

WiSE Missions Policy

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HolyTrinity

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A vision for mission: “Your kingdom come”

Jesus gave his disciples a task which defines what we call “missions” today. He said, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) We call this the Great Commission.

What does it mean to be Jesus’ witnesses? Jesus himself described his coming as bringing about the year of the Lord’s favour (Luke 4:18,19) and taught us to pray “your kingdom come” (Luke 11:2-4). Therefore, when we are witnesses to Jesus, we are seeking to extend the kingdom of God.

Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19&20) Disciples are to make other disciples, the job is finished when they are ready to share in the task of extending the kingdom.

Is mission limited by geography? Looking at the Great Commission, we can see that there are equivalent mission fields for us today. ‘Jerusalem’ is where we are; every Christian should be involved with witness here. ‘Judea’ and ‘Samaria’ were culturally distinct groups living side by side in the disciples’ homeland. So for us, this is those who would see themselves drawing on a Christian heritage and those who would not, throughout the rest of the UK. ‘To the ends of the Earth’ is the rest of the world. So there are no geographical limitations, God’s kingdom can come anywhere.

A Our mission strategy

Mission within ‘Jerusalem’ and ‘Judea’ is supported directly (often through small groups) as church family members get involved. There are also some key organisations which have links with **htcd**. The church leadership (i.e. the Executive and PCC) provides pastoral care and takes support decisions where appropriate. Support for overseas and cross-cultural mission is coordinated by the ‘Witness in Samaria and to the ends of the Earth’ (WiSE) Team and is the subject of this Mission Policy. The leadership also delegates administration of the links with ‘Judea’ ministries to the WiSE team.

Reasons for a written Mission Policy

- To encourage and maintain a clear and consistent vision for mission
- To ensure the missions programme is in harmony with **htcd** leadership
- To maintain thoughtful, prayerful evaluation of our progress
- To prevent domination by or reliance on strong personalities
- To help Partners to know where they and **htcd** stand
- To ensure Partners receive the consistent support they deserve
- To maintain continuity through personnel changes on committees
- To prevent inconsistencies in practice

Who is a Mission Partner of **htcd?**

A Mission Partner is anyone who is working to extend the kingdom of God who falls within the remit of the WiSE group (defined above) and who are either sent or supported by **htcd**. There should be a very real sense that the Partner has been set aside for a particular ministry either by **htcd** or by another church with whom we are in agreement. Those who are **sent** by **htcd** will have worked through their call with the WiSE team and church leadership. There is a high level of mutual accountability and responsibility between **htcd** and the sent Mission Partner on the mission field. Sent Partners would have an assumption of on-going long-term support subject to criteria laid out later in the Policy. The PCC would need notification of any major change in support and could then ask to review the decision themselves. Those who are **supported** but not **sent** by **htcd** will have worked through their calling more independently. Generally this would also include all short-term workers and those going long-term who are primarily linked with another church. There is a lesser degree of mutual responsibility for the supported Partner. Supported Partners would always be supported for a fixed term and support decisions regarding them can be made solely by the WiSE team (subject to limits given later).

Flexibility

There must be room for the leading of the Holy Spirit in decision making rather than reliance on the letter of the

Policy. Therefore, if an exception to the protocols which follow is identified, a thorough investigation of all issues will be made and approval, if appropriate, will be given by the Exec in conjunction with the WiSE team.

Revision of Policy

The Policy should be reviewed every 3 years by the WiSE team and approved by the church leadership. It is not anticipated that significant changes will be necessary at every review.

Summary of WiSE team responsibilities

They are responsible for:

- stimulating prayer for mission and Mission Partners
- mission education and inspiration
- encouraging and guiding volunteers for mission
- co-ordinating support for and pastoral care of personnel
- good stewardship of resources
- long-term planning
- liaison with mission agencies

Strategic target areas

It makes sense to focus our long-term support on certain areas within mission which fit well with the general thrust of the church's work at home. The home church is then more likely to be a useful training ground for those going into cross-cultural mission with its additional challenges. As the church learns about these areas of mission, it will be able to advise candidates more effectively, will understand how to target its support efficiently and may eventually be able to act as a facilitator of new ministries and even advise mission organisations. It is anticipated that all sent and supported long-term Mission Partners will be working within these areas.

