

Stanley Heights Baptist Church Missions Policy* **September 2003**

As each person is a steward of the calling God has placed on his/her life, so SHBC is a steward of the funds God provides and the people/projects our missions money supports. The qualifications and requirements in this policy document indicate the seriousness with which we take the cause of world evangelization and our commitment to each missionary family and project. The seriousness with which we approach missions provides encouragement to our missionary family and requires accountability from them.

I. PRINCIPLES

- A. The purpose of the mission program of the Stanley Heights Baptist Church is to implement obedience to the Great Commission given by the Lord Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19-20). Since the world population is estimated to reach 9.3 billion by the year of 2050 and since the Bible has declared all mankind to be under sin (Rom. 3:9; Gal. 3:22), the most urgent business of the church is to give the world an understanding of the Gospel. Therefore, mobilization to accomplish this task is of major importance.
- B. Since the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20) embodies making disciples, baptizing and teaching all things that have been commanded, missions is understood as evangelism, church planting and training leadership for these churches. Therefore, the comprehensive goal of the mission program of the SHBC is the establishment of indigenous churches across the face of the earth. An indigenous church is self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating which in turn continues to send out missionaries to maintain the process of church planting. Anything short of leaving local churches is in the end an aborted attempt in accomplishing the mission goal. On this basis, it is our desire to support American missionaries so churches in other countries can have the joy and responsibility of sending missionaries to the uttermost part of the earth.
- C. The Stanley Heights Baptist Church is Baptist both in name and conviction. Therefore, its mission program should naturally produce Baptist churches in both name and doctrine. Missionaries deputized by the church will be those of like doctrinal convictions and philosophical goals to either plant local churches or augment this process.
- D. In the same manner, the mission boards with which the church cooperates should understand their role as a service organization to assist the church to accomplish its God-given task. They also are to be in harmony with the desire to leave independent, autonomous Baptist churches.

II. PRACTICES

* This is the combined work of Dr. Les Frazier who did the "principles" section and Brent Baughman who did the "practices" section. We are grateful for Dr. Frazier's experience and vision for this policy.

A. Financial

1. Faith promise missions giving

a. Why faith promise missions giving?

We practice faith promise missions giving based on the financial principles established in II Corinthians 8-10. The principles of giving extend to special needs (as practiced in the offerings for the suffering saints in Jerusalem – II Cor. 8:4; Rom. 15:25-26; I Cor. 16:1-3) and to world evangelization (II Cor. 10:15-16). This is God's program to finance the expansion of the gospel and personal growth in believers.

b. What does faith promise giving involve?

1) Submitting to the Lordship of Christ

"...but first gave their own selves unto the Lord,..." II Cor. 8:5

2) Surrendering your will to His will

"...they were willing of themselves;" II Cor. 8:3

3) Settling the issue voluntarily and privately between you and the Lord

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver." II Cor. 9:7

4) Satisfaction that God is able to provide for you

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:" II Cor. 9:8

5) Sending the gospel to "the regions beyond"

"...for we are come as far as to you also in reaching the gospel of Christ:...having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you...To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you..." II Cor. 10:14-16

2. Special projects / needs – As the Lord leads, the church may take special offerings for special missionary needs and /or projects. This will be recommended by the Pastor in cooperation with the missions committee.

3. General policy

a. Integrity – Faith promise gifts are given to missionaries and/or missions projects. Faith promise funds are not to fund programs of the church but are to be dispersed for missionary endeavors.

b. Availability – The support levels may be increased if the financial situation of the church missions program makes it possible to do so. The support levels may be decreased if the financial situation of the church makes that action mandatory.

B. Missionaries

1. Personal qualifications

a. Clear, positive testimony for Jesus Christ including assurance of salvation, a definite sense of calling by God to serve Him, and a clear

vision of missionary work for Christ and the individual's relationship to it.

