

FIRST BAPTIST THOMASTON MISSIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURES JANUARY 2009

SECTION 1----GENERAL

A. VISION

To be an “On Mission” church in doing everything possible to share Jesus with our lost world.

B. PURPOSE

The purpose of this mission’s policy and procedures is to guide the administration of the global missions ministry of First Baptist Thomaston as we seek to develop an Acts 1:8 strategy for reaching the lost and developing fully devoted followers of Christ.

God is at work in our congregation in creating a renewed awareness of His heart for fulfillment of the Great Commission. As we become more involved in world missions, it becomes necessary to develop printed guidelines for our missions’ activities. These policies and procedures were developed for the following reasons:

- A. To give a clear sense of direction and strategy to our missions efforts.
- B. To provide consistent guidelines for making decisions related to missions activities.
- C. To maximize good stewardship of all the resources God has given to use in missions.
- D. To instruct new Global Impact Team (GIT) members.
- E. To maintain consistency as the GIT membership changes.
- F. To provide a printed policy so that all interested members, friends, missionaries, missionary candidates, and organizations can understand our approach to missions.

C. DEFINITION

Missions at First Baptist Thomaston shall be defined as any ministry focused upon outreach beyond the immediate sphere of influence of this local body.

Jerusalem missions are those mission efforts in the area of our church’s sphere of influence including Thomaston and Upson County.

Judea missions are those mission efforts within the State of Georgia.

Samaria missions are those mission efforts within the United States.

Ends of the Earth missions are those mission efforts anywhere outside the United States. International missionaries and agencies may be based in America, but the scope of their ministry is worldwide.

D. STRATEGY

The commitment of the missions’ ministry of First Baptist Thomaston is to lead our congregation to carry out the command of our Lord in Acts 1:8 to the best of our abilities. Our goal is to reach out to those who have never made a personal commitment of their lives to Jesus and to those who have previously made a commitment but have fallen away or do not have a church home.

The GIT will endeavor to provide opportunities for missions’ ministry in our Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and Ends of the Earth for those who are led by God to become involved. For Jerusalem and Judea missions, the GIT will seek ways to support financially and through volunteer help, existing and new ministry efforts which reach out to those who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus and which builds up the body of Christ in a biblical manner.

For Samaria and Ends of the Earth missions' ministry, our approach will be to partner with local churches, ministries, missionaries, and/or projects in other locations. Thereby, we will seek to determine where God is at work and join Him there. In Samaria missions, our priority will be to seek partnerships with persons or organizations who are reaching the unsaved. These will primarily be new works or works which reach into areas which have not had a gospel witness. In Ends of the Earth missions, our overriding objective will be the advancement of God's kingdom into areas or people groups that are in need of a gospel presence and who are looking for mission teams to come and assist them in the advancement of God's global purpose. We will carry out our international missions primarily through partnerships with national Christians, missionaries, or projects in other countries. Our priorities will be to become involved in work which establishes new churches and trains national Christians to carry on the work.

E. FLEXIBILITY

Exceptions and changes to the missions policy and procedures can be made at anytime with the approval of the GIT Executive Team. Any substantial changes will be presented to the church for approval. This will be a document that is fluid and in need of revision on an ongoing basis due to the constant changes that will be occurring throughout our Global Focus initiative.

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SECTION 2-----THE GLOBAL IMPACT TEAM (GIT)

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Global Impact Team at FBCT is to encourage our church in giving priority to, and having involvement in, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with every person on the globe, from Thomaston to the uttermost parts of the world. In order for the GIT to be effective in planning, conducting, and reporting on missions functions; all missions' activities within FBCT, related to the Global Focus initiative and structure must go through the GIT. This means that any group within FBCT, such as a Sunday School class, who has involvement with any missionary or missions organization, is asked to inform the GIT Executive Team or the Minister of Education/Administration of their activity and keep the Executive Team routinely updated as long as involvement occurs. The role of FBC' WMU will continue as it is currently performing; as it will provide wisdom, guidance, and be a player and support of furthering our mission emphasis and work.

B. OBJECTIVES

1. Educating the FBCT family about the Biblical basis for missions and the local, regional, national, and worldwide opportunities for being involved in carrying out the Great Commission.
2. Informing the people about missions' activities that our church, convention, and individual Christians are involved in.
3. Providing opportunities for our people to be involved in ministry projects on a global basis.

