



MORNINGSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH MISSIONS MANUAL

Purpose, Principles, Priorities & Practices

I. Purpose

A. **Glorify God** – Morningside Baptist Church (MBC) believes the ultimate purpose for all that we do is to glorify God (1Cor. 10:31). God deserves to receive glory from all peoples (1Chron. 16:23-31). Therefore we strive to declare His glory among all nations with full confidence that Christ will build His Church to the extent that representatives of every tribe, language and people group will be part of the redeemed in Heaven worshipping and glorifying Him forever (Matt. 16:18; Rev. 5:8-13).

B. **Make Disciples** – Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, commanded us to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8), to baptize new converts, and to teach them His Word (Matt. 28:18-20). Therefore we are committed to purposeful evangelism and teaching to make reproducing disciples who grow spiritually and bear fruit for God's glory (John 15:8, 16).

C. **Plant Churches** – The New Testament model for preaching the Gospel and making disciples is local churches reproducing new churches by following the Holy Spirit's leading and sending laborers (Acts 8:1, 4; 13:2-4; 14:21-23). Therefore we strive to plant indigenous churches through: 1) sending missionaries to plant churches, training national church leaders, and transferring leadership in a timely manner; and 2) developing careful, strategic partnerships to encourage, assist and train national church leaders to strengthen local churches. Our goal in both modes is to assist the developing and strengthening of national church planting movements to preach the Gospel and make disciples of Christ for the glory of God.

II. Principles

A. **Intentional Investment** – MBC desires to invest more into fewer missionaries versus supporting many missionaries with less or little investment. This is for the benefit of both the church and the missionary. Supporting fewer missionaries enables MBC to better know, communicate and partner with missionaries. Increased support also reduces the number of supporting churches needed and enables missionaries to decrease the time dedicated to deputation and furlough, and instead focus quality time with supporters. Therefore we will strive to limit the number of missionaries we support to enable greater investment and partnership with the missionaries we support.



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B. **Disciple Making Focus** – MBC desires to partner with missionaries who are passionate for the Gospel and demonstrate a commitment to following Jesus' example of investing time and energy to discipling a strategic "few" while ministering to the multitudes. Therefore we value "disciple-making-focused" ministries over "decision-focused" ministries.

C. **Internal Development** – MBC desires a deep, intentional investment of encouraging, mentoring and preparing "home-grown" missionaries. Therefore we will focus our mission efforts on encouraging, coaching, mentoring, sending, and supporting missionaries from MBC.

D. **Reaching the Unreached** – MBC believes the Great Commission implores churches to make disciples among the "uttermost" who have little to no witness. Therefore we desire to partner with missionaries serving in fields that are considered unreached or minimally reached.

E. **Indigenous Church Planting** – MBC holds to the indigenous principles of establishing churches that are self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating. Therefore we desire to partner with missionaries whose philosophy of disciple-making, finances, leadership and church planting aligns well with indigenous principles.

F. **Leadership Development** – MBC recognizes that training national leaders is critical to establishing indigenous churches. Therefore we desire to partner with missionaries focused on developing national church leaders and turning leadership over to them in a timely manner.

G. **Serving Churches** – MBC endeavors to serve like-minded churches by assisting them in sending missionaries. MBC founded Open Door Baptist Missions (ODBM) in 1990 to conduct projects in preaching the Gospel in areas where God was opening doors and exists today for the purpose of serving local churches to assist in the sending of missionaries to impact the nations for the glory of God. Therefore we give priority to ODBM (see below) but do support and partner with missionaries serving under like-minded mission agencies other than ODBM.

H. **Missionary Competence** – MBC believes that disciple making and church planting are critical work of the highest calling. Therefore we hold missionaries and church planters to a high standard and will partner with those who demonstrate the following qualities:

1. Missionaries who are fervent in evangelism and discipleship.



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2. Missionaries who produce the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.
3. Missionaries who are humble and teachable.
4. Missionaries who understand and are exercising their spiritual gifts.
5. Missionaries who have a God-centered theology.
6. Missionaries who affirm MBC's doctrinal statement.
7. Missionaries who are committed to distinctive, holy living, though not isolationist living.
8. Missionaries who are grounded in their ability to preach or teach the Word effectively and expositionally.
9. Missionaries who are baptistic in polity and wholeheartedly agree with the following three statements regarding separation:
 - a. Believers and churches must separate from those who deny essential doctrines of the faith (Jude 3; 2 John 9-11; Rom 16:17);
 - b. Believers and churches must separate from those who compromise the faith by granting Christian recognition and fellowship to those who have denied essential doctrines of the faith (Rom 16:17; Phil 3:17-19; cf. 2 Thess. 3:6-15).
 - c. Believers and churches must strive to reflect God's holiness and to live differently than those who have not experienced the saving grace of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:15-16; Ephesians 4:17-19).
10. Missionaries who are sent by MBC or a like-minded church, and serve under ODBM or a like-minded mission agency.
11. Missionaries who are actively preparing for retirement or to be self-supporting.
12. Missionaries that maintain an adequate level of ministry effectiveness.
13. Church planters must be ordained by MBC or a like-minded church.
- I. **Accountability** – MBC esteems missionaries for their sacrifice and service. However MBC recognizes that all ministers of the Gospel need healthy accountability. Therefore MBC will evaluate missionaries regularly to confirm they are in agreement with the MBC Statement of Faith and are continuing to serve in accordance with our purpose, principles, priorities and practices. MBC expects missionaries to submit regular prayer letters/reports and return evaluation forms. Ongoing partnership is dependent upon receiving reports and evaluation forms.