The areas on which our long-term support will focus seek both to draw on what is happening already and address gaps in our missions support. They are:

- training pastors and equipping churches (2 Timothy 2:2)
- holistic ministries, addressing mental, spiritual and physical needs together, rather than separately (James 2:14)
- sustainable development in the context of Christian stewardship (Leviticus 25:23-24)
- "tentmakers", professionals who are called to serve God overseas, can often access communities closed to direct Christian work (Acts 18: 1-4, 2 Cor 12:13). Also sometimes called Business Based Ministries or Creative Access Ministries.
- reaching the unreached, with particular focus on North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. It is suggested that the church "adopts" one people group which is unreached within this region to make them a special focus of prayer over the next 10 years. (Revelation 5:9)

Short-term missions

Short term missions are very often training opportunities for those involved. They also fulfil an important role in educating western Christians about the needs of the rest of the world. We do not insist that they should fall into the strategic target areas. However, they work best when they are part of a long-term project. It would be sensible to develop links with some organisations which fit in with our long-term areas of interest which can offer short-term placements. It is suggested that at least 1 such link be established within the next 3 years.

Support of agencies / special appeals

Some agencies whose work fills gaps in the strategic target areas are selected by the WiSE team for support. This commitment will be for no more than 2 years at a time but can be renewed at the end of the period if the strategic value remains. As far as possible, such agencies will receive support in the same way as supported Partners and we expect the same degree of communication in return. Agencies must also be in broad agreement doctrinally and in matters of church practice with *htcd*.

Other agencies can approach us for support but only one-off gifts will be considered. Special appeals e.g. for disaster relief will also be considered for one-off gifts.

Church family members are welcome to bring proposals for all the above categories to the attention of the WiSE

team. However, applications to support individuals must come from the individual themselves.

B The WiSE team

WiSE team structure and composition

The team will comprise 6-8 members. This will include a representative of the Exec and the team co-ordinator who are both appointed by the Exec. Ideally the PCC should also have a representative on the team (this could be the same person who represents the Exec). Other members should be appointed by the vicar in consultation with the co-ordinator. The team should be made up of men and women representing various ages and backgrounds who have demonstrated spiritual maturity, active church participation, a deep interest in mission, a willingness to make a significant time commitment to mission support, dependability and responsibility in discharging assigned tasks. Team members should commit to 2 years service initially, which can be renewed annually up to a maximum of 6. The team coordinator should commit to 3 years if possible but should not be expected to serve as coordinator for more than 10 years.

The WiSE team should meet formally 6 times a year. Clear and measurable goals should be set for a 3 year period as part of the Policy review. Progress towards these goals should be reviewed annually.

Team members should seek to keep themselves informed about world mission through reading, taking mailings from mission agencies, communicating with missionaries and attending conferences or courses. They will be considered to have resigned if they miss 3 consecutive meetings.

The WiSE team coordinator

A volunteer worker, they should be someone with experience of practical missions support in addition to the qualities listed for team membership. However, mission support should be their main responsibility within the church.

The coordinator is responsible for running meetings, ensuring agendas and minutes are produced. They are the first point of contact for agencies, mission candidates and church members. However, their job is to ensure the WiSE team does its job, not to do all the work themselves.

C WiSE team responsibilities

The WiSE team has responsibilities as follows:

Stimulate prayer for mission and Mission Partners

- Corporate prayer: to seek ways to increase the level of corporate prayer through existing prayer opportunities, e.g. in church services, Powerhouse and Small Groups, and by organising special prayer activities for mission, such as World Prayer Evenings (WPE).
- Individual prayer: to support individual prayer, encouraging people to start and continue praying for mission regularly.
- Disseminate news, to include prayer requests and answers, as widely as possible by as many varied means as possible. This could include a regular prayer diary, inclusion of Mission Partners in the birthday slot, development of slideshows (PowerPoint) on Mission Partners for between and after services, arranging special events with visiting speakers, a mission notice board.

Mission education

All groups and departments within the church should receive education at some point each year on mission. This is an area which offers considerable scope for WiSE to work in partnership with small groups who may wish to support particular *htcd* Partners or additional projects complementary to those supported by the church as a whole. Essentially there are 3 levels of involvement which require different types of education.

PRAY – education is through provision of prayer information as described above.

GIVE – education is through sharing information about the needs of the world and the responsibility of the Christian to give through their local church and directly. This would be easiest through extending the scope of prayer information at key times or through special events, showcasing the work of individual Mission Partners, key agencies and the needs of certain areas or communities.

