

Strategy and Priorities in World Missions at Discovery Hills

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations (ethne), baptizing 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. Matt 28:19-20

New Opportunities and Strategies in World Missions

The era of the western church being the leader in world missions is ending as the international church is actively increasing its role in global evangelism and church planting. Already there are more people joining the missionary force from newer sending countries like Brazil, Nigeria, Singapore and Korea than from long-time leaders Canada and the U.S. The international church movement primarily needs resources: human and financial. Human resources are needed to assist with evangelism, biblical education, leadership and special skills training so that individual churches, church movements and ministries can become indigenously led and reproducing. Financial resources are needed to help these churches, church movements and ministries become self-sustaining. The church in America, rich in these resources, is being called to new strategies of partnership with the international churches.

The Greatest Need

Approximately 27% of the world's population remains unevangelized and without a local body of believers to share the good news of the Gospel. For people living in those cultures, even if they want to know more about a God who loves them, there is no one in their culture pointing the way to Jesus. They need someone from "outside" to come in as evangelists and church planters. Yet there is a great imbalance in current missionary efforts - by one reckoning, 97% of foreign missionaries work in either Christian cultures or cultures that already have a gospel witness, leaving 3% of the missionary workforce for the unreached peoples of the world. In 2000, Christian organizations in the U.S. spent \$269 **billion** ministering to Christians and evangelized non-Christians. In the same year, Christian organizations spent \$810 **million** for ministry to unevangelized non-Christians, a mere 0.3% of the total.

Discovery Hills' Role in Missions

In recognition of these changes and challenges in world missions, Discovery Hills is committed to moving from a "missionary-oriented" approach to a "missions-oriented" approach in our missions program. Working with U.S. agencies and national partners in the international church, we will provide resources, human and financial, in support of global evangelism and church planting effort in strategic areas of the world. We set forth the following mission, vision and strategy to guide our efforts:

- **Mission** – to strategically invest our people and our resources in key areas of the world to introduce lost people to Jesus Christ and help them become fully devoted followers of Christ.

- **Vision**
 - for our church – to see every person at Discovery Hills become a “Great Commission Christian” actively involved in world missions as a “sender,” a “goer,” a “mobilizer” or an “interceder.”
 - for the world – to see God raise up indigenously led, self-sustaining and reproducing churches among the “least reached peoples” of the world.
- **Strategy** – to be effective stewards of our people and resources and to make a significant impact for the gospel by concentrating our missions efforts in selected key areas of the world primarily among the least reached peoples.

In support of our mission and vision, we will employ the following complementary strategies:

1. **Mobilization of our people** – through education, exposure to and participation in cross-cultural ministry opportunities, we will encourage each individual at Discovery Hills to explore their role in expanding God’s kingdom. Examples could include projects in international communities in the local area, short-term trips to culturally different locations or sponsoring the “Perspectives on the World Christian Movement” class.
2. **Geographic strategy** – We will target a specific geographic region in the world where we can make a significant impact. This region will be characterized by strategic needs in the areas of evangelism, national church assistance, socioeconomic problems and by a positive response to the gospel.
3. **Project strategy** – Discovery Hills will support projects in our target geographic area, new projects of strategic importance in the growth of God’s kingdom or projects sponsored by our current missionaries or associated agencies. Projects may be accomplished as **strategic partnerships** with US agencies or national churches where Discovery Hills is an active participant. Possible activities for Discovery Hills include financial support for training and equipping of national pastors/workers; financial support for infrastructure improvements and micro-enterprise projects; sending our pastor or teachers to a specific site on a regular basis; the sending of adult and youth/teen short-term teams for youth and children’s programs, puppet ministry, construction/building projects and skills training; hosting or attending conferences and other mutually beneficial activities. Strategic partnerships encompass more than merely giving financial support. These projects will have clearly defined goals, budgets, expected outcomes and time frames. Periodic evaluation of projects with our partners will be conducted. Projects may also include **strategic opportunities** to advance God’s kingdom, such as *Birthday Present for Jesus* projects, regardless of relationship to or benefit for our church. These projects may have no other involvement on our part other than the provision of financial resources. These strategic opportunities could be for churches, ministries or people.

Priorities

The following priorities will guide our decision making in the investment of our people and our financial resources (shown in priority order):

1. Overseas Evangelism and Church Planting Among “Least-Reached” Peoples – support for existing missionaries, national workers and churches, new missionaries, organizations and projects whose role is evangelism and church planting.
2. Overseas Training – support for personnel, organizations and projects whose role is to provide training for national church leaders.
3. Overseas Support Roles – support for personnel, organizations and projects whose role is to assist with evangelism, church planting, discipleship and caring for the whole person. Examples include healthcare specialists, teachers, pilots, technicians, agriculturists, administrators, Bible translators, and missionary care personnel.
4. U.S. Evangelism, Discipleship and Training – support for personnel, organizations and projects whose role is evangelism, discipleship and training within the U.S.
5. U.S. Support Roles – support for personnel, organizations and projects whose primary role is to provide support within a U.S.-based organization.
6. Special Opportunities – consideration may be given to global ministry opportunities arising from political, social or economic changes that provide special occasions for the spread of the Gospel.

Budgets

In accordance with these strategies and priorities, the goal for the Discovery Hills Missions program is to reach and maintain the following budget allocations:

1. 60% of the annual missions budget for missions work outside of the USA
2. 10 % of the annual missions budget for missions work within the USA
3. 30 % of the annual missions budget for mobilization of the congregation of Discovery Hills (including seminars, short-term trips, conferences and education)

Implementation

Application of these strategies and priorities will begin immediately, however, by necessity and design, there will be a lengthy transition period during which support for existing ministries will continue. The Missions Leadership Team will develop specific policies to address continued support for missionaries currently supported by Discovery Hills whose ministry falls outside the above priorities or is categorized in the lower priority levels. These policies will include timely notification of changes in support and, if needed, graduated decreases in support levels.

Glossary

“missionary-oriented” approach - an approach to world missions which emphasizes a long term relationship with church supported missionaries rather than a long-term commitment to planting the gospel among the people whom they are serving

“missions-oriented” approach - an approach to world missions that directs the attention of the local church towards helping fulfill God’s plan for seeing a healthy local church planted among every people group in the world

Great Commission Christian - one who has made fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) the purpose and focus of their life and who has committed their time, talents and resources to its achievement

sender - one who participates in the task of world evangelization by supporting missionaries and world missions financially, in prayer and by encouragement

goer - one who participates in the task of world evangelization by actively working as a missionary or in direct support of missionaries in cross-cultural evangelism

mobilizer - one who supports the expansion of God’s kingdom by encouraging others to learn about, support, pray for and be involved in the task of world evangelization

interceder - one who intercedes regularly with God in prayer on behalf of His kingdom’s expansion; an intercessor in prayer for world missions

“Perspectives on the World Christian Movement” - a 13 week curriculum established by the US Center for World Missions in Pasadena, CA, which introduces the learner to the biblical, historical, cultural and strategic perspectives of the fulfillment of the Great Commission.