

CHURCH@THEPEAK LINK MISSIONARY POLICY

1. PREAMBLE

The purpose of this Link Missionary Policy is to provide clarity around our strategy for mission and to provide a framework for the selection and support of link missionaries of Church@thepeak.

While this policy is intended to give direction and clarity to church leadership, it is in effect a statement of principles, not a rigid set of rules. There may be times where exceptions will need to be made. The approval of two-thirds of Parish Council is needed to approve exceptions.

2. OVERVIEW OF MISSION

The Bible declares that God made Man, creating him in His image and for His fellowship. Man rebelled against God and broke that relationship yet God sought him out and took the initiative of grace to redeem him and to restore the broken relationship. From the earliest pages of the Bible, God demonstrates his desire to be in relationship with his creation. The mission of God is what fills the Bible from The Fall to Revelation.

Mission is God's initiative throughout history; by grace He involves us as co-workers to make Christ known. It is, *"God's desire to be known by all people throughout the world, fulfilled through the medium of his people."*¹

A. Our Responsibilities in Mission

(i) Responsibility of everyone

The chief purpose of the church on earth is to give glory to God, witnessing to the gospel, directing people to the Father and his Son, Jesus. In Acts 1:8, as Jesus ascended to heaven, his last instruction to the disciples was that they were to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. As the disciples made disciples of others, this became an instruction for them too. It is a responsibility for everyone to carry on the mission Jesus gives his disciples. All members of Church@thepeak have a responsibility to pray and serve in some way with the shared goal of the spread of the gospel to all nations and people.

(ii) Sent people and sending people in ministry partnership

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul, who was ministering the gospel whilst imprisoned in Rome, writes of his great joy and thanksgiving in prayer because

¹ Bruce Dipple, Director of the School of Cross Cultural Mission at SMBC

of the *'partnership in the gospel'* between him and the Philippians (1:3-6). In 1:27, Paul also talks of *'striving together as one for the faith of the gospel.'*

In Philippians 2, Paul mentions *'Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.'*

In this example, the missionary and partnering church are praying for each other to stand firm, and for the advancement of the gospel. Epaphroditus was sent by the church in Philippi to bring gifts and encouragement, and to be a messenger and a co-worker with Paul.

In the same way, Church@thepeak sees itself as a 'partner in the gospel' with our link missionaries who have been sent from our wider church family here in Australia. Their ministry is our ministry to be engaged with through prayer, communication, material and pastoral support.

3. STRATEGY: LONG TERM MISSION

Jesus instruction to witness in Acts 1:8 covered the whole world: *'in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'* The focus is global. We have particular responsibility for our own locality, but are to actively support the spread of the gospel to the ends of the earth.

In light of Acts 1:8 and our context of Sydney, we interpret these verses to mean:-

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|-----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Jerusalem | Local evangelism and church growth |
| Judea and Samaria | Sydney, NSW and Australia |
| The ends of the earth | Overseas mission |

In other words, we want to ensure our missions focus is local, national and global.

A. Definition

Long term mission is any missions activity of three years or more that seeks to fulfil the Great Commission by reaching communities and people groups with the gospel that don't know Jesus.

B. Assessment Criteria

When it comes to assessing the priority and suitability of new link missionaries or mission initiatives, they will need to meet the following criteria:

(i) General

- a. All link missionaries must contribute to the Great Commission of *'making disciples of all nations'* (Matt 28:19-20). This would include but not be limited to – church planting, theological training, evangelism, leader training, church ministry, and chaplaincy.

- b. While we acknowledge the need for mercy and compassion ministries (e.g. Red Cross, World Vision etc), Church@thepeak will not support such missions as these are already supported by secular Australians. Our priority is to give to gospel missions which secular Australians do not support.

