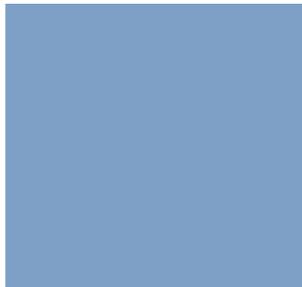


MISSION COMMITTEE VISIONING WORKBOOK



Covenant World Mission

Mission Committee Visioning Workbook

CONTENTS

The Onesiphorus Story	3
The Vision—Where Are We Headed?	4
How Mobilized for Mission Is Your Church?	6
Setting Long-range Goals.....	7
Creating a Mission Policy.....	8
Mission Committee Job Descriptions.....	9
Personal Goals for Your Mission Outreach	13
Checklist for Mission Committees.....	15
Half-day Mission Retreat.....	19
Mission Budget Strategies and Tactics.....	20

Developed by Mobilization and Connection of Covenant World Mission

The Onesiphorus Story

2 Timothy 1:16-18

Onesiphorus isn't exactly the first name that comes to mind when thinking of a biblical model of mission involvement. We usually think of Paul, Barnabas, or Timothy. Onesiphorus is mentioned only twice in the Bible, so he's unfamiliar to many of us. Who was he? How can he be an inspiration to those serving on mission committees?

Behind the scenes. We don't really know much about him. He was a family man who gave up some of his time to help and encourage Paul. He wasn't ashamed to be associated with Paul, even when he was imprisoned. Onesiphorus helped Paul in many untold ways in Rome, as well as Ephesus.

Took risks. In fact, Onesiphorus took a considerable risk to befriend and encourage Paul when he was imprisoned in Rome. Back in those days Christianity was seen as a Jewish sect called The Way. The religion was not approved by the state and the leaders were often imprisoned. Even to be associated with a leader took considerable risk!

Diligent. Paul wasn't the easiest person to find in Rome. Onesiphorus had to look for him. Back then, as is the case for some places today, visitors provided the food and other resources for those imprisoned. Onesiphorus was Paul's lifeline while in prison.

Behind the scenes. Onesiphorus helped Paul in many untold ways in Rome, as well as Ephesus.

Made a tremendous contribution. It may not be too far off to say that because of Onesiphorus's help, portions of Scripture were preserved. He kept Paul alive to write them.

APPLICATION FOR YOUR MISSION COMMITTEE

God uses the known and the unknown. We may not all be called to be a missionary like Paul. However, we can help support them and influence their direction. We can be faithful in working behind the scenes.

Every role is vital. Have you ever taken apart one of those old windup watches? A watch can stop because one part not working. The vision for mission is like that, too. All the parts need to be working. The local church has an important part to play in what God is doing around the world.

We are called to take risks. What might risk look like? We can risk time and invest in prayer. We can work to promote vision for mission for the church in which we serve. We can risk some of our resources, and see where God leads. In prayer, we can listen to Jesus, letting him lead vision, goals, and direction—the places he calls us to risk.

The long-term results are yet to be seen. Onesiphorus probably had no idea how he fit into the larger mission picture. He just loved Jesus and loved his missionary friend Paul. Without a doubt, God honored his faithfulness. And so it will be for us who make the commitment for the long haul. We too, by God's grace, can become colleagues like Onesiphorus.

The Vision—Where Are We Headed?

It's important to have a sense of direction as the local church gets connected to God's work around the world. Each local church needs a purpose statement that defines vision for mission, which then helps determine direction from its unique context. If your church already has a vision statement for mission, it's a good idea to review it every few years.

A vision statement is vital in keeping a mission committee and the congregation it represents on track. A vision statement guides purpose, helps determine goals, and impacts decisions. If there is no guiding purpose, then energies may be poured into one project one year and diverted somewhere else the next. This destroys continuity.

If your mission committee already has a vision statement, read it together and talk about the following questions:

1. Does this statement resonate with us?
2. Does this statement make sense in light of where our church is at today?
3. Does this statement resonate with the rest of the congregation?
4. How is mission and vision being communicated to the congregation?

If your mission committee doesn't have a vision statement, do the following exercise to develop one:

CREATING A VISION STATEMENT FOR MISSION

1. Write the central theme of each passage in a single phrase. [Note: There are many Bible references that can be used in this process. There is a resource called "Missio Dei—the Mission of God" from Covenant World Mission which outlines a Bible study process for groups to go through, in understanding the breadth and depth of God's work in the world.]

