

How to Apply and Prepare

Candidates should notify the Committee as early as possible of their intention to serve, even if they have not yet received final acceptance by the mission agency under which they intend to serve. For projects during the months of May, June, July and August, this preliminary notification should be given in writing to the Missions Chairman no later than the first Sunday in March. The Committee will assign mentors to each prospective candidate, or arrange for group meetings, on the basis of this preliminary notification. This mentoring program will be under the oversight of the Pastor for Missions and will include preparation for travel, the etiquette of fund raising, a discussion of cross cultural expectations, and strategies, spiritual preparation for the upcoming experience and an opportunity after the trip to discuss what has been learned.

As soon as final acceptance of the candidate has been given by the mission agency the candidate should notify the Committee by submitting:

- A completed copy of the Committee's application form, giving background on the candidate, his/her testimony and previous training that may apply
- A copy of the mission agency's doctrinal statement and description of the project
- Three letters of reference: one from a lay leader (Sunday school teacher, Impact Group leader, Youth Staff), one from a member of the pastoral staff, and one from outside the congregation.

V.E.F.C.

Short Term Missions Application

At Visalia Evangelical Free Church our pastors, elders and members of the Mission Committee encourage members to consider summer or short-term missionary service with agencies approved by the Missions Committee.

Who Can Go?

In supporting short-term mission projects, the Committee recognizes their strategic value within a missions program that should continue to place its greatest emphasis on the work of career missionaries in long-term situations. **Therefore the Committee will look most favorably on those short term projects where:**

- 1) The short-term worker will be assisting an established career missionary whom we are already supporting.
- 2) A young person who has demonstrated spiritual maturity within our body will have the opportunity to gain new skills for Christian service and to examine how Christ might be leading him or her into career missions or lifelong Christian service.
- 3) An adult with proven gifts and skills is called to a project of limited duration.

In selecting candidates for short-term service, the Mission Committee will be looking for those who:

- Are active members of VEFC
The Committee will pay attention to faithfulness in attendance, discipleship training and service within the local church. Consideration may be given to those with a long history at our church but who have relocated to another part of the country and have moved their membership to a qualifying church where they now live. Consideration may also be given in situations where a young person from a member family has not yet personally joined the church. In such situations, a note should accompany the application from the member parents, explaining why they feel membership should be postponed.

- Have as their primary motivation service to the cause of Christ.
- Have parental approval if a minor.
- Demonstrate evidence of spiritual growth in their own lives, and a concern for others.
- Will be serving with a mission agency approved by the Committee, holding to a set of doctrines in agreement with those of VEFC.
- Are willing to submit to a mentoring program designed by the Committee.

What About Finances?

In support of such short-term projects, the Missions Committee offers information and counsel. As funds are available, the Committee can distribute funds budgeted for short-term missions.

In addition, the Elder Board may annually establish an account to receive designated giving, which may be distributed by the committee to help candidates as needed. Wherever possible, members who will be serving with established missions should instruct donors to give directly to those missions. Donors intending to help specific short-termers through the common fund should accompany their gift with a written request (separate from the check) to the Chairman of the Missions Committee. In such cases due to IRS tax regulations, donors should understand that the Committee retains the prerogative to redirect such funds to other candidates, as they deem best.

With approval of the Committee, candidates may solicit support directly from individual members of the congregation through letters or personal contacts under the supervision and mentoring of someone designated by the Committee. This solicitation is viewed as both a discipleship and a faith building opportunity, and not just a means to raise funds necessary for the project.