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- J. **Evaluation** – MBC will evaluate its partnership with a missionary and reconsider financial support if there is a significant change in a missionary's service and ministry including but not limited to changes of field, mission agency, sending church, doctrinal position and philosophy of ministry. MBC may also cancel its financial support and end its partnership with missionaries at any time if the MBC leadership determines that the partnership is no longer fulfilling MBC's desired goals and objectives.
- K. **Strategic Investment** – MBC regularly evaluates particular fields and gospel needs both in the US and worldwide. Therefore MBC may withdraw missionary support and invest new support in other regions determined to be better use of MBC mission funds.
- L. **Missionary Retirement** – MBC does not generally intend or desire its missionary financial support to be used to provide retirement income. Therefore MBC requires missionaries to be actively preparing for their future retirement/latter year needs throughout their missionary service.

III. Priorities

- A. **Prospective Missionary Priorities:**
1. Missionaries who are members and sent from MBC will be given first consideration and priority.
 2. MBC gives next consideration and priority to missionaries and church planters being sent by like-minded churches serving with ODBM.
 3. MBC gives next consideration to missionaries and church planters being sent by like-minded churches to fields of interest.
- B. **Field/Ministry Priorities** – while MBC recognizes there are legitimate needs for the Gospel worldwide, our missions focus is on the following areas:
1. Gospel Restricted Regions – MBC is committed to proclaiming the Gospel and planting churches among unreached people groups and in regions that have limited gospel witness.
 2. US Church Planting – MBC maintains its historical commitment to making disciples and planting churches within America to maintain a foundation for sending laborers worldwide.
 3. National Church Leadership Development – MBC recognizes that the Gospel ministry is not American-centric, and desires to partner with those who



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are carefully partnering (in ways to not create dependency) with indigenous churches and developing national church leadership.

4. **Business as Mission (BAM)/Tentmaking/Bi-vocational Ministries** – MBC recognizes that the constantly changing political climate often requires missionaries to enter restricted regions through BAM, tentmaking or bi-vocational roles. MBC requires these missionaries to demonstrate a commitment to disciple making and assisting church planting efforts.

5. **Church Planting Assistants** - While MBC will focus missionary support for those directly involved in church planting, MBC will consider support for those engaged in humanitarian/service ministries (medical, counselling, teaching, support roles, etc.). MBC requires these missionaries to demonstrate a commitment to disciple making and assisting church planting efforts.

IV. Practices

A. **Open Door Baptist Missions (ODBM)** – While MBC does consider partnering with and supporting missionaries with like-minded mission agencies other than ODBM, it is understood that ODBM is central to MBC's missions program. ODBM is a ministry of MBC. Therefore MBC devotes resources to ODBM. ODBM's Board of Directors consist solely of MBC members who are recommended by the Senior Pastor and Missions Pastor/ODBM Director, and are approved by the MBC Deacons. It is also understood that MBC may or may not financially support missionaries serving under ODBM.

B. **Missionary Mentoring** – As developing "home-grown" missionaries is the focus and priority of MBC's missions philosophy, MBC will strive to encourage and mentor those who express serious interest in missions. This mentoring extends to middle school, high school, and college students as well as adults to encourage and assist each individual in their spiritual growth and development.

C. **Missionary Financial Support** – The MBC Missions Pastor receives requests and information from missionaries desiring financial support from Morningside. The Missions Pastor evaluates requests and may choose to send a missionary questionnaire to select missionaries. Upon receiving completed questionnaires from select missionaries, the Missions Pastor makes recommendations to the Senior Pastor and missions committee. Some missionaries may be invited to present their ministry to the



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congregation. The missions committee evaluates the missionary and makes recommendations to the pastoral staff and deacons, who will then evaluate and recommend missionaries to the congregation for financial support. The MBC congregation votes to begin financially supporting new missionaries. All financial support for missionaries is to be considered temporary in that missionary support will be regularly evaluated. The missions committee will evaluate missionaries, give reports and make recommendations to the pastoral staff and deacons. MBC financial support for missionaries may end or be altered so that MBC can better fulfill its purpose and accomplish its goals and objectives.

D. **U.S. Church Planting Missionaries** – MBC desires to reproduce and plant churches in North America through establishing and/or partnering with church planting leadership teams. MBC also regularly encourages its members to consider joining church planting teams to serve in lay ministry capacities. MBC desires to partner with church planting teams that are doctrinally, philosophically, and strategically like-minded with MBC. In coordination with its indigenous philosophy, MBC desires to financially partner with North American church planting teams through a significant initial financial investment and then progressively decrease financial support to encourage the church plant to be self-supporting.

E. **Short-term Missions** - MBC values short-term missions as a means to assist missionaries and to encourage members to learn about missions, to grow spiritually, and to serve in ministry. MBC supports short-term missions by organizing mission trips and/or assisting Morningsiders to serve through other short-term mission opportunities. The Missions Pastor coordinates short-term missions efforts and works with the missions committee to report and make recommendations to the pastoral staff and deacons.