



Local Engagement Policies & Guidelines

Grace Bible Church - Approved by the Elders October 2024



GBC Local Engagement Policies & Guidelines

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GBC Local Engagement Policies & Guidelines

Introduction

Commitment

Grace Bible Church is committed to the worship of God, the equipping of the saints for effective life and service and evangelizing the lost. God desires the church to be the primary means for sending people to proclaim the saving message of Jesus Christ to wherever people inhabit the earth. In its desire to obey the great commission of Jesus Christ and further the work of the Gospel, Grace Bible Church (GBC) sets forth the following policy.

Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this policy is to give a clear sense of direction and strategy for the local engagement of GBC; to make wise decisions; to maximize efforts to invest each dollar as we feel would please our Lord; to instruct new team members, allowing them to familiarize themselves with policy issues; to maintain consistency as the team membership changes; to work in harmony with the key leaders of the church, keeping them abreast of policy and strategy; to provide a printed policy for members, friends, workers, and candidates; and to assist in church-wide education and promotion of local engagement.

Flexibility of Policy

It is intended that the local engagement policy be used as a framework for decision making.

Counsel should be sought when an issue arises that would be contrary to policy. Exceptions can be made. The policy should be reviewed periodically as to its appropriateness and usefulness as a framework for decision making.

Defining Terms

Local Engagement Worker - A person who has been commissioned by a church and accepted by a Christian mission agency dedicated intentionally full-time to the work and support of evangelism and discipleship, leading to the planting, growth, and multiplication of churches or groups that manifest the reign of God in word and deed within the DFW metroplex.

Local Engagement Partner - An organization intentionally including the work and support of evangelism and discipleship that manifest the reign of God in word and deed within the DFW metroplex.

Grace-Sent – Is expected to have been a member of GBC for at least a year.

Vision of Engagement

According to research, approximately 105 people die every minute without knowing Christ.¹ Many simply have never had an opportunity to hear the gospel—the good news of salvation in Jesus—in their heart language in a way they can understand it.

We as the Engagement Teams, along with the Elders and Senior Pastor, desire to *help others follow Jesus* both locally and globally. **We desire to see every believer equipped for real**

¹ [105 People Die Each Minute \(thegospelcoalition.org\)](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org), accessed on May 13, 2024.

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ministry in his or her day-to-day life and to help raise up laborers who will leave Dallas to go to unreached peoples² and places on the planet.

The Engagement Teams will seek to ground all our activities and policies in these three realities:

1. The Biblical Mandate – Since engagement is God’s people joining Him in redeeming men and women in every people group (*ethne*) (see Gen 12.1-3, Psalm 67, Isaiah 49.6, Matt 24.14, Matt 28.18-20, Acts 1.8, Romans 10.13-15, Rev 5.9, Rev 7.9), and the Biblical method for such activity is evangelism that leads to disciple making that leads to multiplying churches (see the book of Acts), then GBC is mandated to follow God’s command.
2. The Core Engagement Task - Jesus’s own ministry was one focused on engagement and raising up of co-laborers. Mobilization of the bride of Christ is the goal - more prayer, gospel sharing, discipling, church planting, etc.
3. Unreached People Groups – The reality is that in the world there are whole ethnicities, approximately 7,280 people groups, which have little to no access to the Gospel.³ Many have no Christians, no churches, nor no Bible in their language. They are cut off from all hope. The Bible places an emphasis of priority on the Church taking the Gospel to places it is not, over places where it already is (Luke 4.43, Romans 15:20).

Vision Statement of Engagement

The GBC community members understand and personally engage with the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) for the glory of the Father and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Mission Statement of Local Engagement

Maximizing GBC's support for selected workers and partners around the DFW metroplex while equipping and engaging GBC's body in the Great Commission.

Biblical Core Values

1. God glorifying
2. Great Commission centered
3. Prayerfully focused
4. Holy Spirit Filled and Lead
5. Kingdom-minded
6. Possessing Unity and Love
7. Abiding in Christ

² The Joshua Project defines an unreached people group as having "a people group among which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize this people group without outside assistance." Less than or equal to 5% [Christian Adherent](#) AND less than or equal to 2% [Evangelical](#).

