

## **Missions and Outreach Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

Missions and Outreach at Grand Parkway Baptist Church (GPBC) exists so that we may be witnesses in our Jerusalem (local/Houston Metro), in all Judea and Samaria (national/United States) and to the ends of the earth (International), and to make disciples—inviting them to fellowship in the church and teaching them all that Jesus commanded—for the sake of His name among all the nations (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:5).

### **2. Definition of Terms**

- a. **Missions** is the process of sending the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a people group, such that some from that people group respond to the Gospel by repenting of their sins and trusting in Jesus Christ. Then they are discipled, join fellowship in a local church and are trained (Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:14–16,18).
- b. **Outreach** is the process of going out from the church to pursue genuine relationships with unbelievers with the hope of evangelizing, making disciples and seeing them join fellowship in a local church.

### **3. What We Do**

The Missions and Outreach Team, under the authority of the elders of GPBC, looks to partner with people and ministries focused locally, nationally and/or internationally where we can invest long-term with them—prayerfully, financially, relationally, and in a way that is mutually beneficial in accordance with our Purpose in Section 1.

Additionally, as we do this, we seek to be led by the Holy Spirit, through prayer, to:

- a. Instill in our church the high value and expectation of missions and outreach involvement.
- b. Integrate missions and outreach involvement into the other ministries of the church, where appropriate.
- c. Determine how to involve the most people with a variety of gifts and talents.
- d. Facilitate effective training of all who are involved with missions and outreach in our church.
- e. Send people out—both short-term and long-term—to make disciples locally, nationally and internationally.

### **4. Goals**

- a. Provide substantial practical, financial and personal support to people and ministries serving the Lord in fulfillment of the Purpose in Section 1.
- b. Pray diligently and regularly for all of our partners (II Thessalonians 3:1–2).
- c. Be active in our listening and submission to the leading of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8; Romans 8:3–4; Ephesian 3:16).

- d. Value Christ in such a manner that we can experience joy, even in times of significant obstacles and suffering, while doing the work of missions and outreach (Matthew 13:44; Mark 8:34–35; John 15:20; Acts 20:23; II Corinthians 6:4–10; Philippians 1:29; I Thessalonians 3:2–4; II Timothy 3:12; I Peter 4:19).
- e. Be active in the personal lives and ministries of the people and ministries we support (Acts 15:36).
- f. Regularly lead and send teams from GPBC to serve alongside our local, national and international ministry partners in a manner that is beneficial to the church, the ministry partner and, most importantly, to the long-term work of creating disciples of Jesus Christ.
- g. Develop, encourage and send men and women from GPBC to pursue a calling to full-time missions or outreach.

## 5. **Priorities for Partnership**

Because we believe that missions and outreach should be birthed from our own church ministry, we give priority to supporting people and ministries who have grown in ministry from among our own members. Second priority is given to ministries or missionaries that have a reasonable and natural potential for developing a sustained relationship to and with our church congregation. We give little or no priority to ministries that have no prior connection to our church. In addition, we seek to be good stewards of finances and relationships in the ministry at GPBC; therefore, we will support fewer ministries at a higher level of support rather than more ministries at a lower level of support. We want the congregation of Grand Parkway Baptist Church to develop a depth of involvement, ownership and investment. As it relates to each of the specific geographic areas, we place the following priorities for partnership:

- a. **International.** Given there are many areas in the world outside of the United States where people have little or no access to the Gospel, we prioritize supporting missions to those places as defined in Section 2a. We want to be a part of God’s plan to see “*all the nations of the earth blessed*” (Genesis 26:4; Romans 3:6–9; Revelation 7:9–10). Therefore, we place a priority in supporting people and ministries located in areas of the world where there is very little or no gospel influence. Specifically, we want to support people and ministries in those areas of the world who are doing one or more of the following works:
  - i. Engaging with those who have never heard the gospel.
  - ii. Sharing the gospel.
  - iii. Discipling new believers.
  - iv. Planting healthy churches.
  - v. Training indigenous leaders.
  - vi. Working themselves out of a job and starting over.
- b. **National (United States).** Given we live in a country where the gospel has had and continues to have a broad influence, we are specifically focused on outreach as defined in Section 2b. We desire to support people and/or ministries that pursue genuine

relationships with unbelievers in the hope of evangelizing, making disciples and seeing them join fellowship in a local church.

