

Missions Strategy and Purpose Sample - Church #16

Wheaton Bible Church

Global Outreach Purpose and Strategic Focus

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I. Purpose of Global Outreach

The mission statement of Wheaton Bible Church is: Love God, Grow Together and Reach the World. Mobilizing the church to help Reach the World for Jesus Christ is the purpose of the Global Outreach Department of Wheaton Bible Church.

Reaching the world with the message of reconciliation is our role as Christ's ambassadors. Rooted in the redemptive story of Scripture, the story of our missionary God is His seeking to reconcile mankind to Himself and win true worshippers from every tribe, tongue and nation. Therefore, we join Him in the joyful task of reaching the world with this good news.

Global Outreach has two primary roles:

1. **Inspire and involve the church in this mission around the world.**
As we help individuals grow spiritually at WBC, we desire that they understand God's love for the world and His desire to use them to meet needs and share the message of Christ. The apostle Paul speaks of our role in II Cor. 5:17 – 20.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin^a for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

Every Christian is to recognize his/her identity as a new creature in Christ who is now Christ's ambassador to the world. Each believer is to ask God what specific part he/she should play in the task of world evangelization. Going, sending, and praying are ways to be involved in the task of reaching the world.

2. **Prepare and send those individuals from WBC who have sensed the call of God to become missionaries.** While worshipping and growing at WBC, many recognize that using their unique gifts and abilities as short-term or long-term missionaries is the next step of obedience. We offer a Missionary Preparation Program (MPP) to help equip these individuals in their preparation. We will send them out with our finances and our care. We will celebrate and serve the individuals and families who God calls from our church to be in missionary work. We take seriously the role of the church in praying for the harvest workers in Matt. 9:37 – 38.

"The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field."

II. WBC Global Outreach Values

1. Sharing Christ with the Unreached

Through our missionaries we support every kind of opportunity to make Christ known. The world changes and methods of evangelism are reinvented, but the timeless truth of the gospel is unchanging.

2. Empowering Nationals

Missionaries strengthen under-resourced church leaders by teaching in seminaries in their own countries. As the population of the Global South becomes more Christian, traditional “mission field” countries are becoming missionary-sending countries and so we work alongside national leadership.

3. Innovation in Ministry

Innovation affords new avenues of ministry through growing technology in publishing, radio, translation, medicine, and gaining an education. Every year we support the use of methods never before possible.

4. Transformation of Underdeveloped Communities

Our missionaries come alongside national leaders in under-developed communities to introduce new ideas like micro-enterprise strategies, job creation, vocational skills training, community health work and orphan care programs. Transformation in a community happens as God’s servants help meet social and economic needs in Jesus’ name and gain a platform for sharing the gospel and a community realizes its place in God’s design.

III. WBC Missionary Roles in the World

WBC’s heritage reflects such diversity in missionary roles that we could truly be described as generalists in missions. In 2007, an attempt was made to categorize our 95 missionaries serving in 40 countries. Six categories became apparent and the vast majority of WBC missionaries fit into those described here.

1. Evangelism: Whether they are the first to share the Gospel with someone in Africa or are training U.S. college students in evangelism, WBC missionaries are living our mission statement to “Reach the World” for Jesus Christ. Historically we have been especially invested in pioneer ministry in Africa, serving with mission agencies that began over 100 years ago. In the past few decades, our missionaries’ creative ministries have reached specific populations—on U.S. college campuses or in summer camp programs in Europe, for example. As Europe experiences an influx of immigrants from closed countries, our many missionaries on this continent face a great challenge and great opportunity for evangelism.
2. Bible translation: WBC currently supports more missionaries serving with Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) than any other U.S. church. Many of

these Wycliffe missionaries are in Asia working among unreached people groups. We also support many Wycliffe missionaries who are now serving in U.S. offices, many of whom are in leadership training roles after having been on the field.

3. Church planting: As a small group of believers emerges in a previously unchurched location, this group begins meeting and births—or plants—a church, defined as a community that meets to worship and study God’s word. WBC has a strong commitment to and history of church planting in the challenging, post-Christian countries of Europe. We are also presently involved in such ministry in Asia and Latin America.
4. Community development: Meeting the felt needs of a community—as Jesus did in the gospel accounts—is an important way to work toward the holistic development of that community. Many of our missionaries are involved in creative ministries such as: operating community centers, caring for children at risk, micro-enterprise projects, medical work and education, particularly in Latin America and Africa.
5. Leadership Development: WBC missionaries are training and mentoring the next generation of church and mission leaders through theological education, leadership development and missionary sending responsibilities. WBC supports many seminary professors and missionaries invested in facilitating healthy church leadership development. We support trainers, recruiters, mobilizers and other administrators who train and send out missionaries around the world from both U.S. based agencies and churches that used to be primarily “missionary-receiving.” We also support educators of missionary children, an important investment in both the current missionary force as well as the next generation of leaders.
6. Professional skills in global mission: A diverse set of vocations is found on Wheaton Bible Church’s missionary roster. Health care professionals, pilots, teachers, graphic designers, radio technicians, curriculum writers and photographers capture the great variety of skills that God is using in expanding His kingdom today. These professions open doors for direct evangelism and the building up of believers.

IV. Ten Global Outreach Tasks at Wheaton Bible Church

1. We believe that prayer is our most effective means of missions support. We will communicate prayer as WBC’s priority in missions over finances, communication or any other form of congregational support.
2. We will encourage WBC members to consider God’s call to missionary work, long-term or short-term. We will do this through general awareness efforts but also by early identification and mentoring of potential missionaries, starting as early as high school.
3. We will give primary consideration to members of our congregation who desire long-term WBC missionary status.