- b. For a man, fulfillment of the requirements for the office of a bishop as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7. For a woman, a clear evidence of the commitment to work under authority as commanded in I Timothy 2:12.
- c. A good testimony to those outside the faith including a reputation of good character, prompt payment of debts and obligations, and freedom from hindering debts.
- d. Spiritual maturity (I Timothy 3:6), as evidenced by the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), patience in teaching (II Tim. 2:24-26), and godly wisdom (James 3:17-18).
- e. Appropriate training for the ministry to which the candidate is called including completion of a degree or certificate program incorporating a significant study of the Bible. A wife's training should be similar to that of her husband though it may be less than his, depending on the circumstances and needs. The Missions Committee will consider such matters individually.
- f. Current active membership at SHBC or a church of like faith and practice.
- g. Commissioned by and accountable to SHBC or a church of like faith and practice.
- h. Acceptance by a qualified board.
- i. Willingness to engage in evangelism and the support of indigenous local churches of like faith and practice to SHBC.
- j. A flexible, humble servant's heart including active involvement in evangelistic outreach and discipling, the ability to cooperate with other missionaries and other believers, a willingness to make personal sacrifice and endure hardships for the sake of the ministry, the desire to adapt to cultural differences and work with national believers in an attitude of love and mutual respect.
- k. Reasonably good health appropriate for the work.
- l. Willingness to refrain from direct involvement or sanction with groups or individuals whose teachings and/or practices are clearly contrary to the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith as set forth in the Bible

2. Classification

a. Member missionary

1) Qualifications

a) Faithful members of Stanley Heights Baptist Church (including faithfulness in attendance, service, tithing, and faith promise giving), significant and on-going participation in the ministries of SHBC through which the candidate and his family have demonstrated the following qualities:

- A submissive, teachable spirit
- Spiritual wisdom (as demonstrated by good judgment)
- Spiritual maturity (as demonstrated by stability, endurance, consistency)

- A concern for others (as demonstrated by a commitment to other believers and non-believers)
 - Faithfulness and responsibility (as demonstrated in their obedience to the Lord in the local church)
- b) Selection of a mission board that is in harmony with the doctrine and missions philosophy of SHBC and with which SHBC can have a profitable, working relationship
 - c) Like-mindedness with the ministry, philosophy, and doctrine of SHBC
 - d) Having SHBC as their sending church
 - e) Meeting all the personal qualifications as listed above
 - f) Direct involvement in missions as defined in this policy including an active ministry directly to people

2) Requirements

- a) Regular written communication with SHBC and supporting churches (at least quarterly)
- b) Significant participation in SHBC during furlough, with the Chattanooga area being the home base. Exceptions may be granted due to extenuating circumstances, but the pastor must approve these.
- c) Maintaining “home membership” while pursuing active membership in the church in which one is participating on the field. (This means accountability and connection with home but does not require financial obligation to SHBC) [See Appendix # 1 for the Biblical basis for this.](#)
- d) Openly and honestly completing the SHBC Missionary Accountability form periodically as determined by the pastor. Realize this is a responsibility of the sending church and the missionary for the mutual interest and edification of both parties. The goal of SHBC is to serve our “home” missionaries through a personal, special relationship.
- e) Since you are representing the Lord and the ministry of SHBC, we ask that in their personal lives and official capacity, maintain a dress code in conjunction with our general guidelines of “long, lots, and loose.” You are expected to choose the “high road” when in doubt considering others at all times (I Cor. 8-10, Rom. 14) Your liberty should be exercised with maturity and responsibility

3) Benefits

- a) A praying, sending church
- b) A personal relationship with the pastor and church
- c) A renewed relationship with the church while on furlough/deputation
- d) Special consideration of special needs beyond that given to non-member missionaries
- e) Higher monthly support levels than other missionaries supported by SHBC

f) Hospitalization, at the missionary's expense, in the SHBC Health insurance group when on full time deputation and/or furlough as long as the missionary meets the weekly work requirements of the insurance carrier.

b. Non-member missionary

1) Qualifications

- a) Faithful members of an independent Baptist church (including faithfulness in attendance, service, tithing, and faith promise giving), significant and on-going participation in the ministries of an independent Baptist church through which the candidate and his family have demonstrated the following qualities:
- A submissive, teachable spirit
 - Spiritual wisdom (as demonstrated by good judgment)
 - Spiritual maturity (as demonstrated by stability, endurance, consistency)
 - A concern for others (as demonstrated by a commitment to other believers and non-believers)
 - Faithfulness and responsibility (as demonstrated in their obedience to the Lord in the local church)
- b) Selection of a mission board which is in harmony with the doctrine and missions philosophy of SHBC and with which SHBC can have a profitable, working relationship
- c) Like-mindedness with the ministry, philosophy, and doctrine of SHBC
- d) Meeting all the personal qualifications as listed above
- e) Direct involvement in missions as defined in this policy including an active ministry directly to people

2) Requirements

- (a) Regular written communication with SHBC (at least quarterly)
- (b) Openly and honestly completing the SHBC Missionary Accountability form periodically as determined by the pastor. Realize this is a responsibility of the supporting church and the missionary for the mutual interest and edification of both parties. Our responsibility is stewardship of the resources and opportunity God gives.

