

Policy – Guiding Support of Short-term Mission / Ministry Trips

Background

NPC is pleased to support members who wish to embark on short-term trips in order to serve the Lord. This policy is designed to clarify the circumstances in which such support may be offered. It is primarily intended to establish the terms for supporting members who will be performing mission-related work under the umbrella of an approved NPC mission cause or other established sending agency. Under this policy, NPC may distribute funds to an approved sending agency / mission cause or will reimburse the individual member for properly documented expenses.

Eligibility

This policy is designed to set out the criteria by which a member or regular attender of NPC, currently active in regular worship attendance, may apply for funding in support of a short-term mission / ministry trip. The policy extends to family members of an age at which they can reasonably be expected to raise their own support in addition to any provided by NPC. For the purposes of this policy, it is expected that this age shall be from the year of entry to public middle school.

It is a condition of the church's support that the member(s) supported share the results of their experience via presentation to the Missions Committee and the wider congregation upon their return from the trip.

Definition

A short-term mission trip meets the following criteria:

- It is a full-time immersion in the culture addressed by the sponsoring missions cause (missions = leaving your culture)
- It will have a duration of at least one week but less than 3 months
- It requires the applicant to travel outside their township of residence, and that of the church
- It is carried out under the auspices of an existing NPC supported missions cause or of any other appropriate missions agency
- It is convergent with the NPC criteria for support of a missions cause (vision, impact, relationship, stewardship)

Support provided by NPC for short-term mission trips will not exceed \$1,000 per person or \$2,500 per family per year except in exceptional circumstances as determined by the Board of Deacons. The Board of Deacons shall determine during the annual benevolence budget process the amount designated in support of short-term missions for the coming year, subject to funds being available for this purpose.

Procedure

1. The member identifies the opportunity for a short-term mission / ministry trip and seeks God's will and call for the trip.
2. If appropriate, the member checks via appropriate communication whether any other member of the congregation feels called and qualified to go on this short-term trip. (The opportunity for some trips may occur only by reference to a member's particular professional or other skills).
3. The member determines the financial requirements to make the trip and assesses their ability to raise this amount.
4. If necessary, the member may then apply to the Missions Committee of the Board of Deacons for short term trip support, using a simple application form which details information about the trip, provides evidence of financial need and summarizes God's calling on the member for the trip. An application in itself does not guarantee any support from the church.
5. Except in exceptional circumstances, the member provides the completed application to the Chairman of the Missions Committee at least three months before the trip is due to begin.
6. The Missions Committee will prayerfully consider the application. If required, approved applications will be recommended to the Board of Deacons for ratification. The Chairman of the Missions Committee will inform the applicant of the result of their application as soon as such decision is made.
7. Applications for short-term trip funding will be considered in the order in which they are received, not based upon the timing and dates of the intended trip.
8. Any and all public appeals for funding and/or fundraising efforts under NPC must be approved by Session. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure that application to Session is made appropriately in advance of the fund raising activities. If other private individuals, already aware of the intended mission / ministry activity, have already pledged or contributed support of said member, such contributions shall be accepted and considered as tax deductible for IRS purposes.
9. If support is provided, when the member has completed the trip, he/she comes before the next appropriate Missions Committee meeting and provides testimony about the results of the trip and God's impact through it on their lives and those served. If appropriate, the member may also give such testimony during a Worship hour or at another congregational gathering.
10. In any given year, the Missions Committee shall consider the requests for support for short-term mission/ministry trips and, where possible, ensures that funds are available to support a variety of trips in terms of geography and purpose.

Please answer the following questions individually (each response should be no more than a single double spaced page in length)

1. What are the goals/purpose of the trip
2. Describe your spiritual journey up to this point
3. Describe your sense of God's calling, how you sense he has spiritually gifted you for it and your process of preparation for this project
4. Describe what you hope to learn and contribute (e.g. natural gifts and skills) to this project
5. Describe any prior mission or related ministry experience that you may have
6. Describe your process of dealing with one of the significant struggles in your life
7. Describe your plans to raise financial support for this project (Note: all fund raising must be approved by Session if done within NPC congregation)