GO – suitable courses and conferences for interested individuals to attend or to hold at **htcd** should be investigated and advertised. Genuine mission candidates should be encouraged to approach the appropriate agencies to find out what training will be required prior to long-term service.

Financing education should be seen as a valid use of resources. Assistance should be available with the costs of courses for genuine mission candidates for whom the cost would otherwise be prohibitive. Visiting speakers should be paid travel expenses and given a gift towards their ministry. There will also be costs associated with running a missions weekend or hosting a short missions course. Up to 5% of the total mission budget should be available to spend on education in any one year.

Personnel and pastoral

- To participate actively, along with the leadership, in the selection, training and development of potential Mission Partners
- To oversee support for the spiritual and emotional needs of our Mission Partners, whether at home, abroad or in retirement.
- To help candidates choose courses and avenues of service most suitable for their abilities.
- To liaise closely with the leadership through a member of the Exec and the PCC on the WiSE team.
- To investigate special circumstances and needs, including provision for retirement
- To ensure good channels of communication exist between **htcd** and Mission Partners
- To arrange Farewell/Welcome Home services
- To coordinate home leave arrangements on behalf of the Mission Partner as requested. They may need help with finding accommodation, transport, making appointments for health and dental care, an initial groceries delivery and this provides an excellent opportunity for members of the church family to be involved.
- Preliminary contact with **htcd** sent Mission Partners returning for a prolonged period or permanently needs to be made within a week of arrival home, if home is local, or as soon as possible otherwise. A full debriefing meeting for returnees should be arranged with a member of the Exec or WiSE team to assess pastoral need within a month of return. Partners visiting for a short period, for example, an annual holiday, should also be seen by a member of the Exec or WiSE team one-to-one, not simply at church.

Stewardship

- To monitor giving and allocation of all funds for national, cross-cultural and overseas mission ('Judea', 'Samaria' and 'the ends of the Earth').
- To be responsible for support decisions for supported agencies and supported Mission Partners within the budget set by the PCC.
- To make support decisions for **sent** Mission Partners in consultation with the PCC. In exceptional circumstances this could be outside the general mission budget.
- To investigate student and short-term worker needs and award grants where appropriate
- To advertise the availability of short-term grants and long-term support

Long-term planning

To make 3-yearly plans for a varied programme of mission events, coordinating dates with the leadership and their plans for **htcd** as a whole. This should include a church-wide missions event approximately every 2 years. In addition, by keeping in close touch on travel arrangements, opportunities should be created for Mission Partners to speak to the whole church when they are back on home leave. An appropriate slot for those who are overseas and return briefly once a year, would be to give them 10 minutes in the church services one Sunday. There may also be opportunities for them to speak in more detail to small groups such as youth or small groups, but these should be in addition to the whole church forum not instead of it. Mission Partners on extended home leave after 2 or more years overseas should be given a longer opportunity to present their work, such as a preaching slot or a church family evening, perhaps with a shared meal.

To keep in touch with current mission thinking and maintain an ongoing overview of the missions scene so that our resources can be used as effectively as possible, where the need is greatest and complementing the work of other churches rather than duplicating it. This includes keeping in touch with the developing needs of our own Mission Partners in their ministry, being ready to help identify both when patience and long-term commitment is required and when the time to move on has been reached.

D Policy for selection/recruitment of candidates for mission

Selection for long-term *htcd* **sent** and **supported** Partners

- Candidates should write to the WiSE team in the first place, explaining what they hope to do. It is unlikely that an application from a candidate to be a **sent** Mission Partner would come as a surprise to the WiSE team, as they would have already indicated their interest in mission and long-term ministry informally and possibly have done some short-term work and/or training.
- Candidates to be **sent** by *htcd* should have been part of the church family for sufficient time to show that they are spiritually mature enough to cope with the challenges of cross-cultural or overseas mission. They should be regularly participating in the church programme at *htcd*. Alternatively, potential **supported** Partners should be members of a church family that is supportive of their proposed ministry and which is prepared to give them pastoral support. They should have been part of that church family for sufficient time to show that they are spiritually mature enough to cope with the challenges of cross-cultural mission or work overseas. They should have very strong links with *htcd*.
- They should be in agreement doctrinally and in matters of church practice with *htcd*.
- The candidate should be over 18 years of age.
- Candidates should be interviewed initially by the WiSE team and, if recommended to become **sent** Mission Partners only, then also by the Exec and representatives of the PCC. The Exec, PCC and WiSE should be in full agreement before a Mission Partner can be **sent** by *htcd*.
- The WiSE team can take decisions on supported Partners without referring to the leadership.
- Should the candidate's approach to the WiSE team/leadership seem premature, for any reason, they will be encouraged to be involved in service in the church for some time before reapplying.
- It will be expected that candidates will have some experience of training in Christian service which is relevant to their proposed ministry although the WiSE team will be happy to receive a first approach from a serious candidate prior to training taking place.
- The candidate must be planning to work in one of the strategic target areas on which *htcd* has chosen to concentrate resources.