Psalm 95:3-7

Matthew 25:24-40, 28:18-20

Romans 3:9-12; 23

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

How Mobilized for Mission Is Your Church?

In determining next steps for your church in global ministries, it's important to consider where you've been. Take some time to evaluate your church's current involvement and commitment to global mission. Mission involvement crosses many layers in the life of a local church—from leadership to mobilization to support to sending.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

Your mission committee may discuss the following to get a sense of mission action:

1. Categorize your church's current ministries:
 - Are they geared toward relationships and people outside your church or are they focused on people within your church?
2. Talk about impact of these ministries listed:
 - How are they part of the life-giving work of God's kingdom?
 - Is the impact local? Is there global impact?
3. How engaged is your entire congregation in these ministries?
 - Who leads? Who participates?
 - What percentage of the "whole church" is involved?
4. What motivates people to participate? What keeps them committed?
5. Is something missing?
6. What do you celebrate in the church's mission?
7. What needs attention?

MISSION ASSESSMENT PROFILE

Pioneers has a diagnostic tool called, "Mission Assessment Profile," which can be downloaded from their website at www.cartpioneers.org (search for Mission Assessment Profile).

This tool helps you think about the process of mission outreach such as pastoral leadership, mission committee organization, mission education, etc. Mission committees may feel overwhelmed by the assessment tool. As you reflect on your answers, it's important to remember the breadth of opportunities for mission connection.

In light of the evaluation, make sure you celebrate one or two things your church is doing well and discuss ideas to keep those areas strong. Then, choose one or two things to work on next.

Don't forget about your mission committee's vision statement as you do this evaluation. What will you work on that makes sense in light of your vision for mission?

Setting Long-range Goals

Hopefully, this process is helping you catch a glimpse of global kingdom work into which God invites your church. Before you get weighed down in making many decisions about where to pour resources, whom to support, or what to do, it is important to consider long-range goals. Remember, vision guides purpose, which shapes goals, and determines direction.

Consider these questions individually, and discuss them corporately to set direction for your local church.

1. What mission opportunities do you hope your church will be involved in during the next two years?
2. What mission opportunities do you hope your church will be involved in during the next ten years?
3. Does what I'm hoping for match the mission vision of the entire congregation?
4. What needs to happen to see these ideas become a reality?
5. What could you be doing to promote a greater sense of global mission awareness within the church?
 - In worship
 - In home fellowship groups
 - In youth group
 - In Sunday school
 - In Bible studies
 - In the leadership team (e.g., boards, councils)
6. How can you encourage more members to actively support global mission in prayer and finances?
7. Which missionaries could you support, now and in the future? Why?
8. How might your church get involved in sending a short-term mission team on a cross-cultural experience?
9. Within your church, whom do you see as being a future missionary (one to two years or longer)? What might you do to encourage those individuals on their journey?

Creating a Mission Policy

Once you have discussed and set long-range goals it may be helpful to create a policy for mission involvement.

Use your vision statement and goals as a foundation for writing a policy that describes purpose, goals, expectations, and parameters. Each policy should be unique to your church's context, values, and leadership practices. A policy acts as a compass that provides direction for new and ongoing mission support and involvement. This document should be consistent over time but allow flexibility for new opportunities and the movement of the Holy Spirit.

A policy will you:

- Put your vision statement into action with clear direction
- Maintain consistency in mission involvement across time and leadership change
- Allow for thoughtful evaluation of new opportunities and issues
- Define responsibility and expectations
- Communicate your vision statement and goals to the congregations

Consider these questions as you draft a policy that will inform mission involvement decisions and practices.

1. What level of support will your congregation commit to missionaries? mission trips? mission projects? international crisis situations?
2. How will your congregation decide which missionaries or projects to support?
3. In addition to funding, how will your congregation support God's work in the world?
4. How will your church communicate with and about missionaries and mission partners?
5. How will your church evaluate and celebrate mission involvement?
6. Will all age ranges take part in global ministry? If so, what will that look like?

Mission Committee Job Descriptions

Mission leadership is greatly enhanced when everyone on board has a clearly defined role. Having reasonable job descriptions is also a great recruiting tool because many are hesitant to volunteer for something that is not clearly defined. The following section is a set of generic job descriptions for a healthy mission committee. Each group should feel free to modify the descriptions to fit their own context.