³ <https://joshuaproject.net/>, accessed on May 13, 2024.

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Local Engagement Team

The Local Engagement Team is made up of several volunteers from GBC. The Engage Pastor serves as the strategic leader to facilitate an engagement mindset at GBC.

Team Members

1. This is a team of unspecified number under the direction of the Engage Pastor. The ideal number of members is less than 10.
2. Members shall remain on the Team if the individual and the Team agree to that member's participation.
3. Team Members must demonstrate a desire to promote local engagement at GBC as well as contribute to the effectiveness of the Team.
4. Team Members can serve on the team for three years at a time and then must rotate off for a year. They can then re-join the team at the invitation of the Engage Pastor.

Process of Onboarding Team Members

1. We bring up the name of someone we want to add to the team to get feedback from the team. We discuss whether we should ask their interest. To be eligible for consideration, one must:
 - a. Be a member of the church.
 - b. Have a deep interest in local engagement.
 - c. Be worthy of respect and sincerely hold the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.
 - d. Be familiar with and supportive of the local engagement policy and program of the church.
2. The Engage Pastor and/or other Team Members will ask their level of interest in joining the Team.
3. The Engage Pastor meets with them to hear their faith story, what their involvement has been with local engagement in the past, and what their view of engagement is.
4. If they are deemed a good fit by the Engage Pastor, he will recommend the person to the team and a vote will be placed with the simple majority deciding the outcome.
5. Provide the Local Engagement Team Member Expectation document and have them sign the Team Member Agreement (separate document).

Responsibilities

1. Fill out Self-evaluation annually.
2. Sign an agreement every year.
3. We will have an annual strategic planning meeting.
4. Read and review all necessary information before team meetings.
5. Pray about decisions and discussion topics before team meetings.
6. Stimulate the intercessory prayer of the congregation for local evangelization and the needs of our workers and partners.
7. Develop, manage, evaluate, and re-evaluate local engagement.
8. Interview candidates for local engagement.
9. Supervise the fund-raising and ongoing financial issues for local engagement.

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10. Develop and coordinate an educational and communication program geared to the GBC body to feature supported workers and partners.
11. Stimulate and recruit volunteers for service.
12. Plan and conduct the annual Engage conference.

Meetings and Attendance

The Local Engagement Team shall meet on a regular basis, usually once a month. Additional meetings may be called throughout the year as needed. Decisions will be made by the Engage Pastor receiving input from the team and making the final decision.

Communications & Challenge

Local Engagement Education – The Team shall promote local engagement education in the congregation. This is to be done by liaison with ministries such as Grace Kids, Youth, ABC's, Community Groups, etc. This education shall include the identification of Grace's workers, where they are ministering, Grace's overall local engagement strategy, and provide opportunities for personal and corporate involvement in local engagement.

Engage Conference – The Team shall sponsor, plan, and conduct the annual engage conference. The purpose of the conference is to emphasize engagement to the church body, inform, update, and stimulate our church body toward greater involvement in engagement through prayer, giving, and serving on the field. It is also a time for asking the people of the church to make an investment in The Special Missions Fund (see Special Requests for Financial Support).

Local Engagement Workers and Partners

GBC is committed to sharing the good news about salvation through Jesus Christ as well as sharing God's love with others in word and deed. We believe God has commissioned the church, His body, as the primary means for sending people to proclaim the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ to wherever people inhabit the earth.

Therefore, GBC welcomes applications from local engagement workers and partners for financial support.

Qualifications for Local Engagement Workers

Grace-sent worker:

1. Do they fit the definition of a local engagement worker?
2. They need to have been a member of Grace for at least one year.
3. Applicants must obtain acceptance of a GBC-approved sending agency for a term of two or more years and proposed ministry involvement and sending agency must be consistent with the emphasis of GBC's local engagement priorities.
4. We need to be aware of their doctrinal disagreements with GBC's doctrinal statement.
5. We want to know where they got their budget number from and submit a monthly budget approved by the org. This will need to include their personal vs. operational expenses.
6. Each candidate must complete an application and submit to an interview with the Engage Pastor (the spouse is strongly encouraged to be present in the interview).

