

SSBC Missions Philosophy

Of course, as an extension of the call for each and all Christ followers to “*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age*” (Matthew 28:19-20) we are committed to supporting and engaging in Missions Works around the world.

We want to look at engaging our congregation in all aspects represented in Romans 10:14-15:

*“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never **heard**? And how are they to hear without someone **preaching**?¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are **sent**? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”*

Informing

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matt 28:18-20

We work hard to make sure our congregation is made aware of opportunities to follow the Great Commission. For example, we are intentional about introducing our people to various ministries through ministry emphases on Sundays (at least once a month), Wednesdays, Life Groups and other times in our church events for

adults and children. We are also intentional to not burden our congregation with activities that do not engage in this commission.

We encourage and help support families to create their own mission experiences and inviting others in the church to be involved. No one needs church permission to go on mission. The hope is that we would live lives on mission in our homes, neighborhoods, communities, and the world. The church is our hub to unite in purpose, information and resources for the larger scale mission endeavors, but no believe should look at the church as the limiting factor in their missional activity.

Going

*“And how are they to hear without someone **preaching**?”*

Another way we engage in missions is short-term mission trips. We encourage all Christ-followers to take an opportunity at some point in their walk and go to work within The Church in some other culture and in some other location. We want to strategize to, train for and accomplish these goals in our endeavors:

1. To encourage the missionaries on the ground with our friendship and support. They will continue to be there long after we are gone and if we can bring them a cup of cold water and prolong their ministry, it is a good use of our resources. (Rom 18:12)
2. To challenge the nominal & congregational Christians into a ministry mindset. Mission trips, even short ones, can align “young” Christians to the mindset of service, sacrifice, and suffering that Christ calls us to. It helps guard them against the inoculation effect of the saturated church culture. Seeing lives changed is a powerful way for “young” Christians to experience this.

3. To uplift Christ followers and families who face burnout or crisis. Often, what a struggling marriage or family relationship needs is to serve together for a purpose. American Christians often need to escape the materialist mindset and experience need. Our activities together to work, serve and suffer, can create unity.

4. To raise and offer resources and expertise for missionaries. These are typically specific trips – medical or construction, for example.

5. To encourage unity among the believers, especially among families, at SSBC. This is yet another reason why we try to keep relationships in the same sites year after year.

6. If possible, to directly impact the locals with the gospel.

Moving forward, we are developing a strategy meant to encourage our church member/ministers to do this. Any trip that doesn't accomplish these is not a good fit for our church. Any trips that do a better job than others accomplishing these is to be preferred.

Per these goals, it will be our intention to choose, of all of the excellent options, a suitable number of relationships on the mission fields that allow our people to have overlapping stories, experiences and relationships on the field. This allows us to fulfill as many of these as possible more effectively. Once we are in a place, as measured by interest and engagement in current relationships, to spread out to other locations and with other missionaries, we will start sending vision trips out to evaluate other options.

Part of our goal is to create the most challenge and growth of the members of our church and inspire them to mission-al living every day.

Sending (these ideas are just an attempt to apply our goals)

*“And how are they to preach unless they are **sent**? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”*

One of the ways we do that is through giving financial gifts. We support mission endeavors all around the world – and locally - through a minimum of 15% of the church’s income going to various ministries. There is a team of church members that evaluates various giving opportunities and designates the usage of the majority of those funds.

This allows us to support many long-term missionaries and ministries.

Some of these funds are also allocated for helping to send our church members on SSBC created mission trips.

Generally, long-term missionary work falls into this heading of financial sending, but we also want to develop strong ties and relationships with a few missionaries who see SSBC as their home support. Our hope is that our young people are called overseas, that we can focus energy and other resources toward them.

Vision Trips

Vision Trips are early trips taken by a small, specific team or an individual to evaluate the potential for partnership in a larger way.

Vision trips would typically not take more than a trip leader and 1-2 others, and each person carefully chosen and the guidelines (whatever we decided on) would still apply. The cost to those attending would be determined case-by-case.

Also to meet and engage with ministries we support but have not yet experienced the impact directly.

Debriefing

It will be the habit of those who attend mission trips to gather afterwards and celebrate and debrief the trip. The hope is that in time, this would involve people who have been on mission to that same locations as well, so they can share in the common experiences!

Example debrief conversations - How did we accomplish our goals? Where did we succeed and fail? How would we improve on future trips? (create an evaluation form to turn in?)

Celebrations?

Locations

Generally, set locations.

Who to communicate with next.

Meeting with the mission team - **long term missions**