An ideal mission committee consists of at least five members. Don't be discouraged if your group is smaller, just adapt the expectations for each member.

Each member will commit to be a faithful prayer partner with the missionaries related to the church. Each member can also pray that the Holy Spirit would fan the church's vision for mission into full flame.

CHAIRPERSON

CHARACTERISTICS: passion for the lost, heart for mission, advocate for missionaries

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Meeting Leadership
 - a. Determine place, time and agenda for monthly committee meeting.
 - b. Preside over each meeting, extend invitations to guest speakers and/or missionaries, interview those seeking financial and prayer support from your church for their ministries, keep current and report status of persons in ministry supported by the congregation.
 - c. Attend all meetings pertaining to leadership and committee chairperson (e.g., administrative council and leadership retreats).
2. Disseminate Information
 - a. Regularly pick up mail from the office box.
 - b. Read mission newsletters, periodicals, articles, and missionary correspondence.
 - c. Make this information available to various concerned parties (e.g., boards, council, pastors, small groups, individuals, and the congregation).
3. Church Communication
 - a. Give monthly updates regarding mission work and ministries in church news letters, on church website and blog.
 - b. Coordinate notices for the weekly church bulletin.
 - c. Create a plan for ongoing communication to the congregation about mission work (e.g., mission display, church newsletter, e-mail, social media).
4. Calendar/Annual Events
 - a. Coordinate all functions of the mission committee (business, social, interaction

with pastoral staff, etc.) so there will be no conflict of interest or overlapping functions. Plan early and get events on the church calendar—six months is not too early.

- b. Give leadership to mission awareness activities.
- c. Connect with other local churches regarding learning and serving opportunities.

5. Financial

- a. Prepare a projected mission budget by appropriate deadlines.
- b. Be aware of financial concerns of the mission group and the congregation.

6. Reporting

- a. A written report of the mission committee activity for the calendar year, along with a financial report-to-date, should be included in the church's Annual Report each year.

7. Mission Exposure

- a. Plan at least one adult class or Bible study with a focus on mission each year. Work out the curriculum with the person overseeing adult Christian education/formation.
- b. Conduct one session with the Inquirers Class (new members) on the topic of church-sponsored mission.

CHURCH-GROUP LIAISON

CHARACTERISTICS: good communicator and thoughtful

RESPONSIBILITIES: Coordinates communication between mission committee and church non-administrative groups (e.g., Sunday-school classes, fellowship groups) on matters of mutual interest where congregational involvement is deemed appropriate.

1. Work closely with groups to ensure that they are adequately informed of the mission committee's activities that are likely to be of interest. Keep the committee apprised of the group's concerns and objectives with respect to mission.
 2. Assign a missionary, missionary family, or church-sponsored organization for each church group. Entrust them with the following responsibilities:
 - a. Communicate regularly with the missionaries or organizations (through cards, letters, e-mail, phone calls, etc.) in order to encourage, exhort, and build relationship with them.
 - b. Provide spiritual support and sharing through prayer for the missionaries and/or staff of sponsored organization.
 - c. Report monthly to the liaison on the group's efforts and on responses received.
 3. Report monthly to the committee on group's efforts related to mission.
 4. Wherever possible, involve church groups in committee-sponsored church functions and events.
-

CONNECTION COORDINATOR

CHARACTERISTICS: a networker and an advocate

RESPONSIBILITIES: This role connects missionaries with the congregation and the congregation to the missionaries. The connections may be made through e-mail, social media, letters, cards, phone calls. This person pays attention to ways the local church can be an encouragement for the missionaries it supports. Be innovative and creative. Sign birthday and anniversary cards, set up a Skype call between the missionary and the mission committee or during worship to hear from and pray for the missionary.