3) Benefits

- (a) Monthly financial support
- (b) A praying church partner
- (c) Availability of our pastor and/or staff as needed for personal ministry
- (d) Accountability and encouragement

C. Procedures for supporting new missionaries

1. Contact the SHBC office to receive instructions on this procedure.
2. The candidate completes a questionnaire and sends the questionnaire to SHBC with any accompanying information (see website at www.stanleyheights.org).
3. The missions committee or pastor review the candidate's information and the SHBC missions financial status
4. A meeting is arranged for the candidate to present his/her work.
5. The pastor and/or missions committee interviews the candidate.
6. The committee recommends missionaries to the church for support and categorization
7. The church votes to accept the candidate for financial support.
8. Financial support begins the month following the vote of the church.

D. Organizations/projects supported by SHBC

Mission boards and projects supported by SHBC should be in agreement with SHBC on the fundamental questions of doctrine, role of the local church, role of the mission agency, and cooperation with SHBC. The pastor and/or missions committee will investigate both mission boards and projects on this basis.

E. Evaluating support

1. Change of status
 - a. This means a significant change in the life and ministry of the missionary other than that which SHBC understood upon supporting the missionary
 - b. If a change of status occurs, SHBC reserves the right to evaluate the missionary for further support. These may include doctrinal error, disagreement with the principles and philosophy of Stanley Heights Baptist Church, marital status, change of mission board, change of mission field, change of location, change of role, or change of church membership.
2. Insufficient correspondence – We expect at least a quarterly report of missionaries' activities.
3. Extended furlough – If for some reason a furlough extends beyond the typical year's time, support may be suspended or held in escrow until the missionary returns to the field. The missions committee will only do this upon investigation.
4. General
 - a. Deputation – a reasonable time may be allotted for deputation at home. After three years, a re-evaluation for support may be made.
 - b. Ministry – It is the duty of SHBC to determine whether the missionary is faithfully and diligently "making full proof [of his] ministry" (II Tim. 4:5). Support may be reconsidered upon investigation of the missions committee.

c. Moral disqualification – If there is any action or appearance of impropriety that would disqualify a missionary from the office of pastor or deacon, support may be reconsidered upon investigation of the missions committee.

F. Missions committee

1. Duties

- a. Read missionary letters
- b. Evaluate missionary candidates, missionaries supported, and missions policy for the furtherance of the gospel.
- c. Make recommendations to the church body, and/or deacons on missions policy and personnel.
- d. Plan and execute missions functions.
- e. Support the pastor and church in promoting the furthering of the gospel.

2. Qualifications

- a. Member of SHBC in good standing
- b. Personal involvement in tithes and faith promise offerings
- c. Loyalty to the Lord, the church, and the pastor
- d. A cooperative spirit (not necessarily agreement in all things, but an attitude of cooperation)
- e. Moral and spiritual conduct that promotes godliness and the benefit of the church

3. Terms of service

- a. Committee members are appointed by the pastor
- b. The term of a missions committee member is two years
- c. If a committee member wishes to resign, he should confer with the pastor
- d. If at any time the pastor deems an individual uncooperative or against the good of the Lord Jesus Christ and the church, the pastor may remove the individual from the committee
- e. The missions committee is a service ministry serving both the leadership and the body of the church and should not consider itself above the ordained leadership of the church.

APPENDIX 1

Church Membership and the Responsibilities of the Sending Church and Her Missionaries

By
Brent Baughman

The Premise

The ministry of Paul as the most notable missionary of the New Testament is the pattern for missions activity that the church follows. This applies to the relationship between the sending church and her missionaries.

The Texts

This is a record of the specific texts in the book of Acts concerning Paul's missionary activities as related to his sending church. Each text contains a review of the account as recorded in the Scripture and the application of the text. Please read the annotated footnotes as part of the entire work.

Acts 11:25-30

The Account

11:26 Barnabas connected with Paul and brought Paul into the church at Antioch.

11:27-29 An offering was established for the Judaeen believers in a drought

11:30 Paul and Barnabas were faithful in the taking of the offering to Judaea
(Confirmed by Acts 12:25 adding only that they “picked up” John Mark.)

The Application

- Prior to the choosing and commissioning to missions, these men were faithfully serving in the ministry of their local church.

Acts 13:1-4

The Account

Paul and Barnabas are sent out of the church at Antioch Syria¹ on their first missionary journey²

¹ There is an Antioch Pisidia that is referenced in the book of Acts. Every reference in this paper is a reference to Antioch Syria.