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7. Applicants must have adequate education and training appropriate for the proposed ministry location and position.
 - a. Must have been to Gospel Conversations Training.
 - b. We want to know their local engagement experience.
8. Applicants must be willing to maintain an open and strong relationship with GBC and willing to abide by the Team's proposed guidelines for correspondence and periodic review of ministry.
9. Ideally be actively involved in the community at GBC. This would include a recommendation from someone they do life with at GBC.
10. Ideally be serving in some capacity at GBC (or with a partner of GBC).

Non-Grace-sent worker:

1. Do they fit the definition of a local engagement worker?
2. Applicants must obtain acceptance of a GBC-approved sending agency for a term of two or more years and proposed ministry involvement and sending agency must be consistent with the emphasis of GBC's local engagement priorities.
3. We need to be aware of their doctrinal disagreements with GBC's doctrinal statement.
4. We want to know where they got their budget number from and submit a monthly budget approved by the org. This will need to include their personal vs. operational expenses.
5. Each candidate must complete an application and submit to an interview with the Engage Pastor, (the spouse is strongly encouraged to be present in the interview).
6. Applicants must have adequate education and training appropriate for the proposed ministry location and position.
 - a. We want to know their local engagement experience and local church involvement.
7. Applicants must be willing to maintain an open and strong relationship with GBC and willing to abide by the Team's proposed guidelines for correspondence and periodic review of ministry.

Qualifications for Local Engagement Partners

We encourage members to rally other people to the causes and ministries they're passionate about. We also encourage the rest of our body to jump in wherever God leads them (not simply with our established partners).

3 Keys to Building Powerful Partnerships

1. Be on mission together by collaborating with non-profits that align with church vision, mission, philosophies, and operations.

Questions to consider:

- Does the published and practical mission, vision, purpose of this non-profit align with the church?
- Is there an excitement and eagerness to work together?
- How effective is the non-profit at pointing back to and connecting those they serve with the local church?

Practical Applications:

- What's the volunteer experience like?

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- There is an annual reassessment of partnership and clearly communicated investments of time, talent, and treasure.
- Our teams have extended relationships beyond work titles and responsibilities.

2. *Prioritize partnering at the intersection of church strengths, community needs, and biblical commands*

Questions to consider:

- What are the gifts and strengths seated right in front of us and how best can they be utilized?
- What are the in-your-face issues that can no longer be ignored?
- Which verses inform outreach and impact efforts?
- How would partnering move the needle together?

Practical applications:

- A partnership within a sweet spot is mutually impactful and goes beyond filling typical volunteer slots.

3. *Mobilize volunteers into mutually impactful discipleship opportunities* by ensuring a lasting impact on people, God's kingdom, and room for continued investment.

Questions to consider:

- Is there room for meaningful and "right size" mobilization of volunteers?
- Will there be a high level of impact over activity from the investment?
- Does the ministry or non-profit have a means to follow up with the people involved in service?

Practical application:

- Focus on developing people and improving systems, not just providing relief of felt needs.

New partnerships most often come about as follows:

- Asking the evaluation questions listed below, as well as filling out a separate document titled *Evaluation of GBC's Local Engagement Partners*. This document will also be used for annual evaluations.
- At least one trusted GBC Member rises as leader and liaison (a significant volunteer task).
- An official partnership is established (at which point the LET can participate in advertising for volunteers, considering funding, and other ways).

Evaluation Questions

As we (on GBC's Local Engagement Team) vet potential partners, we ask a series of specific questions. While each potential partner may be stronger in some areas than others, these play a crucial role in identifying new strategic partnerships.

- Does this organization's mission and vision line up with GBC's? Do we know the organization's leadership and trust them?
- Does the organization incorporate heart transformation and local church connection?
- Does this organization help *develop* people and situations, not simply provide relief?
- Can volunteers share the "why" behind their service (the gospel)?

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- How many GBC individuals are currently involved? How are they involved?
- Are there plenty of opportunities to involve GBC members, families, and/or groups in “boots on the ground” service? Are there clear ways to get more deeply involved over time?
- Is the organization strategically located and accessible for GBC members?
- Does GBC have a clear and unique opportunity to make a tangible impact?
- Is there a trusted GBC member willing and able to lead our involvement?

Expectations

What should a worker or partner expect from GBC?