SECRETARY

CHARACTERISTICS: organized, concise, and prompt

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Record the minutes of all mission committee meetings.
 2. Prepare minutes no later than one week after the meeting and distribute to all members.
 3. Procure all handouts for absent committee members and distribute materials to them.
 4. Call (at least three days in advance) all committee members to remind them of the upcoming meeting.
 5. Assist other mission related ministries as time and resources permit.
-

FINANCIAL LIAISON

CHARACTERISTICS: attentive, creative and good with numbers

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Work with the church bookkeeper in preparing a monthly financial report. Track the monthly progress of the congregation in meeting its commitments to the mission budget.
 2. Communicate to the bookkeeper the disbursement needs and priorities of the mission committee.
 3. Assist the chairperson of the mission committee in preparing the annual projected budget. Three months prior to the new fiscal year is ideal.
 4. Prepare attention-grabbing reminders as to the progress of the congregation in meeting its commitments to the mission budget. Display graphs in the mission corner or other communication venues.
-

MISSION DISPLAY COORDINATOR

CHARACTERISTICS: artistic and creative

RESPONSIBILITIES: Maintain the designated mission display as an attractive, informative, up-to-date center for news, promotion, inspiration and challenge relating to global ministries for the benefit of the church.

DISPLAY PRESENTATION

1. Ensure that each missionary, missionary family, and/or church-sponsored organization that partners with your church has a photograph and brief descriptive narrative, and that these are fairly uniform.
 2. Update narratives and photos often or at least annually or when a significant change has taken place (e.g., birth of a new family member).
 3. Include a map that is accurately updated.
 4. Maintain a space for prayer requests.
 5. Alter display presentation and materials occasionally.
-

SPECIAL EVENTS and SOCIAL COORDINATOR

CHARACTERISTICS: innovative and socially oriented

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Coordinates mission awareness opportunities for the congregation to learn about global ministries in a fun and interactive setting.
2. Give leadership to training events for short-term mission team.
3. Work with missionaries on home assignment to schedule visits with the church and small groups.
4. Give assistance to home assignment/returning missionaries in need of housing.
5. Plan church activities which support mission-related projects (e.g., care packages, Thanksgiving offering).

Personal Goals for Your Mission Outreach

For members of the mission committee, commitment to the goals of the group ought to impact personal action and likely goes beyond it. As you think about your vision statement, the purposes the team is committing to, and the goals defined, it is good to reflect on personal goals.

As you pray about the process the mission committee is going through, pray about how you might respond to the tasks at hand, and the role with which you're entrusted. Then, identify your response, with action steps.

GOAL #1

How will I achieve it?

GOAL #2

How will I achieve it?

GOAL #3

How will I achieve it?

Checklist for Mission Committees

The following can be used for a mission committee consultation, as you seek to evaluate how you're doing and what you need.

THE MISSION COMMITTEE

- Do you have a vision statement for mission? (provide copy)
- What are your stated goals? (provide copy)
- What goals have been or are close to being accomplished?
- Which goals have not been realized? Why?
- How many mission committee members do you have?
- Do you have a chairperson? Who is it? How long has your present chairperson served?
- How often does your mission committee meet?
- Do you have clearly identified roles?
- Are there job descriptions?
- What issues occupy the bulk of your time?

RESOURCES

- Does your church have a mission display presentation with a map? Is it current?
- Do you have current photos of your missionaries or church-sponsored organizations?
- Do you have current mission books and materials in your library?
- Does your church visit the Covenant World Mission blog (<http://blogs.covchurch.org/worldmission>) or receive the Covenant World Mission newsletter (quarterly) or Catalyst?
- What percentage of your church's annual budget is dedicated to mission?
What is the dollar amount?
- Do you regularly distribute missionary newsletters, e-mails or subscribe to missionary blogs?

ACTIVITIES

How often do you have missionaries visit the church during the year?

- Monthly Quarterly Annually When was the last time

What were two of your most recent mission projects?

Were they successful? Why or why not?

Has your church sent out teams to minister in local or cross-cultural situations? Describe.

What local mission ministries is your church supporting?

Do you have regular public prayer for mission? How often?

MISSIONARY SUPPORT

How many missionaries do you support and what agencies do they represent?

Do the members of your congregation know the names of missionaries you support?

Do you designate your support to Covenant World Mission?

What Covenant projects do you support?

Do you correspond with your missionaries? How often?

Do you send and receive e-mails, phone calls, newsletters?

Have you had someone from your church visit a missionary's country of service? When?

MISSION EDUCATION

Does your Christian education/formation committee use mission-related curriculum in Sunday school?

What sources?

Have you ever had an adult Sunday-school class on mission or needs in the world? How did it go?

Have you participated in mission training within your conference or region through the Evangelical Covenant Church?

WORSHIP

Does your church pray during weekly worship for its missionaries?

Do you have mission-emphasis Sundays? How often?

