

Ashley River Baptist Church Philosophy and Policy Regarding Missions



The missions philosophy of Ashley River Baptist Church affirms that the purpose of all Christian activity is to glorify God (Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 10:31). God is glorified when we acknowledge the greatness of His person and His works, and when we are faithfully responsive to His revealed will.

Acknowledging that the New Testament purposes of the church include worship, evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and fellowship, both home and abroad, we, the Missions Ministry Team of Ashley River Baptist Church will constantly endeavor to carry out an effective strategy to follow Christ's directive until He returns.

The Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20; 22:8; Rom 10:13) is obeyed when people are introduced to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord (evangelism), and when they are guided to spiritual maturity in obeying Christ (discipleship), and when they worship God from a pure heart (worship). Thus, we believe it is the responsibility of each Christian to do his/her part first of all in the home region. Then, collectively, through the local church, believers send missionaries throughout the world according to Christ's on-going directive. Christ said, *"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it"* (Matt. 16:18).

It is recognized that the Book of Acts presents the principle that world missions (*home and abroad*) is to be accomplished by local churches - local churches that select, send, and support missionaries to evangelize and disciple peoples of other cultures with a view to starting other local churches and to bring them to maturity. In addition, participation with a network of other common believing Christians/Churches will be encouraged when it can help maximize the potential of fulfilling the Great Commission.

While it is apparent from the Bible that every believer is a witness for Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8), we realize that certain believers with special gifts and abilities will be selected by the Holy Spirit through the local church and sent out by the church as missionaries.

Mutual accountability and responsibility exists between the local church and the missionaries as outlined in the following policy. The following guidelines are not rigid in all cases, but shall serve to guide the Missions Ministry Team in its decisions. Occasionally, the Team may find it advisable to make an exception in a particular situation; however, exceptions should be acknowledged as exceptions, and the Team should be prepared to explain the reasons for them.

Strategically, ARBC should continually pray, prepare, educate, support and be actively involved in the Great Commission. Successful ministry is most effectively evaluated by the obedience to this directive. Missions Education, Missions giving, promotion for participation, organization and planning domestic and international mission opportunities (life, long term and short term) should be at the core of the Mission Ministry Team's actions.

The Strategy that is developed by this Missions Ministry Team should be continually updated to best accomplish this Philosophy. (see *Acts 1:8 Bridge builder Strategy*)

ARBC Missions Guidelines:

1. The *Missions Ministry Team* will consist of ongoing members of ARBC appointed by the Missions Ministry Pastor and approved by the Pastor. Included as coordinators on this team will be appointed *Lay Missions Ministry Coordinators* (Mission Ministry Coordinator descriptions available). Furthermore, this team will establish a *Missions Support Team* that includes any member with a passion to participate, promote plan or pray for mission projects and ministries.
2. The Missions Ministry Team and the Missions Pastor will meet together on a regular basis to give needed direction of ARBC Missions strategy and to make decisions in a timely manner. The team should have five main responsibilities: 1. *Procurement* (Decide ARBC Mission endeavors; local, national and international). 2. *Planning* (establish calendar, budget and balance). 3. *Promotion* (advertise, enlistment, periodic ARBC Mission publication). 4. *Preparation* (give support of Mission coordinators for necessary preparations and verify that they are adequate). 5. *Processing* (coordinate reports, verify de-briefing of teams, procure written reports and evaluation from all teams and file)
3. All Missionaries, or Agencies, supported by Ashley River Baptist Church are expected to agree with the ARBC Church Constitution's Statement of Basic beliefs.
4. Prayer for Missions. Regular prayer for Great Commission opportunities should be planned and promoted by the Missions Ministry Team.
5. Missions Education for all ages should be supported by the Missions Ministry Team as much as possible. Provide opportunities for Missions emphasis, promotion, reports, training and invitations to consider missionary involvement as a profession or short term project individually, as a family or as part of a group.
6. Local Mission opportunities should be considered in balance with other domestic and international opportunities.
7. ARBC sponsored, short term project approval, should be given by the ARBC Missions Ministry Team, Missions Pastor and the Senior Pastor. Short Term project participants should have "*Application for Short Term Missions*" on file, should participate in training and pre-project(s) where applicable. When applicable, each mission project team member will develop/inform/update an individual "*Life Support Team*." (A "*Life Support Team*" is a group of people committed to pray and support a project member. Detailed document available.)
8. Short term project participation should be promoted. To participate in a Short term project that is sponsored by ARBC will require participants to undergo application, training and de-briefing opportunities.
9. Support for Mission projects (financial, prayer, information, etc.) should be approved. When applicable, follow the guidelines set out in the ARBC "*Support Discovery*" document that is part of the preliminary training.
10. All solicitations of funds and/or fund-raising activities should be communicated/approved through the Missions Ministry Team of ARBC. Overt solicitation and/or fund raising activities

made directly to individuals or ministries within ARBC fellowship are not allowed except that which is approved by the Missions Ministry Team.