- c. **Local (Houston Metro).** Unlike International and National partners, we see our local ministry partners as an extension of the specific work of GPBC to make disciples of Jesus Christ in our surrounding area. We seek to support local ministry partners that allow us to develop relationships and meet the needs of a broad spectrum of people in the area surrounding our church, where we as a church are unable to do so on our own due to a lack of expertise or resources. This may include, but is not limited to: homelessness/poor, unwanted pregnancy, Islam/Hindu outreach, child mentoring, etc.

## 6. **Criteria for Partnership**

All partnerships between GPBC and a local, national or international partner must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be Christ-centered and biblically based (John 15:5; II Corinthians 4:5; Ephesians 2:9–10; II Timothy 3:16).
- b. Be aligned with the GPBC theological statement of belief and core values.
- c. If an individual, be an active member in an evangelical church and seek to encourage those who benefit from their ministry to be likewise committed to active participation in a local church. Where no such church exists, we support ministries and missionaries that have the planting of Bible-believing local churches as one of their primary ministry goals. If we are supporting an organization, we would expect the same of the leadership.
- d. Prioritize evangelism, discipleship and the building up of strong, indigenous leadership (Matthew 28:18–20; Mark 16:15; II Timothy 2:2).
- e. Be relationally and mutually transforming (Acts 4:32–37).
- f. Be trained and/or have extensive experience in their area of ministry.
- g. Complete the Missions and Outreach Questionnaire.
- h. Be conducive to a long-term and mutually beneficial relationship.
- i. Have proper accountability structures, with a preference for submission to the authority of the local church. In light of the financial limitations of many local churches, we do not rule out people and ministries who operate under the auspices of parachurch agencies or large denominations. Our only condition is that the individual, or the leadership of the organizations we support, has a home church to which they are accountable.
- j. Be providing opportunities for significant involvement for the people at GPBC to use our variety of gifts, ages, abilities and maturity levels (Romans 12:4–8; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11–16). We recognize that not all partnerships are conducive to providing significant opportunities for the people of GPBC to be involved in their specific ministry and will therefore make exceptions to this criterion when necessary.
- k. Once the partnership has been established, ongoing criteria will include:
  - i. Open accountability through evaluation by the Missions and Outreach Team at least annually thereafter (Matthew 7:16–20; 10:16; 13:5, 23; Luke 14:28–32; John 15:16; I Corinthians 3:6–15; II Corinthians 6:14–18).
  - ii. Continued alignment with the purpose and policy of Missions and Outreach at GPBC and the GPBC theological statement of belief and core values.

- iii. Providing an annual ministry report entailing how the vision and goals were reached and not reached in the previous year, what the vision and goals are for the coming year(s), and an annual financial report of the ministry.
- iv. Keeping the Missions and Outreach Team at GPBC abreast as to how we can be a blessing to them personally (and to the organization they represent, if applicable) and to the long-term work of creating disciples of Jesus Christ.

## **7. Procedures for Partnership**

The Missions and Outreach Team will generally go through the following steps:

- a. Fit assessment—determine if the prospective ministry partner is a good fit with this Missions and Outreach Policy.
- b. Further exploration—meet with the prospective ministry partner to get to know them and ask questions.
- c. Elder assessment—introduce the prospective ministry partner to the elders for their initial feedback, concerns, and questions.
- d. Final assessment:
  - i. Ask the prospective ministry partner to fill out our questionnaire.
  - ii. Provide the questionnaire answers to the entire Missions and Outreach Team for discussion at a monthly meeting.
  - iii. Assuming a good response from the committee, meet with the prospective ministry partner, in person or by phone, to ask further questions and make a final assessment as to whether they are the right fit.
  - iv. If, after prayer, the team is in agreement of support, develop a plan for support and involvement by Grand Parkway and then submit the ministry partner for approval by the elders.
- e. Implementation
  - i. Introduce the ministry partner to the people of GPBC.
  - ii. Invite the people of GPBC to pray and serve alongside the ministry partner.
  - iii. Keep momentum by regularly inviting the people of GPBC to pray and be involved with the ministry partner.