- a. If they are a new worker being sent out from GBC, we will commission them (and their spouse).
- b. We desire to communicate at least quarterly with each worker or partner sent from GBC seeking prayer requests and ways we may assist in ministry. This expectation is not the same for workers or partners who are not sent by GBC. (Communication may occur by various methods: phone, e-mail, letter, etc.)
- c. Monthly ongoing financial support will be sent directly to the worker’s sponsoring agency or the partner organization. Due to unforeseen circumstances in which the church’s financial situation alters available funds, the worker will be notified promptly.
- d. We desire to feature at least once a year the work of each worker or partner we support, informing the church body during a Sunday morning service.
- e. Insurance, education of children and retirement for workers are assumed to be included in the support level defined by the mission agency.

What should GBC expect from our workers or partners?

- a. We desire periodic updates (can be replicated from agency requirements) on prayer needs, ministry objectives, accomplishments, and plans sent to the Engage Pastor.
 - a. (Financial support may be held if updates are not received for 6 consecutive months)
- b. Each worker and partner will submit a year-end update by January 31, evaluating how God has worked, the coming year’s strategy, financial health, and any requests for increase/decrease in financial support.
- c. We would like to be notified of any changes in plans for ministry, ministry location, or change in agency sponsorship. Such change in agency sponsorship may require re-evaluation for support.
- d. Annually, the worker or partner will submit to the Engage Pastor a short video (if possible) of the fieldwork in progress to feature before the church body during a Sunday morning service.

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- e. The general church mailing lists, or leadership lists, may not be used for solicitations. We encourage workers to make presentations of their ministries to adult Bible classes, community groups, or other corporate gatherings.

Missions Agencies/Organizations

To aid GBC in its local engagement effort, we have chosen to work in cooperation with approved mission agencies (that must be 501©3 registered and have proof on file with us). This partnership is viewed as a mutual effort between the local church and agencies to be more effective in mobilization. GBC views mission agencies as specializing in sending and overseeing the care of the worker while on the field more effectively than GBC.

Requirements for approval of mission agency or organization:

1. The mission agency's/organization statement of belief and ministry priorities must be consistent with that of GBC's statement of faith and mobilization priorities.
2. The mission agency must maintain accountability through the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA).
3. The mission agency/organization must be willing to cooperate and communicate with GBC and the team in support of the applicant in terms of fund distribution, support packages, benefits, etc.
4. If the mission agency sponsoring the applicant is unfamiliar to the team, the team may ask the agency to complete a *Missions Agency Information Inventory* provided by Advancing Churches in Missions Commitment (ACMC). [In a separate document]

Application Process

Contact for requesting and submitting applications: the Engage Pastor.

1. The Candidate or Partner submits the Preliminary Application.
2. The Engage Pastor will evaluate the org.
 - Mission/vision
 - What kind of care they give:
 - Emotional
 - Spiritual
 - Physical
3. The Engage Pastor reviews the application, and if the Candidate or Partner meets all criteria and the ministry seems to be a match for GBC, a full application will be sent to the candidate or partner.
4. The Candidate or Partner submits the Full Application.
5. The Engage Pastor will set up a meeting with the Candidate or Partner representative to get to know the person/couple/ministry better.
6. If the candidate or partner still meets all the criteria, the Engage Pastor recommends the Team offer support from GBC.
7. The team discusses, vote, and simple majority decides the outcome.
8. The decision will be sent to the elder board.
9. The Candidate or Partner will be notified of the decision.

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Financial Support

GBC supports numerous workers and partners. Due to some extenuating circumstances (number of supported workers/partners, financial situation of the church, etc.), the team reserves the right to deviate from these guidelines.