Selection for short-term grants

- Candidates should be church family members or attend *htcd* regularly, e.g. students who worship with us term-time.
- Candidates should complete a standard application form which can be done via email or on paper. The forms are for all ages of applicant and all types of project. An individual can apply for more than one grant for different projects/trips but a new form must be completed for each application.
- All sections of the form should be fully completed and details of the total funds required and an explanation of what the grant will be used for must be given.
- The grants are usually for not more than 10% of the total needed, but can exceptionally be up to 25%, depending on the candidate's level of involvement with *htcd* and the significance of the contribution the short-term project will make.
- It is expected that all candidates will be able to give at least one example of active participation in and contribution to church life, although for students this may be work within the CU.
- The candidate does not need to be going to work in one of *htcd*'s strategic target areas.
- The WiSE team can take decisions on short-term grants without referring to the leadership.

E Finance

Financial support for missionaries

This will normally only be given to those who have fulfilled the following requirements:

- Those who have been actively involved in service in *htcd* and have proved their effectiveness this way. The maxim, "if you won't miss them, don't send them," is a good guide.
- Those who have kept the WiSE team well informed of progress regarding their call.
- Those who are to be linked with a recognised missions agency or organisation, unless exceptional circumstances apply. For tentmakers or Creative Access Ministries this criterion may not be possible, although we would encourage a link to give some pastoral support and guidance whilst on the mission field.
- Any candidate who proceeds to mission work without the approval of the leadership or WiSE (as appropriate) will not be eligible for financial support through the church.

Withdrawal of financial support within period of original commitment

This may occur if:

- A return is made to secular employment (except where the employment is a means of remaining on the mission field as a 'tentmaker')
- There is disagreement with the doctrinal basis and practice of *htcd*
- An *htcd* sent Partner terminates their church family membership whilst 'on the field'
- There is a significant change in the aims of the project or individual with which *htcd* is not in agreement.

General principles for administration of mission giving

(all the boring bits you don't want to think about but should!)

The PCC determines the proportion of the church's budget to be given to mission each year. They may wish to discuss the likely needs of all the church's sent and supported Partners in advance and the WiSE co-ordinator should be available for consultation on such matters. At the moment the practice is to allocate each year in advance 10% of the church's budget to mission, the 10% being calculated on the basis of the previous year's income, ¼ going to local mission and outreach and ¾ to 'Judea', 'Samaria' and 'the ends of the Earth'. It is our aim to increase this proportion to at least 10% to 'Judea', 'Samaria' and 'the ends of the Earth', with the funds for local mission coming out of the local budget (90% of income) by the end of 2012.

The WiSE team will allocate the bulk of the budget to sent and supported Partners and agencies in advance, liaising with the church office to ensure appropriate standing orders/cheques are set up/sent. A contingency fund to cover special appeals and short-term grants amongst others, will be kept available to draw on throughout the year. At the end of the accounting year, any surplus funds should go to ministries within the strategic target areas unless there is a particular reason why it should be held over for a gift in the following year.

Each Partner will be allocated a sum according to need and the advice of the mission agency where appropriate, subject to the limits on the total budget. Some Partners will not need regular financial support but should still feel able to bring a one-off expense to the WiSE team for consideration. It is recognised that tentmakers often have particular support needs which local salaries or earnings cannot cover, e.g. regular flights home, relocation expenses, pension contributions or medical insurance. The WiSE team should agree with the Partner before departure which expenses will be covered on a regular basis and which can be covered on a one-off basis.

The WiSE team also administers the financial support of 'Judea' ministries delegated to them by the leadership. The percentage of the total WiSE budget given to such ministries should not exceed 10%.

If more than 20% of the total WiSE budget is to be given to a single recipient, the decision should be referred to the PCC for ratification. Decisions on short-term, one-off gifts of £250 or less can be made by agreement of the WiSE co-ordinator and 2 other members of the team by consultation between meetings, if necessary. Decisions regarding larger sums or further gifts to an existing recipient must go to a full consultation of the whole team, and should normally take place at a meeting, unless the matter is very pressing. Such decisions must be made by the agreement of a majority of the whole team, irrespective of the numbers actually attending a meeting.