(ii) Link Missionaries

- a. Our preference is that link missionaries partner with a recognised mission agency (such as CMS) to ensure missionaries receive the appropriate assessment (character, convictions and competency), missions training and field support.
- b. Where link missionaries do not partner with a recognised mission agency, the Missions Co-ordinator must conduct the following review and assessment and ensure that:
 - i. the applicant has a proven track record in ministry.
 - ii. the applicant demonstrates the qualities of an elder found in 1 Timothy 3:1-10.
 - iii. the applicant's home church is in agreement with their decision.
 - iv. the applicant has clear and realistic funding model
- c. Link missionaries must be in agreement with our statement of faith
- d. All link missionaries must have a strong relational connection to Church@thepeak – either an existing connection or willingness to develop and maintain that connection. (see Section 6. Responsibilities below)
- e. Priority will be given to those link missionaries whose ministry will focus on those communities and people groups that have least access to the gospel.
- f. Priority will be given to those link missionaries that are training and equipping local Christians and leaders, rather than 'coal-face' evangelism.
- g. Priority will be given to members of Church@thepeak.

C. Number of Link Missionaries

To ensure appropriate support and relational connections are maintained with our link missionaries, Church@thepeak will limit its support for Link Missionaries to no more than five.

D. Current Mission Support

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|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| Jerusalem | John Delezio | SRE, Georges River Campus, Peakhurst |
| Judea & Samaria | John & Jan Bales | Ministry to Muslims in Greenacre |
| | Matt & Lisa Pearson | Ministry to Indigenous Australians (NT) |
| Ends of the Earth | Mike & Katie Taylor | Theological education, Tanzania |
| | Mike & Jo Charles | Theological education, Chile |

4. STRATEGY: SHORT TERM MISSION

A. Definition

Any missions activity of one day to one year duration. It must be needs driven – the primary benefits going to those whom we are serving, not ourselves.

B. Assessment Criteria

- a. The short-term mission must be in partnership with a national church, a long-term missionary, mission agency or para-church ministry.
- b. There must be a clear long-term strategy in place.
- c. There must be a qualified leader for the ministry.
- d. There must be appropriate pre-field training.
- e. There must be appropriate debriefing and follow-up plans for those who ministered.

C. Number of Supported Mission Initiatives

No more than 1 per year.

D. Current Mission Initiatives

India Gospel League Teaching pastors PTC in India and Sri Lanka

5. APPLICATION & DECISION MAKING PROCESS

(i) Applicants must:

- a. Complete a written application.
- b. Meet with the Rector and Missions Co-ordinator.

(ii) Rector and the Missions Co-ordinator will:

- a. Meet with the prospective link missionary to assess the criteria outlined in sections 3 and 4 above.
- b. Make a recommendation to Parish Council

(iii) Parish Council will:

- a. Review the recommendation of the Rector and Missions Co-ordinator
- b. Approve all new link missionaries and short-term mission initiatives (by 2/3 majority)
- c. Write to the link missionary, and where relevant their mission agency, to advise of their acceptance / non acceptance.
- d. Where a link missionary is accepted by the Parish Council, include a Letter of Acceptance outlining the following:
 - i. Mission policy of Church@thepeak, including responsibilities of the church, the link missionary and the Missions Co-ordinator
 - ii. Church statement of faith

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Responsibilities of Church@thepeak

- a. Invite each link missionary to present at church once (or twice) each year about their ministry (either via video, Skype or in person when on home assignment).
- b. Include, where appropriate, the link missionary details on the church website.
- c. Actively encourage church members to financially support our link missionaries (normally after link missionary presentation).
- d. Allocate at least one growth group to each link missionary who will actively support and pray for them.
- e. Communicate with each missionary every two months to support and encourage them.
- f. Pray twice per term in church for each link missionary.
- g. Assist in the set up of the missionary's house when returning for home assignment.
- h. Invite the link missionary to be part of our church ministries while on home assignment (church, growth group, youth group etc).

B. Responsibilities of Link Missionary

(i) General

- a. Communicate with Church@thepeak members at least every two months.
- b. Give the Parish Council advance notice of any significant changes in ministry and /or location.