C. PRIORITIES

1. Develop partnerships with missionaries, mission agencies, or nationals in areas where we already have personal connections.
2. Establish involvement in carrying the gospel to one or more Unreached People Groups.
3. Develop relationships and provide assistance to established missions agencies within and outside the North American Mission Board (NAMB) and International Mission Board (IMB).
4. Provide opportunities for those interested to work with local mission agencies.
5. Provide opportunities for those interested to be involved in state and national ministries through short-term projects.
6. Provide opportunities for those interested to be involved in international ministries through short-term international trips and projects.
7. Provide information to allow prayer support for missions' activities on a global basis.
8. Report to the congregation on results of missions' activities and new opportunities.
9. Be open to involvement in new missions activities anywhere God call us.

D. QUALIFICATIONS

1. Must have a clear testimony of a conversion experience.
2. Must exemplify Christ-like behavior and spiritual maturity.
3. Active church participation, including regular attendance in Sunday School, and membership in good standing.
4. Must demonstrate a deep interest in missions and our church missions' ministry.
5. A willingness to make a substantial time commitment to the missions' ministry of our church.
6. Dependability and responsibility in discharging assigned tasks.
7. Must participate in the Faith Commitment Offering and be supportive of all other FBCT works.

E. SELECTION

1. Members of the GIT, including Executive, Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Ends of the Earth, GIC, and Prayer, are appointed by the Chairman of Deacons, in consultation with the Senior Pastor and Minister of Education/Administration, and approved by the Deacon and Church body.
2. This includes those who will be deemed the Heads and Co-Heads of each ministry area.
3. Members or Champions of the various ministries in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, Ends of the Earth, GIC, and Prayer shall be appointed by the GIT with final approval of the GIT Executive Team.

F. TERMS OF SERVICE

1. Heads of various ministry areas will serve for two years.
2. Co-Heads will serve a total of four years; two in the role of Co-Head and two as Head.
3. Co-Heads will rotate to Head at the completion of the Heads two year service.
4. When Co-Heads rotate to Head, new Co-Heads will be appointed by the process stated above.
5. If a member does not complete his or her term, the open position shall be filled by means of the process stated above.
6. Members may be removed for lack of faithfulness to the church, failure to attend meetings, failure to perform their assigned tasks, and moral failures.
7. Prayer Team members will serve for two years. The Head for the Prayer Team will be determined by appointment. At conclusion of two years, all Prayer Team members will rotate off and new Prayer Team appointed.

G. ORGANIZATION

I. EXECUTIVE TEAM

A. Members

1. Senior Pastor
2. Minister of Education/Administration
3. Jerusalem Head
4. Judea Head
5. Samaria Head
6. Ends of the Earth Head
7. Global Impact Celebration Head

B. Responsibilities

1. To help cast the vision for church mission's ministry.
2. To oversee all aspects of church missions work.
3. To oversee missions education in the church.
4. To oversee prayer support for missions.
5. To mobilize the resources for mission trips, projects, and partnerships.
6. To put together the annual Faith Commitment Offering budget.
7. To identify and develop strategic missions partnerships.
8. To oversee the various strategic missions partnerships.
9. To review and update the Missions Policy and Procedures document.
10. To oversee the implementation of the Global Impact Celebration.
11. To confirm champions of various ministries.
12. To evaluate projects and/or events in various ministries.
13. To oversee the implementation of the Faith Commitment Offering budget.
14. To develop, oversee, and implement Sending Policy for church missionaries.
15. To review and approve all Short Term Mission trip applications.
16. To develop, oversee, and implement Missions Policy and Procedures.

II. AREA MINISTRY COORDINATORS

A. Members

1. Head and Co-Head of Jerusalem Ministry
2. Head and Co-Head of Judea Ministry
3. Head and Co-Head of Samaria Ministry
4. Head and Co-Head of Ends of the Earth Ministry
5. Head and Co-Head of Global Impact Celebration
6. Head and Co-Heads (4) of Prayer Ministry

B. Responsibilities

1. To evaluate and target opportunities which exist within the assigned area.
2. To educate church members concerning vision and mission opportunities.
3. To design and implement a plan of action to assure team objective is met.
4. To coordinate the activities within the assigned area.
5. To measure the effectiveness of the work being done within assigned area.
6. Review and recommend missionary/champion applications.
7. Recruit champions for ministry events, projects, and partnerships.
8. Meet regularly with team and be present at any GIT meetings.
9. Set budget priorities for area of ministry.
10. Establish and maintain communications with supported missions.
11. Recruit and determine TEAM LEADER(S) for any Short Term Mission trip that is an official STM trip of FBCT and so recognized as that. The Area Ministry Coordinators must use sound judgment, wise choices, and pray earnestly over their choice; depending on the nature of the trip, due to location, safety, duration, travel, and ministry options.
12. Collect STM trip applications from STM trip team leaders for submission to GIT Executive Team for approval.