Tax efficient giving and designated gifts

Where financial support is given to church family members and their children, it must be possible to prove that there is no tax benefit to the church family member should they also be a donor to the church.

A designated gift is one made to the church by a donor who specifies that it should go to a certain person, project or organisation rather than into the general fund. Such gifts are not counted as part of the income of the church. Occasionally a fund is set up for a special mission project and designated gifts are invited for it, enabling donors to give tax efficiently. In this case the tax refund will be added to the project fund and passed on in full.

Uninvited designated gifts should generally be discouraged. Gifts to mission organisations which have charitable status should not be accepted as these can be made direct equally tax efficiently by individual donors. It involves *htcd* in unnecessary costs (time and money). Designated gifts should only be accepted for individuals who have already been accepted for support by the church (which could be prayer support or prayer+financial support) but only if they are gift aided, in which case the church will forward the net amount and keep the tax refund to cover the administrative costs. Any surplus will go into the general church fund. If a donor wishes the tax refund to go to the Mission Partner they should make use of a CAF account (for charities) or a Sovereign account (for Christian

organisations and individuals). Designated gifts from a CAF or Sovereign account will not usually be accepted as the tax refund has already been added to the gift and there will be costs to the church in making the onward transfer. However, there may be certain circumstances where a one-off gift is being made to a supported Partner who has good reasons for not wanting to set up a Sovereign link for a single gift. In such a case the WiSE team may advise that the gift be accepted with a (discretionary) 10% deduction of the gross for administrative costs.

F Partnership Contract

htcd will

- honour financial commitments keeping to review or termination dates as agreed
- circulate prayer news regularly to the whole church family and linked small groups, keeping matters confidential when requested to do so for personal or safety reasons
- link each Partner or agency with a small group within the church
- appoint a representative for each Partner to be an independent friend and contact. Ideally they should be in the linked small group and act as liaison for that group. They are also likely to be the person best placed to distribute prayer letters, although the Partner may have other friends who want to do this.
- arrange for a member of the WiSE team to write, phone or email regularly.
- seek (through the WiSE team) to assist with arrangements for home leave.
- arrange for a member of the WiSE team to get in touch, by phone if possible, during the first week out on the mission field or back at home to check on immediate needs.
- ensure that a full debrief with a member of the WiSE team or exec takes place within a month of starting home leave.
- review changes in circumstances leading to changes in support requirements at the next WiSE team meeting and deal with them on a case-by-case basis subject to general guidelines in section E. Urgent requests will be dealt with as appropriate.
- encourage visits to Partners, so that a member of the WiSE team or Leadership will try to visit long-term Partners at least once every 3 years. If this is not possible a church family member should be encouraged to visit.

The Mission Partner should

- respond to requests for prayer news at least quarterly or more often if possible
- bring requests for additional financial support to the WiSE team in the first instance but may then circulate it to the congregation if the WiSE team is unable to help
- (sent Partners) make themselves available for debrief during home leave at a mutually convenient time
or
- (supported Partners) provide a written report instead of a debrief if a meeting is not convenient. However, if an individual would like support for the next period of service, a meeting must take place.
- (sent Partners) include **htcd** in the consultation process if major changes in the nature of their service are being considered by them or by their mission agency.
- be honest if they are experiencing difficulties.

Review process

- All supported and sent Partners will have agreed termination dates or review points at which time support may cease without further notice.
- Except, to prevent an individual **sent** Partner having their support terminated mid-term whilst on the field, those who were sent by **htcd** in the understanding that their role would be long-term should have a year's notice of cessation of support or notice equivalent to their remaining time on assignment, whichever is shorter.
- Where a termination date was agreed, a Partner may be invited to make a new application for further support.
- Where a review point rather than a termination date was agreed, there is an assumption that support is likely to continue should the review confirm God's continuing call to the ministry concerned.
- The review is not looking for quantitative 'results' but for evidence of 'God's Hallmark'; effectiveness in the mission field (which may be shown by faithfulness to a difficult ministry that has not yet borne much fruit) and two-way commitment and benefit between the mission Partner and **htcd**.
- The review will seek evidence that the ministry is as represented to the leadership and WiSE team.
- The review should be an opportunity for both parties to give and receive constructive feedback.