4. We will give annual consideration to Greater Chicago Missions Consortium (GCMC) missionary candidates, which advances our commitment to help support area missionaries. GCMC also enables its missionaries to draw their support primarily from this geographical base.
5. We will build relationships with indigenous nationals in strategic roles.
6. We will commit to quality member care of our supported missionaries. This includes a commitment to operate one or two missionary furlough housing units.
7. We believe that quality church growth includes increasing the proportion of giving to missions. As WBC grows numerically and grows its annual budget, the Finance Committee of the Elder Board will be encouraged to make every effort to move toward the goal of 25% of our budget being allocated for Global Outreach and Local Impact.
8. We will seek to share missions insights gained with interested churches around the country for the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of other churches in missions and may include, for example, consultation, printed materials and short term missions training.
9. We will introduce strategic initiatives and build new strategic partnerships, which will lift special goals of missions before our church body.
10. WBC will grow the Global Outreach department as it is able to accomplish these values.

V. Criteria for Missionary Selection

The qualification for acceptance as a WBC Long term or Mid-term Missionary is found in the context of four words that begin with the letter C. These words represent the values we hold and serve as criteria for becoming a missionary sent from this local church body. We commit to mentoring an individual along in the journey toward full-time missions ministry. Through the application and mentoring process, we will assure ourselves and the congregation that each missionary we approve and commission is called to and prepared for the ministry s/he is pursuing.

A. Call

1. God communicates through His Holy Spirit in many ways and calls some individuals to full-time ministry. Global Outreach wants to facilitate the next steps when one's call is to mission. Calling is described in scripture in many ways: a God-given desire arising in a person's heart and mind (Philippians 2.13), a persuasive appeal from a godly person (Acts 11.25-26), a clearly perceived vision (Acts 16.9-10) and other ways. It can also be the role of a local body of believers to perceive the unusual potential for vocational Christian service and encourage an individual to consider the ministry (Acts 11.25, 26; 16.3). God often confirms His will for an individual through the consensus of local believers.
2. In the case of missions, we believe that the church affirms that a person is called and equipped for a specific ministry before he or she is commissioned and sent out as a WBC missionary. Thus it is our responsibility to have a role in the preparation process of one who is sensing God's call to work as a

missionary. In response to the need for workers in God's harvest field (Matthew 9.38), the local church actively teaches missions and talks with individuals about God's call to minister in places where the gospel has never been preached as well as alongside our brothers and sisters around the world in partnership roles.

3. Therefore, the first criterion for Missionary Status at Wheaton Bible Church is the affirmation of a person's calling. The individual must be able to articulate and explain specifically how God has called him/her. This call should be affirmed by those who know him/her well. During the process of WBC preparation to serve on the mission field, the candidate will be encouraged and guided to apply with a reputable mission agency that matches the person's call, if he/she has not done so already.

B. Character

1. Being transformed into the image of Christ (Rom. 12.2, Titus 3.5) is the order for all believers. Becoming more like Him will ground us in a new walk that will affect our nature and our character (Eph. 4.1-4). "Character" includes the deepest qualities of one's nature, the moral fiber or inner makeup of an individual. Though formed from childhood, godly character is developed through spiritual regeneration and the development of godly habits under the power of the Holy Spirit (II Peter 2.2-8, James 1.19-27). Demonstrated Christian character is of great importance in discerning the eligibility of becoming a Wheaton Bible Church missionary. Relational and emotional maturity is part of the quality of character.
2. The fact that a candidate is actively serving within our local body provides a good opportunity to assess this person's character. Thus, the "competency" (see part 4) interview during the Missionary Preparation Program (MPP) with someone the candidate has served alongside will also be helpful in this evaluation. In addition, a reference from a close friend and in many cases, an employer, will be invaluable. A counselor and/or other evaluative methods may be included in this assessment if it seems necessary (Titus 1.5 – 2:15).

C. Community

1. Being a part of our Wheaton Bible Church community is a criterion that has been our standard. When a person is rooted within our local body, we have the opportunity to know him/her personally and also track the history of a person's calling, as well as character and competency. This is very important to us. In order to apply for long-term missionary status, a candidate must have been active at WBC for at least five years or in the case of a national, must have been in close relationship to a WBC missionary for at least five years.
2. For the majority of applicants, WBC membership is strongly encouraged, although there are occasional exceptions. In the case of the applicant who was part of our congregation for at least five years while growing up and then moved away, it is necessary that he/she has remained in touch with those who knew him/her at WBC. This stipulation allows us to verify the candidate's

relationship to the WBC community, and the people he/she still has relationships with can validate the candidate's calling, character and competency.

3. It is also important to gain an understanding of and evaluate the candidate's beliefs and convictions concerning the value and function of the local church.

D. Competency

1. We believe it is the responsibility of the local church in sending a person into full-time ministry to be confident that he/she is adequately educated, equipped and experienced in ministry (Rom. 12:4-21, I Cor. 4-11). It is very important to see not only a heart for ministry, but a proven track record in ministry experience and effectiveness.
2. A candidate's spiritual giftedness, abilities and competencies to carry out the ministry to which he/she is being called (Eph. 4:11-16) is of great importance.
3. A candidate should have experience in evangelism and discipleship and be able to ably handle the Word of God in relation to front-line ministry. Most agencies require Bible education, but if they do not, we will assess the need for ample effectiveness in using the Bible.
4. Experience and ability in working with other cultures and in other countries should be proven. Before acceptance, we desire an assessment trip to the field of interest has been made.
5. In some situations, if the sending agency does not provide use of assessment tools to discern a candidate's readiness, WBC will administer assessment tools of cross-cultural readiness and adaptability.