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SECTION 3-----STRATEGIC MISSION PARTNERSHIPS (SMP)

A. OVERVIEW

The primary vehicle through which our church will seek to impact the world for Christ on a national and international basis will be Strategic Missions Partnerships (SMP). An SMP is a relationship that develops between our church, and a specific missionary, national, ministry project, or mission entity/organization. Under an SMP each partner will commit to specific responsibilities written in a partnership agreement and signed by all parties in an effort to advance the Kingdom of God in a specific area or to a specific people. The SMP is a long-term commitment, minimum of three years, by our church to become involved in a strategic way with the missionary, national, ministry project, and/or organization. It will allow for timely and strategic prayer, financial assistance, and short-term trip involvement.

B. SELECTION

In determining and developing SMP's we have five basic criteria:

- A. Common Covenant Vision and Doctrinal Beliefs
- B. Clearly Identified Field Partner
- C. Documented Ministry Plan
- D. Accountability for Ministry Plan and Finances
- E. Commitment to Partnership and Relationship for Specific Time

C. STRATEGY

In determining and developing SMP's with any missions individual, organization, project, or organization we will seek to impact the relationship in three ways:

- A. Prayer
- B. Prayer and Finances
- C. Strategic Mission Partnership (SMP)
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Finances
 - c. Hand-on involvement
 - d. Plan/Strategy development
 - e. Specific time frame

D. PROCESS

First Baptist Thomaston will seek to establish SMP's on a national and international basis in situations where the gospel of Jesus Christ is being proclaimed. One priority will be to establish and maintain SMP's with one or more missionaries, nationals, projects, or organizations which are specifically reaching out to a cultural group defined as an Unreached People Group.

When appropriate, the proposed partner will be required to submit an application to the Minister of Education/Administration stating their intention/desire to partner with FBCT. After review by the GIT Executive Team, the application will be forwarded to the entire GIT with a recommendation for action.

The Executive Team will monitor the number of SMP's so that the efforts and resources of our church are maximized. There should always be several SMP's ongoing, but the number of active SMP's must be controlled so that our efforts do not become so diluted that they no longer have a significant impact.

Other, less formal and shorter term partnerships may from time to time be entered into on behalf of the church by the GIT. The purpose of these partnerships will be to reach people for Christ and strengthen believers through existing agencies, individuals, or groups. An application for such partnerships will be required. Such partnerships may include local ministries and will be subject to annual evaluation.

E. REVIEW

The Executive Team and GIT will perform an annual review of every ongoing partnership or other relationship FBCT has with any entity. The Minister of Education/Administration will keep appropriate records of each entity with a relationship with FBCT and will present information to the Executive and GIT for the annual review. A statement of ministry goals and objectives and plans toward accomplishment of each objective and target dates of expected outcomes will be submitted annually by the partner entity. Other documentation such as an operating policy, financial statement, yearly budget plan, and doctrinal statement may also be required for submittal.

Changes in partnership and support levels for entities may be made during the annual review based on the following criteria:

- Completion of project
- Changes in need as defined by the partner
- Lack of conformance with agreed upon ministries and areas of service
- Availability of funds based on the FCO
- Review of performance
- Priorities of FBCT and the GIT

For any new partnership, renewal, or change, diligent efforts of research and prayer will precede any decision. Where possible, a member of the Executive Team will meet face-to-face with the individual or agency so that the unique circumstances of the ministry and area can be understood. Our desire is always best use of God's resources entrusted to us to reach the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.

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SECTION 4-----SHORT TERM MISSION TRIPS (STM)

A. GENERAL

For purposes of these policies, short term mission trips/projects are those trips which are no longer than thirty (30) days in duration. It is recognized that short term mission trips play a vital role in FBCT missions efforts. These trips serve to encourage missionaries on the field, provide needed services to national churches and Christians, and result in life-changing experiences for those who go.

It is the policy of FBCT and the intention of the GIT to encourage as many of our members to take short term mission trips as is practical. Each year, the GIT will publish a list of approved short term mission trips. These trips may be part of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), Georgia Baptist Convention (GBC), Centennial Association, trips planned by FBCT, or through partnerships through our Global Focus initiative. Any trip desired to be added to the list must be approved by the Executive Team.

For short term mission trips sponsored by FBCT, a Group/Team Leader must be identified prior to that trip officially being a sanctioned trip by the church. This person will assist the Minister of Education/Administration in all facets of administration, organization, logistics, and implementation of necessary details for a successful experience. This person will also provide on-the-field leadership in coordinating work with the missionaries, nationals, etc. and making decisions regarding team activities.

