

Fellowship Reformed Church: “Focus Missions”

Drafted August 2015

PART I: DEFINITION OF A “FOCUS MISSION PARTNER”

Fellowship Reformed Church has a deep and rich history of mission support and involvement. Through the years we have supported missionaries and partners both in our local community, and in communities far away. From Taiwan to Peru, from Holland’s Macatawa Resource Center to ministries based in Los Angeles, Fellowship has been a significant contributor to missions from the very beginning.

As Fellowship’s Mission Crew looks forward to our next chapter of “being the hands and feet of Jesus in a lost and broken world so loved by God,” we feel a significant desire to more actively engage our mission partners. To this end, we are working toward a formula to identify specific local and global partners that will be designated as “Focus Missions.”

What is a Focus Mission? A Focus Mission is one that the Mission Crew will intentionally highlight in church communications and regularly invite the congregation to actively engage through events and activities. It is a mission that will provide an opportunity for deep relational development and supports the stated goals of Fellowship in such a way that it may become a part of the very fabric of the everyday ministries of Fellowship Church. This active communication and participation with a few selected Focus Mission Partners will move our church family from the common practice of *transactional mission support* to ***transformational mission engagement*** that will not only impact the communities we support, but will actively further our commitment to *developing faithful followers of Jesus* in our own community, as well.

The Mission Crew, in collaboration with the partner and dependence upon the Holy Spirit, will develop the following for each Focus Mission:

A Communication Strategy: The communication plan will create awareness among our members about the ministry of the partner by:

- introducing the congregation to the culture and context of the ministry
- identifying the needs of those being served by the ministry as well as the needs of those facilitating the ministry
- describing partner’s goals and plans for achieving those goals
- identifying tangible ways the Fellowship community can support the ministry.

A Plan of Action: The action plan will be a roadmap for actively furthering the work of our Focus Missions and providing “on-ramps” for our congregation to participate in the ministry. For all partners, this will include:

1. A plan for special offerings that address specific needs of the partner and provide an opportunity to highlight the ministry for the congregation.
2. Service opportunities for all ages and all abilities. For international partners, this will include trips that combine cultural experiences with acts of service that are appropriate to the context.
3. Relationship opportunities - everything from pen pals to mentors to prayer partners.

4. Expectations that partners regularly provide updates and stories about the ministry which the Mission Crew will share with the Fellowship community in creative and compelling ways.

The number of Focus Missions will be determined on an annual basis, during the Mission Spending Plan development process. At this time, all mission partners will be evaluated in light of (a) progress toward ministry goals, (b) the stated vision and goals of Fellowship Church, and (c) other time sensitive circumstances (i.e., budget short-falls or surpluses, etc.). There is not a maximum term for those partners classified as “Focus Missions” which continue to meet the stated expectations at each annual review. These stated expectations of Focus Missions are described in the next section, titled “Preferred Characteristics.”

PART II: PREFERRED CHARACTERISTICS OF “FOCUS MISSION PARTNERS”

The following are criteria that will be utilized by the Mission Crew in the process of prayerfully identifying partners who will be classified as “Focus Mission Partners”:

1. **Honors Christ:** The ministry furthers God’s work in the world and the vision God has given Fellowship *to love God and others, as an accepting community, centered in Christ and focused on developing faithful followers of Jesus*. The partner also has stated goals that align with the stated ministry goals and objectives of Fellowship Church.
2. **Accountability:** A defined structure of accountability for the ministry and/or missionary that ensures accurate reporting of a) ministry progress toward defined goals, b) finances, and c) agreed upon measurements that are contextual for each partner. This may be monitored by the denominational structure or another trusted organization.
3. **Relational:** Partner is willing to make themselves available to relationship with the Fellowship community. This may be accomplished through electronic communications and/or on-site visits. We desire opportunities for individuals in the congregation, as well as groups, to interact with those involved in the ministry over time. *Each partner will work with the Fellowship Mission Crew to specify appropriate expectations to include, but not limited to, a minimum requirement from both parties to facilitate print communications, electronic communications, one-to-one interactions (i.e., pen pals) and in-person interactions.*
4. **Accessible:** Partners have the capacity to engage the Fellowship community in the activity of the ministry, both by hosting on-site visitors and providing invitations which engage all ages and abilities in relationship, as described above. This requires that a partner’s locations and available accommodations are financially feasible, the necessary technology is available for long-distance engagement, and the partner shares a desire to visit the Fellowship community, when possible.

5. **Multi-generational engagement:** Each ministry partner appeals to the gifts and interests of a broad variety of ages and demographics within the congregation, and between the ministries of all partners there are opportunities to engage every generation in missions.