

St John's Newland - Mission Policy

Scope

We affirm our general responsibility to be a missional church, which means simply that all members should see themselves as missionaries sent into a non-Christian culture, bringing the mission of God into every aspect of life. This policy however relates to our responsibility to support and promote gospel activity outside the parish.

(Acts 1:8)

Priorities

We accept the privilege of the Great Commission given to the church to go into all the world and preach the gospel. We recognise that there are large groups in our own society who are marginalised and unevangelised, and that many of the world's people groups are still virtually unreached with the gospel. Although recognising that much valuable Christian work is undertaken elsewhere, we choose where possible to focus our limited resources of time, people and money on these areas of greatest need.

(Mat 28: 18 – 20)

Primary Responsibilities

1. To identify, encourage and send members for Christian service at home or abroad. These are our 'Mission Partners'

(Acts 13:2)

2. To pray consistently for those sent, for the people they are ministering to, and for those as yet unevangelised.

(Col 4: 2 - 3)

3. The ongoing care for members sent out including their financial support.

(Acts 14: 26 – 28)

4. To ensure that education in world mission is an integral part of the church teaching programme at all levels.

(John 4: 35)

Other responsibilities:

1. To identify and encourage support for appropriate 'Partner Organisations'. These will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.

2. The church has been in relationship with a wide variety of Christian workers over the years, even though St John's is not their primary sending church. Where appropriate we recognise these folk as 'Mission Associates' which implies that we encourage prayer and circulation of news – to be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.

VJW 9.2010

Appendix A: Sending and Mission partnership

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Appendix A – Sending and Mission partnership

It is the responsibility of the church;

3. to encourage members to consider missionary service,
4. to identify those members whom God is leading, then to support, guide and commission them. This will normally be in partnership with an appropriate mission agency

We recognise that often members make short term exploratory visits abroad to help clarify their vision. We encourage all participants to share their plans with the church leadership and Mission Committee so as to maximise the benefit of such trips.

Group leaders will often be the first to recognise the potential for missionary service in members – they should share their perspectives with an appropriate staff member.

If an individual member senses that God may be calling them to missionary service, they should, in the first instance, discuss with the Vicar or chair of Mission Committee who will advise and refer them appropriately.

Most Mission Agencies will require a period of training and orientation before acceptance, this will be undertaken in agreement with the church and agency. When both parties are satisfied the member will be commissioned and sent as a 'Mission Partner'

This also marks the commencement of an ongoing partnership between church and Agency. We recognise that the Agency is the 'expert' on conditions and strategy on the chosen field of service, however we expect consultation at times of transition (eg furlough)

Mission Partners

Individuals will only be recommended to PCC for adoption as 'Mission Partners' if:

5. They have the support of the Senior Staff Team and Mission Committee who will take into account the Mission priorities of the church. This is not intended to preclude those who have a clear calling to full time Christian work of a different character – these may be recommended to become 'Mission Associates'
6. They have spent a significant period of time in active membership of one of our congregations. This will normally be greater than two years.
7. They subscribe to the IFES statement of faith.

Partners are expected to:

Communicate with the church and home-group on a regular basis.

Schedule as much time as possible with the church during home assignment, in order to maintain relationship.

The Church is expected to:

1. Appoint a 'Link' person responsible for maintaining contact with the Partner and disseminating information to the congregations.
2. Maintain a prayerful interest in both the worker and those they are sent to serve
3. Work with the Mission Agency to provide appropriate direction and support.

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Appendix B – Prayer

Prayer is the most important aspect of Mission support – and yet sadly often neglected. Little will be achieved without a solid prayer base and it is irresponsible to send members into difficult situations without that. Our aim is that:

5. the whole church be committed to mission prayer, and that everyone be linked (informally) with one of our Mission Partners.
6. our prayer should be consistent, informed, and fervent – many workers are in situations of great spiritual darkness.
7. We should pray for fruit amongst the peoples being served.

To those ends we will encourage prayer and praise by:

8. Linking each home-group with a Partner or Partner Agency
9. Informing the church of needs and progress made.
10. Regularly including prayer for Partners during Sunday Intercessions and at Wednesday Central Meetings
11. Encouraging young peoples' groups to link with specific Partners or Peoples
12. Publicising other relevant events and opportunities

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Appendix C - Membercare and Finance

Mission Partners will usually have the additional stress of working in a cross-cultural situation with nationals. Sometimes exacerbated by working alongside other nationalities in multi-cultural teams. It is essential that adequate orientation and ongoing support be provided to avoid unnecessary problems. We recognise that St John's is not equipped to support independent missionaries and expect our partners to join an appropriate Mission Agency. This agency will normally provide the necessary experience and expertise to advise and support our Partner through their Missionary career. As a church we expect to work with the agency and liaise appropriately – especially at times of transition

We would expect as a minimum that the following issues be addressed:

- language training
- cross cultural adaptation
- children's education
- medical surveillance
- psychological assessment
- crisis management and evacuation
- preparation for furlough
- pastoral support
- preparation for retirement
- regular appraisal and debriefing

Finance

We recognise our responsibility to fund Mission activity. A minimum of 10% of the church's voluntary income will go to the support of extra-parish Mission activity – primarily our Mission Partners. In addition to this 10%, we will aim to raise funding for specific individuals and projects through special offerings and gift days. The proposed level of support will depend on the individuals personal situation. The Mission committee will make recommendations to the PCC. Support may also be allocated, where appropriate, to support agreed training requirements.

Mission Agencies operate in very different ways, some employ staff as funds permit, others are more like an association of volunteers – others have significant resources. Each situation therefore must be judged on its own merit. We will encourage potential partners to make appropriate pension arrangements.

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Appendix D - Mission Committee Remit

The Mission committee is a sub committee of the St John's Newland PCC, in accordance with section 2 of the church standing orders.

Primary Responsibilities

1. To encourage and support involvement in Worldwide Christian Mission by:
 1. ensuring that a world vision is at the heart of the church teaching programme
 2. promoting mission interest at all levels in the church.
 3. encouraging intercessory prayer for mission by all members of the congregation.
2. To maintain regular contact with church mission partners and their agencies, and to ensure the provision of appropriate levels of 'member-care' for Partners.
3. To recommend financial allocation of the Mission budget to PCC
4. To advise the staff team and PCC on all matters relating to Mission.
5. To recommend such amendments to this policy from time to time as may be appropriate.

Mission Committee membership is approved by the PCC each year. Members are encouraged to develop their own personal involvement with Mission matters and model this to the wider church.