B. SELECTION

I. FBC CHURCH MEMBERS (includes Sunday School member only)

The following criteria must be met by each candidate in order to be approved to participate in a short term mission trip through FBCT:

1. Complete a Short Term Mission Trip Application.
2. Have a testimony of salvation through Jesus Christ.
3. Demonstrate a willingness to complete all pre-trip training with minimal absences.
4. Agree to and comply with FBCT Financial Policies related to STM trips.
5. Must exemplify Christ-like behavior.
6. Must be active in the life of FBCT, including regular attendance in Sunday School.
7. Must demonstrate a heart for missions.
8. Must be in agreement with the church mission's policy and procedures.
9. Specific trip qualifications may be determined based on needs and nature of the trip.
10. Parental permission required for those under 18.
11. A Background Check is required.

II. NON-CHURCH MEMBERS (includes those who attend regularly)

Individuals who are not members of FBCT may go on a STM trip sponsored by FBCT if they meet the following qualifications:

1. Complete a Short Term Mission Trip Application.
2. Have a testimony of salvation through Jesus Christ.
3. Demonstrate a willingness to complete all pre-trip training with minimal absences.
4. Agree to and comply with FBCT Financial Policies related to STM trips.
5. Must exemplify Christ-like behavior.

6. Must be in agreement with the church mission's policy and procedures.
7. Specific trip qualifications may be determined based on needs and nature of the trip.
8. Parental permission required for those under 18.
9. A Background Check is required.
10. Must indicate good standing and be active in another body believing fellowship that has same doctrinal beliefs as FBCT.
11. There must be an opening that has not been claimed by a member of FBCT by the deadline for indicating interest.

C. FIELD BEHAVIOR OF ANY TEAM MEMBER:

1. Team members must submit to the team leader's authority.
2. Team members must refrain from using abusive language, drinking alcoholic beverages, taking illegal drugs, smoking or using any form of tobacco while on the trip.
3. Team members must refrain from expressing any political opinions while on the trip due to political instability and anti-American sentiment in various countries.
4. If a team member's conduct constitutes a problem, the team leader has the authority to ask that member to return home. Any and all costs related to this will be the responsibility of the team member returning home.

D. FINANCES

Each year FBCT will ask its members to contribute to our Faith Commitment Offering (FCO) for global missions. Since we have such an emphasis on giving to missions through the FCO, it is our policy that no member of our church should solicit funds for mission's ventures from our membership, either in Sunday School or through personal appeals or letters. However, we do realize and understand that there will be the occasions when mission volunteers are approached by church members or groups and given *unsolicited* funds for mission trips. This type of unsolicited giving among the church membership is perfectly acceptable.

It is the responsibility of the mission volunteer, attending a church supported and approved mission project, to handle and take care of all costs related to that particular project or trip. A stated deposit will be due when the volunteer completes the Short Term Mission Trip Application. This will be different and unique for each trip. A payment schedule will be determined by the Team Leader and distributed at the first team meeting after the sign-up deadline has passed. All monies from a mission volunteer should be given to the Team Leader who will keep a record of all deposits; that Team Leader will then give those monies to the Minister of Missions who will then make the necessary and appropriate documentation and depositing to the church financial office.

If a mission volunteer cannot pay for their trip or financial assistance is requested and needed, the most effective, proven method to raise funds is to write a letter for distribution to friends, family, etc. outside the membership of FBCT. Professional fundraisers for large organizations will tell you that people will give to people they know. Potential contributors are happy to have the opportunity to invest in someone they know personally or an endeavor they care about. Persons utilizing a letter will be provided instructions with proper content and guidelines on how to write the letter. Support money or scholarship money raised may only be used towards that particular trip. Any excess money raised over the cost of the trip can be applied to another team member in need or will go into the trip fund and will be used for ministry costs such as supplies, materials, love offerings, etc.

FBCT wants all of its pastoral staff members to constantly keep one eye on the ‘uttermost parts of the world’ so we can build this type of vision into every aspect of our ministry. Therefore, the GIT through the Faith Commitment Offering will fully fund the entire cost of an official Samaria or Ends of the Earth trip of FBC for each pastoral staff member once a year. It is not a requirement for any pastoral staff member to participate in any trip but strictly voluntary and based on that staff member’s desires and where the Lord may be calling them to serve. With the approval of the GIT Executive Team, additional Samaria or Ends of the Earth trips may be fully funded by the FCO for pastoral staff members. In addition, the GIT Executive Team may approve pre-planning site visits in relation to the church’s Global Outreach Plan funded by the FCO.