1. Pre-field Support: a new worker's transitioning to the field may incur some out-going expenses. To aid in some of these expenses, GBC will make available to approved workers.
 - a. Maximum pre-field funding for a single candidate may not exceed \$500.
 - b. Maximum pre-field funding for a married candidate may not exceed \$1,000.
2. Monthly Support: support for career GBC approved applicants is determined the agency defined budget and begins up to six months before the time of departure and once they leave current employment.
3. Increasing Support: GBC is aware of the changes in financial need of its workers. The GET has adopted the following guide to assist in adjusting to this need.
 - a. Criteria for increase: demonstrate need of increased support. The org must approve the worker's need for more support, and the worker must submit a new org-approved budget.
4. New workers approved by the team and elders, will receive monthly financial support for a **three-year period**.
5. Personal and ministry growth will be evaluated every twelve months and continued support will be determined based on this evaluation. Though, no major changes will occur before renewal time.
 - a. If we can tell from annual evaluations, desired work is not being done, there will be a plan of action that consists of:
 - i. The Engage Pastor will notify the worker or partner.
 - ii. Give them until the commitment period is up to make changes.
 - iii. If they do not make necessary before the commitment period is up, then we will discontinue support.

When Support Ends

Guidelines for ending support are:

- The worker resigns or retires.
- He/she conducts himself/herself in a way that is contrary to the teaching of Christ.
- The agency terminates the worker; the mission agency changes the ministry, and such change does not meet the criteria established for the worker by the Team.
- There is failure to abide by rules and requests of GBC.
- There is any change in the worker's doctrinal position which differs from the doctrinal statement of GBC is considered by the Team to be basis for possible termination of support.
- Inadequate accountability.
- The approved term of funding ends. If it is determined by GBC that support will end, the worker will be notified of the change and a grace period of three months prior to support stopping.

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Sabbatical, Retirement, or Off the Field for an Unspecified Period of Time

1. We may ask for an updated, org approved, budget to reflect their change in location and ministry.
2. Will evaluate on a case-by-case basis.

Special Evaluations

A special evaluation may be instigated on a case-by-case basis.

Budget Issues

1. Disbursements & Records – The Engage Pastor is responsible for the execution of the local engagement budget and for the disbursement of all funds. However, any new workers or partners being added for financial support or existing or partners workers being renewed for financial support need approval from the elder board. Ending support of workers or partners before the approved term expires does need elder approval. Ending support at the end of an approved term does not need elder approval, but a report should be given to the elder board as to why the support is ending.
2. Reporting - A monthly accounting report as to the status of the budget shall be provided to the team by the accountant on staff.
3. Designated Giving – Designated gifts from an individual to Grace with instructions to give to a specific worker, agency or non-approved project are not allowed. Any such gift will be returned to the donor in accordance with the Grace financial procedures. However, designated gifts may be accepted for Elder approved projects. The Grace business office will maintain separate accounting for Elder approved Designated Gifts.

Special Requests for Financial Support

Each year during the Engage Conference, there will be a special offering taken for the Special Missions Fund. The Engage Pastor will set a target goal for this fund each year, by requesting what financial needs the workers in the field have for the coming 12 months. We cannot promise or guarantee we will be able raise enough or provide enough of the funds that are needed.

Special missions funding is for one-time, programmatic-related, or special needs of the existing workers of GBC. The aim of which is to accelerate Kingdom impact (evangelism, discipleship, church planting, leader training, theological training, translation projects, and missionary care) of existing GBC global engagement workers. It is also used to support individuals going on Grace approved short-term trips and to invest in the strategic partnerships to which the church has committed.

All spending from the Special Missions Fund is to be approved by the elders.

Application Process

Contact for requesting and submitting applications is the Engage Pastor.

1. The worker or partner submits the Special Request for Financial Support Application.

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2. If the worker or partner meets all policy criteria and the ministry seems to be a match for GBC, the Engage Pastor will set up a meeting with the worker and at least one other GET Member to understand their special project better.
3. If the Engage Pastor and the GET Member(s) who met with the worker or partner deem their request fits the policy criteria, it will be recommend to the GET to offer support from GBC, and a vote will take place. A simple majority decides the outcome.
4. It will then be passed to the elder board for approval.
5. The career GBC worker or partner will be notified.

Due Diligence

1. The Engage Pastor may validate that org knows their worker is asking for additional funds.
2. As a rule of thumb, the worker requesting funding needs to have at least 90% of their personal budget already raised.
3. Depending on the size of the project the funds may be allocated in phases, with certain qualifications and expectations met in each phase before the next phase of funding occurs. We ask the worker spends the funds preferably within one month of receipt of funds.
4. The Engage Pastor may call to follow up with contacts the applicant provides of other churches from which they get support.