

## Missions Affirmations

*During our recent missions conference, some members asked if we were taking a new direction in our missions policy. We have met as a Church Council and discussed the questions that have been raised. We are presenting them to you as affirmations regarding our beliefs and approach to missions. We hope that these affirmations will answer any questions. If we have not adequately communicated our philosophy of missions, please contact one of our Church Council members.*

1. We affirm together that it is our desire as a church to retain our focus on supporting missions. We have always had a heart for missions and it is our desire that we will “excel still more” in this area of responsibility.
2. We affirm that no changes will be made in our missions approach without prayerful consideration and communicating those changes with our Missions Team and the congregation. Further, we are committed to the process of discussing and evaluating all such changes openly with the congregation. We recognize that missions is a stewardship responsibility for our entire congregation.
3. We affirm our commitment to supporting a variety of missions and ministries using our pattern of “salt and light.” We recognize church planting to be one of many biblical approaches to missions and affirm the support of other types of missions, including medical missions, translation work, educational work, and various missions of mercy.
4. We affirm the role of missions agencies in assisting local churches in sending and caring for missionaries and their work. We recognize the value of their expertise in training missionaries, placing them on mission fields, and monitoring their work. We affirm their ability to evaluate candidates as long as that evaluation does not undermine the authority of the local church.
5. We affirm the importance of supporting missionaries largely based upon the relationships that God allows us to build with missionary candidates and missionaries. We further affirm the importance of providing more than just financial support for our missionaries. This includes regular prayer support, receiving regular reports from our missionaries in writing as well as in person, and visiting our missionaries on the field when possible. Additionally, we desire to be involved in calling men and women from our fellowship into missions and in giving priority to supporting those whom God calls out from our congregation.
6. We affirm the role of para-church agencies in advancing the gospel and in training people for ministry and mission. We also affirm the role of both men and women, single and married, in serving as missionaries.
7. We affirm the importance of missionaries seeking support through a variety of individuals and churches. We affirm supporting missionaries who have a broad support base rather than receiving support from only one church. We believe that such an approach provides greater stability and continuity for the missionaries and allows smaller churches to support more missionaries and thus have a wider impact than fully supporting just one or two missionaries.
8. We affirm the importance of regularly evaluating our missionaries annually to determine the effectiveness of their ministry, the level of support they need, and the amount of support that we have available.