as possible. The MT will make every effort to provide a minimum of 6 months prior written notice of termination whenever appropriate. Illegal or inappropriate activities may warrant immediate termination

Missions Awareness and Involvement

The Missions team shall provide opportunities for the FCoC congregation to be familiar with and potentially involved in direct missions support, physically, spiritually, and financially.

Mission Sunday

At least annually, a Sunday service shall be set aside as a time to focus the FCoC congregation on missions supported by the FCoC ("Missions Sunday").

One or more Missions Team members shall organize/coordinate the Mission Sunday event with support from other MT members.

Ad Hoc Mission Status to Congregation

At other Sunday services during the year, the Missions Team shall provide status on one or more missions supported by the FCoC (Ex. Mission Moment).

Special Contribution to Missions

While not required but strongly advised, one Sunday should be designated as a “Special Collection for Missions” Sunday. This special collection may coincide with a Mission Sunday.

Missions Web Page

The Missions Team shall maintain a Mission web page on the FCoC web site. At a minimum, the Mission web page shall provide the following information

- Missions Team
 - Vision
 - Objectives
 - Members
 - Handbook and related forms
 - Contact Information
 - Calendar of upcoming events
- Missions (funded by FCoC)
 - Purpose
 - Missionary (and family)
 - Parent organization
 - Contact information (Ex. mailing address, email, website)
 - Photographs and video (if available)

Mission Team information shall be provided by the Mission Correspondent. Mission information shall be provided by the assigned POC.

Mission Team Intern

The Missions Team intern shall serve as a liaison to the FCoC Youth Group in the area of missions for a six month term.

Missions Team intern duties shall be assigned by the MT.

Based on an interest in missions and availability, FCoC Youth Group members shall be considered by the MT for the intern position.

The FCoC Youth Group member receiving the highest number of MT member votes shall be invited to serve as MT intern.

In the event of a tie vote, the MC Chairperson shall decide on which candidate is invited to serve as MT intern.