11. The Missions Ministry Team of ARBC recognizes the need for priorities in granting support to missionaries and giving for special projects. Some factors which will be considered in setting such priorities are: church membership, whether the candidate is known to the church, type of work to be engaged in, geographic location, and its relationship to church planting (growing the body of Christ).
12. Mission Ministry Team members who have family members as missionaries supported by ARBC shall be excluded and dismissed from all discussions concerning financial and/or policy matters regarding that missionary and their family (e.g. children, spouse, parents, brothers, sisters, grandchildren, or any other relative).
13. ARBC will establish and maintain designated account “*Short Term Missions Ministries*” for our lay people and staff who are involved in short term mission projects and ministries. This account will receive offerings and disperse approved expenses of their short term mission ministries through regular ARBC giving/distribution channels. This designated account administered by the Missions Ministry Team through the ARBC finance officer.

Present ARBC Missions Ministry opportunities/Teams

Supported by the ARBC Missions Ministry Team (each team with Missions/ministry coordinator)

- Missionary Partnership(s)
- Short Term Mission Project(s)
- ESL – English as a Second Language
- Crisis (Homeless Shelter)
- SAM – Semi Active (Homebound) Members outreach
- Ronald McDonald House
- Boy's Home – (home closed)
- Bread of Life (food assistance pantry located @ Charleston Baptist Church)
- Free Medical Clinic Ministry
- Prison Ministry
- Multi-housing ministry/after school mentoring
- Hospice
- Congregational Nursing
- Hospice Center
- Nursing Home Visitation
- Disaster Relief
- Alzheimer Support Groups
- Bereavement Committee
- Bonnie Doone Conference Center
- Crisis Pregnancy
- Florence Crittendon Home for unwed Moms
- My Sister's House/for battered women
- Ministry to Single Moms (through & for members/contacts of the church)
- Habitat for Humanity
- Youth Mission Projects
- Home Missions Involvement
- Foreign Missions Involvement
- Big Brother
- Operation Christmas Child
- Public School Mentoring
- Bridge builder Work Days
- Neighborhood Small Groups
- Adopt-a-Block Strategy

Possible Future Missions to be considered. This list is not intended to be an exhaustive presentation of present ministries.

ARBC Acts 1:8 “Bridge-building” Strategy

Our purpose: *“building bridges of love that connect people to Jesus Christ and each other.”*



But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8 (NIV)

Our “*Philosophy and Policy Regarding Missions*” implores that we continue to develop and redevelop a fresh Strategy that effectively carries out the purpose of the church regarding missions/outreach. The Missions Ministry Team and staff are encouraging all members of ARBC to adopt this “Acts 1:8 Strategy” and that it be implemented in every way possible.

Every person will be challenged to move toward this Acts 1:8, Bridge-builder Strategy. Each small group/Sunday School/gathering of believers are encouraged to develop a mission strategy that is three fold. An outreach/missions effort that is local (*Jerusalem*), Regional (*Judea*) and cross cultural (*Samaria & the ends of the earth*).

Local (*Jerusalem*) *What area has God called me to build a bridge of love in the shadow of my life?*

- Sunday School class’s are asked to start and support at least one “*Neighborhood Small Group*” with the purpose of reaching a target area with the Gospel (strategy/support available)
- Partner with a ministry or mission in the church or city.
- Pray, give and send support to the selected partnership

Regional (*Judea*) *What local opportunity has God given me to help build a bridge of love?*

- Partner with a state or national ministry or mission
- Pray, give and send support to the selected partnership
- Called members of the group are asked to actively go and minister.
- May partner with other groups or the whole church in this partnership

Cross-Cultural (*Samaria, the ends of the earth*) *What about the world? How can I be a witness there?*

- Partner with a cross-cultural ministry or mission
- Pray, give and send support to the selected partnership
- Called members of the group are asked to actively go and minister in this area.
- May partner with other groups or the whole church in this partnership

Bridge-builder Strategy Steps

“building bridges of love that connect people to Jesus Christ and each other.”

Each Mission opportunity should be sifted through these five strategic principles. The first things to establish are; does the Mission opportunity match our purpose and is there leadership in place.

1. Why build this bridge?
2. Build from Leadership, not need
3. Settle on one purpose
4. Establish our Strategy
5. Empower to Action