There will be no refund of money to trip participants of any excess funds after mission trips. Any money that is returned will be placed back into the FCO budget. If this is a significant amount, it may be designated for use in the location of the trip, if that is possible. If it becomes evident during the trip that there will be excess funds, the Team Leader, with input from the team, can decide disbursement of these funds during the trip. The Team Leader may use excess funds to pay for team expenses during the trip. This could include such things as ministry materials as well as sightseeing and R&R events. Also, the Team Leader may leave as much of the excess funds as desired for ministries at the location of the trip.

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SECTION 5-----THE FAITH COMMITMENT OFFERING (FCO)

Most churches that catch a new vision and initiate expanded and intensified involvement in global outreach face a great challenge of funding. The Faith Commitment Offering provides an immediate tool for increased giving. The Faith Commitment Offering is a strategic way to significantly increase the amount of resources that First Baptist Thomaston can use to reach the world for Christ. It allows us to focus our Outreach on people and projects that we really believe in. Thousands of local churches all over the world are using this special offering with dramatic results. Rather than giving impulsively at a few selected times throughout the year, the Faith Commitment approach allows systematic giving over all 52 weeks. This unique approach allows every member of the family to take bold steps in faith and discover new joy in giving for the work of local, national, and international missions.

A. DEFINITION

The Faith Commitment Offering is a faith offering—above and beyond your regular giving or tithe—which is committed in advance, received over a period of time, and used for global evangelization.

B. BIBLICAL EXAMPLE

In 2 Corinthians 8-9, Paul exhorts the believers at Corinth to participate in an offering for the needy saints at Jerusalem. He encourages the Corinthians by citing the generosity of the Macedonian believers. He acknowledges that the Corinthians a year earlier had given and now he challenges them to complete their giving. He says that he will send someone in advance to help them prepare so that when he arrives their gift will be collected in full. From this story, comes the global giving method called the Faith Commitment Offering.

C. WHY IMPLEMENT THE FAITH COMMITMENT OFFERING?

- * It allows for personalized giving
- * It allows for year-round involvement
- * It allows the church to give financial priority to global evangelization
- * It results in increased finances for global evangelization
- * It provides opportunities for spiritual growth—the exercise of faith!

D. WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

- * Better Stewardship
- * Innovative Ideas
- * Unexpected Gifts or Income

E. WHEN WILL FAITH COMMITMENT BE TAKEN?

The Faith Commitment Offering will be taken each year during the Sunday AM services of the Global Impact Celebration.

F. HOW WILL FAITH COMMITMENT BE IMPLEMENTED?

Each year for the Global Impact Celebration a preliminary budget will be developed by the GIT Executive Team. It will consist of those ministries deemed significant to receive funds and support from the FCO and based on our Global Outreach Plan for that particular year. Once the Faith Commitment is received, dollars totaled, etc. a more permanent budget will be developed to reflect a closer amount of monies that was received for the Faith Commitment Offering, and will then be presented to the Deacons and FBCT for approval.

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SECTION 6-----THE GLOBAL IMPACT CELEBRATION (GIC)

A. WHAT?

It is an annual event designed to saturate the entire congregation with a global vision and challenge them to global involvement.

B. WHY?

The two most effective ways to get the local church involved in global missions are to:

Take Them To The World;
Bring The World to Them.

The Global Impact Celebration is the best vehicle to bring the world to the local church. While the church should focus on global missions all year long, the GIC becomes the “Hub” for the church’s global mission involvement. **It should be the most exciting week in the church’s yearly calendar.** It can be the catalyst for missions prayer, giving, and going—short-term and long-term.

C. WHEN?

This event must be a priority on the church’s calendar. Careful and prayerful consideration will be given each year as to when the GIC should be conducted. Thirty days before and after the GIC, the church calendar will be cleared of any other major events. Priority status will also be reflected in promotion and budgeting.

D. WHO MAKES IT HAPPEN?

- * Pastor
- * Church Staff
- * Global Impact Celebration Leadership Team
- * Global Impact Celebration Teams

E. HOW WILL THE GIC BE IMPLEMENTED?

- * Make It Fit FBCT’s Personality
- * Make It Contemporary
- * Offer Variety

F. ELEMENTS OF THE GIC:

- * Kickoff Celebration
- * Senior Adult Emphasis
- * Global Home Briefings
- * Student Ministries Emphasis
- * Children’s Ministries Emphasis
- * International Banquet
- * Missionary Displays
- * Faith Commitment Service
- * Life Commitment Service