² An interesting study is the characteristics of the church in Antioch and how these same qualities create an atmosphere that produces missionaries. These men were not from Antioch but God sent them there to send them to the ends of the earth.

The Application

- God calls missionaries in conjunction with their ministry in the local church.
- The local church commissions missionaries to fulfill the work of the church and do so under the authority of the local church.

Acts 14:26-28

The Account

After the first missionary journey, Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch.

The missionaries returned...

To the church where they were commissioned (26a)

For accountability for the work they were commissioned to do (26b)

To report to the church on the work of their mission field (27)

For renewal of fellowship (28)³

The Application

- The missionary should spend significant furlough time “at home.”
- The missionary should re-establish relationships within the church.
- The missionary should report to the church on the work.
- The church must give the missionary accountability as to the missionary commission the church gave the missionary.

Acts 15:1-35

The Account

The missionaries participated in the life of the church

15:1-34 Participated in settling a doctrinal issue with the Jerusalem church

15:35 Participated in furthering the ministry of the home church

The Application

- The church and the missionary must expect and plan on using part of the furlough time to minister to the church.

Acts 15:36-41

The Account

Paul and Barnabas determined to go on their second missionary journey.

³ Notice the words used to describe the return of Paul and Barnabas. *Abode* is the word *diatribo* that means “to spend or pass time.” Literally the idea of the verse is they were at Antioch “not a small while” which is translated “*long time*.” A final word to notice is that these missionaries were “*with the disciples*.”

15:36-40a There was a disagreement on the role of John Mark, so each man took a new partner and went in his own direction.⁴

15:40 Paul and Silas were again commissioned.⁵

15:41 Their work was to confirm the churches. See 15:36 In the journey, the work was not limited to this but it was the mission the sending church commissioned to be accomplished.

The Application

- There is to be a direct connection between the sending church and the service of the missionary.
- The Lord's sending agency is the local church.
- Each term of service needs to be rejoiced in and emphasized by the sending church.

Acts 18:22-23

The Account

After the second missionary journey, Paul again returned to Antioch then left for his 3rd journey.

18:23 The only information mentioned about this time at "home" was that Paul spent "some time" at Antioch. This one reference indicates that the relationship with the church seemed significant enough to Paul that he took the time to be with the church before going again.

The Application

- There is a clear relationship between the church and the missionary that is vital to both parties.

⁴ No specific information is given regarding Barnabas' missionary endeavor and his relationship to the church at Antioch.

⁵ The men "departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God." The verb in this passage is the word "departed." This speaks to their departure on the journey. However, the participle translated "being recommended" is a verbal adjective indicating that the active agent commending these missionary partners was the "brethren." This is the same expression used in describing the relationship they had with the church as their commissioning agent and as their home base in 14:26. The parsing of the verb is an aorist passive that "indicates simple action which occurs prior to that of the main verb (antecedent time)." With a past time main verb this is to be understood with the helping word "having." (Basic New Testament Greek Forms and Syntax. Bob Jones University Greek Faculty 1986. p. 94-95.) Thus the commissioning of these men was contingent upon the sending church. Lit. "Paul chose Silas, and departed, [having been] recommended by the brethren..."

The Conclusions

1. The local church is the training center, the sending agency, and the accountability provider in God's missions plan.
2. The reproduction of the local church is God's ultimate objective in evangelism.
3. A church must expect a healthy relationship between herself and her missionaries prior to and during missionary service that includes active participation and relationship-building in pre-field ministry and deputation ministry.⁶
4. The relationship between church and missionary is based on the assumption of a spiritually healthy church and a spiritually healthy missionary.⁷
5. The relationship between the church and her missionaries should be a symbiotic relationship that builds both parties for the furthering of the Great Commission.⁸
6. Missionary boards are to be servants to the local church as partners in aiding the church to fulfill her obligation to her missionaries, the Great Commission, and ultimately, the Lord Jesus.

⁶ Each term of service must be evaluated as to the fulfillment of the church's commission in light of the Great Commission upon return to "home." Also, each departure to another term of service must be celebrated as well.

⁷ While there is no specific mention of the pastoral leadership of the church at Antioch, it seems practical that there is a stability and longevity within the pastoral leadership of the sending church.

⁸ Due to the nature of deputation and furlough, each church should consider the needs of missionaries as regards to housing, transportation, and other necessities of life. It is the opinion of this author that the church needs to pray and plan for these matters as part of her service to her missionaries. To some pastors and churches, including the author and the church he pastors, this is a new concept. However, it is a logical and reasonable conclusion based on the Scripture above.