Does your pastor give sermons on mission? How often?

LEVEL OF CONGREGATION COMMITMENT

Who (e.g., individual, church group) is most involved in mission?

Can the members of your congregation name the ways you are involved in global ministry?

What activities/projects?

Do these activities/projects match the mission vision of the entire congregation?

Does each age group have a way to commit to mission?

- Children
- Youth
- Young Adult
- Older Adults
- Seniors

Do members use the annual Covenant Missionary Prayer Calendar?

Do members of your church sponsor international students?

COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING

Our church would be more involved in mission if...

More people would join our mission committee if...

The age group most lacking in mission commitment is...

Half-day Mission Retreat

WHY SET ASIDE A RETREAT TIME?

- There's too much to cover during an evening meeting.
- There's little energy left at the end of the day to cover visionary items.
- People are more creative when relaxed and slowed down.
- A half-day retreat can screen out other distractions.

TOPICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Your church's short-term and long-term mission goals.
- Developing a plan for missionary care, interaction and follow-up.
- Designing a Sunday-school class, Bible study, or special event.
- Articulating a mission support policy.
- Growing together in mission knowledge. Discussing a suggested book, watching a video series (e.g., *A Candle in the Dark*—William Carey's story).
- Planning next year's mission calendar.
- Short-term mission team planning.
- Prayer support of missionaries and outreach ministries.

TACTICAL SUGGESTIONS

- Choose a topic and delegate sub-responsibilities.
- Prepare background material for participants to digest prior to retreat.
- Start early on a Saturday and end at noon.
- Keep it simple. A couple of topics listed above and mission-related items are plenty.
- Meet quarterly.
- Ask your pastor to attend one retreat a year.
- Have fun together!

Mission Budget Strategies and Tactics

by Keith Miller

1. Clarify the vision for mission—identify priorities and goals.
2. Set Objectives
 - 2.1 Budgeting strategies
 - 2.2 Budgeting tactics
 - 2.3 Budgeting for Covenant missionaries
3. Mission Budget Strategies
 - 3.1 Diagnose how your budget is currently being distributed
 - Types of ministries (i.e. medical, education, church planting and evangelism, discipleship, mission agency support staff)
 - Local, regional and/or domestic and/or international
 - Individuals and/or institutions
 - Covenant and/or non-Covenant
 - Church family and/or non-Church family
 - 3.2 Determine where you want to focus your budget
 - 3.3 Prepare a long-term plan for adjusting the focus of your mission budget
 - Be faithful to those you support (how long will you support?)
 - Allow flexibility to accommodate your congregation's new ministries
 - Put more money into individual and institutional support where you want to increase your focus
4. Mission Budget Tactics
 - 4.1 Negotiating your budget
 - Be early (get your budget to the table prior to being asked)
 - Be prepared (line item rationale)
 - Be persistent (use board and congregational meetings to explain budget needs and priorities)
 - 4.2 Budget Line Item Priorities
 - 4.2.1 Priority #1—Continue support of current responsibilities
 - be a reliable baseline of support for missionary careers, provide cost-of-living raises, take into account changing circumstances—new baby, new location
 - 4.2.2 Priority #2—Support your own people
 - long-term missionaries, project missionaries, short-term missionaries, short-term mission teams
 - 4.2.3 Priority #3—Keep a reserve for unanticipated needs
 - do not allocate every penny, remember there will be ongoing opportunities that come up during the year

- 4.2.4 Priority #4—New applicants from outside your church
 - short-term, project, or long-term missionaries from other Covenant churches, as well as other new connections.
- 4.3 Keep your own books.
 - Set up your own mission budget spread sheet to track budget, actual, new items, etc.
- 4.4 Raise additional support during the year
 - Focus requests for additional resources on specific individuals or projects.
 - Go to your leadership team to see if they can provide additional resources.
 - Ask for special fundraising events.
- 5. Supporting Covenant missionaries
 - 5.1 Through your Evangelical Covenant Church (ECC) contributions—churches can designate a significant portion of their ECC contributions for specific Covenant missionaries.
 - 5.2 Through additional support contributions—churches can provide additional, dedicated support to: Covenant World Mission, specific Covenant missionaries, specific projects or needs. For more information, contact Patty Shepherd, associate director of advancement and communication, by email at: patty.shepherd@covchurch.org.



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