

City Evangelical Church World Mission Policy

A. Definitions:

World Mission Partner

A world mission partner (WMP) is someone recognised by City Church as having the gifting and character for missionary service. A WMP is sent or (in the case where a WMP's main sending church is not City Church) supported by the church to spread the Gospel, outside the usual outreach responsibilities of the church and outside of the City of Birmingham. A WMP is sent or supported for a period of at least one year.

Mission Agency

A mission agency (MA) is a Christian agency whose primary goal is to work in partnership with a WMP's sending church to facilitate the ministry of the missionary in the place of God's choosing by providing support, direction and accountability.

The church will be the sending church for a WMP in partnership with an MA only if it shares the church's statement of faith and puts the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ at the centre of their activity.

If a candidate requests support as a WMP but is not endorsed by an MA approved by the church, then the candidate must demonstrate to the World Mission Committee of City Church and to the pastors of City Church that there are good reasons for not forming a partnership with such an MA, that the work is well-planned and that there is adequate alternative provision for local pastoral support.

B. Selection of World Mission Partners

B.1 City Church is the Main Sending Church

The committee, along with the pastors, will encourage church members to consider mission.

Church members considering mission should, in the first instance, liaise with a member of the committee or with one of the pastors.

The committee will assist candidates to consider their motivation for service, their gifting, and their sense of leading and conviction, by providing information (in particular about training) and opportunities to interact with existing WMPs and with MAs.

It is expected that a church member considering such service will:

- Attend world mission prayer meetings.
- Meet on an ongoing basis with a member of the World Mission Committee to share information and seek advice.
- Agree to attend part of a committee meeting to discuss plans.

The committee will report back to the pastors on a regular basis; and during this time the pastors may wish to meet with the candidate to offer advice. If the committee considers that the person is suitable for service as a WMP it will, in consultation with the candidate, formulate a proposal to the pastors, who will then meet with the candidate and a member of the committee for a more formal discussion.

The criteria by which the committee and the pastors will assess a candidate's suitability for service as an WMP are based on character, gifting and commitment to the church, and will include:

1. **Membership** of the church of six months' standing.
2. **Regular attendance** at the church's services and its other activities.
3. **Servant heartedness**, shown in active service in the church, according to the candidate's gifting.
4. **Giving**: Financial contribution to the church, in keeping with the candidate's means.
5. **Gifting** appropriate to the proposed mission task, demonstrated at home or overseas and recognised by the church.
6. **Agreement** with the obligations of being a WMP, as set out within this document.
7. **Endorsement**: preferably the candidate will have received the backing and endorsement of an MA approved by the church.

B.2 City Church is not the Main Sending Church

If a candidate's main sending church is not City Church, then the candidate must agree with City Church's Statement of Faith. Their suitability will be assessed by the committee and the pastors by the criteria (1-7) in B.1, where in (1-6), "the church" is interpreted as meaning the candidate's main sending church.

Once the committee and the pastors are in full agreement about the suitability and preparedness of any candidate, this will be communicated to the church membership at a church business meeting, where there will be opportunity to raise questions and comment. The church members will then vote whether or not to accept the candidate as a WMP.

C. Training

Prior to becoming a WMP, the church encourages each candidate to seek practical experience in some form of relevant ministry.

The church may offer financial assistance towards the cost of any training.

The church will only recommend theological and missiological training programmes at institutions which agree with the church's statement of faith.

A candidate will not be considered as a WMP during initial theological or missiological training.

D. Relationships with World Mission Partners and Mission Agencies

The MA has the primary responsibility for the practical and pastoral supervision of the WMP, at home, on assignment and on final return. The WMP is primarily accountable to the MA.

The committee will monitor the effectiveness of this relationship, and will liaise with those personnel in the agency who have responsibility for the WMP, no less frequently than once per annum.

E. The church's responsibilities in caring for serving World Mission Partners

A WMP will be supported for an initial period of five years or (if the term of service is shorter) for the duration of the initial term of service. Support will be reviewed after this period and thereafter at intervals of five years (or on completion of each term of service, if shorter) to reflect the church's circumstances and priorities.

The committee will have a responsibility towards each WMP to:

- Approve, train and equip a member of the church to act as a Mission Link for the WMP.
- Maintain direct communication with the WMP.
- Enquire, via the link person, as to the WMP's financial situation, at least annually.
- Ensure that updates about the church are sent regularly to the WMP.
- Debrief the WMP each time they visit Birmingham.
- Arrange appropriate pastoral and practical support when the WMP is on home assignment.
- Encourage prayer for the WMP, both individually and corporately.
- Encourage members of the church to visit the WMP on assignment.
- Maintain a high level of awareness in the church of the WMP and their situation.

Financial Support

The church will give priority to WMPs for whom City Church is the main sending church.

Initially, and at any time when their funding is reviewed, WMPs will be required to provide a budget indicating

- Anticipated financial needs, taking account of the policy of the MA, if any. This should take into account appropriate pension provision and education of children.
- Other sources of support.

The church hopes that WMPs will seek a funding support base, wider than City Church alone, comprising both individuals (from outside the church) and institutions. The WMP should be committed to either fund-raising or (in the case where a WMP's MA is a "faith mission") regular active prayer for support.

Additional support may be provided for emergencies and other needs, at the discretion of the pastors.

The pastors, in conjunction with the committee, will assess support levels for each WMP prior to the commencement of service, and will reassess them as necessary.

The pastors may, at any time, reassess support of a WMP if:

- The WMP leaves the work for which support was agreed
- The WMP has a change of assignment
- An MA with which the WMP is serving disciplines the worker and disassociates itself from them
- The WMP fails to fulfil the obligations of a WMP as set out in this document
- If the WMP is a Missionary Member of the church and fails to meet the obligations of missionary membership.

F. The WMP's Responsibility to the Church

Each WMP will

- Send news regularly to the Mission Link
- Send formal prayer letters, at least quarterly, to the Mission Link, the chair of the committee, and any other members of the church who have requested that they receive such letters.
- Maintain an interest in the life of the church and pray for its ministry.
- Visit the church, at least once every five years.
- Inform the committee of any anticipated or actual changes to the basis of their service, and any anticipated or actual change in their financial support needs.
- Inform the pastors if there is an interruption in the normal term of service preventing them continuing their work or which necessitates their return.

G. Support for Short-term Mission

The church will encourage members and regular attendees to consider short-term mission (of duration less than one year) outside of the City of Birmingham in order to

- Support long-term missionaries (in particular WMPs)
- Engage in, or support, evangelistic work
- Foster or confirm a call to long-term missionary service
- Foster or confirm a call to support of missionary service

The committee will provide awareness of short-term opportunities, and consider support on the basis of a written submission about the project, and interview with the committee or pastors as appropriate. Duration, costs and the focus of the project will be taken into account.

Support given may include:

- Financial assistance
- Corporate prayer by the church.
- Publicity for the project.