(ii) For overseas link missionaries:

- a. Send videos or participate in a Skype calls each year once (or twice); or
- b. Allocate time to visit Church@thepeak during home assignment to:
 - i. provide an update on their mission ministry; and
 - ii. build and maintain relationship with church and its members.

(iii) For local link missionaries

- a. Visit Church@thepeak once (or twice) per year to:
 - i. provide an update on their mission ministry; and
 - ii. build and maintain relationship with church and its members.

C. Responsibilities of the Link Missionary Co-ordinator

The role of the Missions Co-ordinator is to assist the Rector and Parish Council live out this policy. In particular it is expected the Missions Co-ordinator will:

- a. Work with the Rector to assess new potential link missionaries and mission initiatives and make recommendations to Parish Council
- b. Work with the Rector to promote and implement May Mission Month

- c. Work with the Rector and link missionaries to allocate time in the church calendar for each link missionary to present at Church@thepeak once (or twice) per year.
- d. Ensure each link missionary is prayed for twice each term as part of the corporate prayers at church.
- e. Ensure each growth group is supporting at least one link missionary; and that each link missionary is supported by at least one growth group.
- f. Help train and equip Church@thepeak and growth groups on how best to support and encourage our link missionaries.
- g. Serve as the liaison between the church, link missionaries and the relevant mission agencies.
- h. Co-ordinate the visit of link missionaries when on home assignment.
- i. Help co-ordinate the set up of the link missionaries house when returning for home assignment.
- j. Assist the Rector to encourage financial support for our link missionaries.
- k. Co-ordinate congregation survey of mission giving as outlined in Section 7.
- l. Ensure Parish Council reviews this policy in time frames specified.

7. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The funding model for mission support will be two-fold:

- a. Mission Month – a dedicated month of giving to financially support our link missionaries with opportunities to promote and celebrate the ministry of each.
- b. Personal Giving – regularly encourage personal direct giving to our link missionaries or their mission agency.

Funds raised during Mission Month will be allocated to link missionaries and / or their agencies by agreement of Parish Council.

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

A. Ongoing Evaluation

All link missionaries will be evaluated by Parish Council at least once every two years, or when they are on home assignment (whichever is the lesser).

A re-evaluation will also be triggered if:

- a. there is a significant change in the nature of the ministry; or
- b. there is a change in location; or
- c. the missionary joins a different mission agency

Church@thepeak requests advance notice of any significant changes in ministry.

B. Support Termination

Termination of our support for link missionaries is the exception with Church@thepeak. There are no time limits on our support for link missionaries, as our preference is to provide ongoing support for the duration of their mission.

(i) Retirement

Where a link missionary 'retires' from their mission service for reasons other than outlined below, Church@thepeak will invite them to do a farewell presentation to church and give thanks for the shared ministry partnership.

In addition, Parish Council will write a final letter of thanks to the link missionary, and where relevant, their mission agency, to formally recognise the completion of the partnership.

(ii) Misconduct

There may be circumstances where Parish Council deems it appropriate to cease the support of a link missionary, apart from 'retiring' from the mission field. These would include:

- a. Having their mission placement terminated by their mission agency
- b. Conduct that is unbecoming of a minister of God's word, such as:
 - i. Sexual misconduct.
 - ii. Financial misconduct.
 - iii. Ungodly behaviour.
 - iv. Teaching contrary to our statement of faith.
 - v. Failing to fulfil the responsibilities outline in Section 6.

Where Parish Council decides to terminate its support of a link missionary, it will do so in writing to both the missionary, and where appropriate, their mission agency, outlining the reasons for terminating the partnership.

9. POLICY REVIEW

The Mission Policy will be reviewed and revised by Parish Council as often as needed, with a thorough review every two years.

Parish Council must approve all reviews, amendments and changes to this policy.

Agreed at Steering Group Meeting – 24th May 2018.