

# Missional Partnership Task Force Proposal

## July 24, 2024

- 1) The Task Force recommends that we continue to support mission endeavors at the level of 10% of regular budget offerings.

Anyone giving to ESBC can choose to designate their budget mission offerings to one of the following Global Mission Partners (in alphabetic order)

  - i) The Baptist World Alliance
  - ii) The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
  - iii) The Southern Baptist Convention
  - iv) Gifts divided equally among BWA, CBF, and SBC.
  - v) A new fund- *The Greater Way Partnership Fund*- (This would be the default if a person does not choose one of the Global Partners listed above.)
- 2) The Task Force recommends that *The Greater Way Partnership Fund* be used for additional funding for current mission partners, mission emergencies or spontaneous needs that arise, or new missions opportunities.
- 3) The Task Force recommends that ESBC create a Missions Vision Council within the Missions Cluster that will:
  - o Develop a strategy for missional partnerships
  - o Evaluate opportunities presented by mission partners to use *The Greater Way Partnership Fund*
  - o Make recommendations to clusters/ deacons/ congregation spending and participation in missional partnerships.
  - o Become a learning group for expanding our participation in Kingdom causes.
  - o Communicate missions projects with the church.
  - o Facilitate missions education for the congregation, including preparations for “The Global Missions Celebration.”
  - o Evaluate the balance of *The Greater Way Partnership Fund* at the end of the year to determine how funds should be used.
- 4) The Task Force recommends the following composition of the Missions Vision Council:
  - a) The Missions Vision Council will be housed under the Missions Cluster.
  - b) The Missions Vision Council will be chosen by the Nominating Committee with input from and consultation with the Missions Cluster.
  - c) There will be 7 members on the Missions Vision Council.
    - i) 3 members will be chosen from the Missions Cluster
      - (1) 1 member will be a member of the Local Missions Council.
      - (2) 1 member will be a member of the National Missions Council.
      - (3) 1 member will be a member of the International Missions Council.
    - ii) 2 members will be chosen from the Stewardship Committee

- iii) 2 members will be at-large members of the congregation.
  - d) There will be staggered membership for team members, with each member serving a 3-year term once the team is established. The inaugural team will either serve 1 or 2 years and then roll off with the ability to be nominated back onto the team to serve the full 3-year term.
  - e) The Missions Vision Council will choose a chairperson at the first meeting of the church year.
- 5) The Task Force recommends the following guidelines for allocating money from *The Greater Way Partnership Fund*:
- a) The Missions Vision Council would be accountable to the deacons and stewardship committee for the funds spent and would give reports of their activity at each regular church conference.
  - b) For ongoing partner support, the team can set up a multi-year plan of funding that will come from *The Greater Way Partnership Fund*.
- 6) The Task Force recommends the following criteria for adding new partners:  
Consideration for new partners must be consistent with our mission statement and the Greater Way Covenant.
- 7) The Task Force recommends that ESBC:
- a) adjust the support for The Greenville Baptist Association for 2024 to the level of funds already distributed.
  - b) redistribute the balance of the funds budgeted for GBA in the 2024 budget to our mission partners in Ecuador and Thailand which currently receive no financial support from Earle Street. We have been assisting these ministries with the work of mission teams for several years.
  - c) direct any future support for the GBA to local projects that align with our mission statement and The Greater Way Covenant.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does it mean to be centered-set/ Jesus-centered?

“Rather than drawing a line to identify people based on their common characteristics, a centered set uses a directional and relational basis of evaluation. The group is created by defining a center and observing people’s relationship with the center.” “In a centered church, God is the center focus.” We want ESBC to be defined by Christ, not an outside organization or denominational structure. One writer defined being ‘centrist’ as a “space deep and rich with conviction. It is a position that is biblically based, Christ-centered, missionally focused, relationally healthy and historically orthodox.” A centered-set congregation will engage relationally across a spectrum of missional partners and cooperate in mission with like-minded brothers and sisters.

## **What is the difference between missions and missional?**

The mission of Earle Street Baptist Church is to: worship God (worship), to share the gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed (missions), to be a home to all who would enter (fellowship), to minister to the needs of one another (ministry), and to assist in spiritual growth (spiritual growth). We also support missions causes locally, nationally, and globally through our giving and personal involvement.

### ***Being missional is a much bigger concern than just supporting missions.***

“Missional is a word that came to be a part of the Christian vocabulary in the last 30 years or so. (Not missions but *missional*.) It is an important distinction that helps us to see missions from a different perspective. In many Baptist Churches “missions” was something you prayed about and gave money to, but was a small, but important part of a large church program. But the concept of “missional” broadens the mission of the church to be everything we are and all that we do in service to the “*missio Dei*” or mission of God.

### ***Being a missional church is actively participating in the *missio Dei*, or mission of God.***

Christopher Wright in an article for the Mission Church Network offers the following explanation of a missional church:

Many times, we wrongly assume that the primary activity of God is in the church, rather than recognizing that God’s primary activity is in the world, and the church is God’s instrument sent into the world to participate in His redemptive mission. This key distinction clarifies the difference between a church with a missions program and a missional church. A church with a missions program usually sees missions as one activity alongside many other equally important programs of the church. A missional church, on the other hand, focuses all of its activities around its participation in God’s agenda for the world. God’s mission must form and inform everything we do. All activities of the church must be catalyzed by and organized around the *missio Dei*.

From: <http://www.missionalchurchnetwork.com/what-is-missional/>

Another way to perceive this is missions is something we do, missional is who we are. Everything we are and do in the congregation is to be focused on living in the center of God’s mission for the world. As a missional, centered-set church we will strive to partner with and cooperate with others who are seeking to care for God’s creation and call people into a reconciled relationship with Himself.

## **Am I able to still give money to the SBC?**

Yes. Everyone is able to choose a Global Partner to give 10% of their budget offering. As well as designating one’s mission offering to the Southern Baptist Convention, others can designate to the Baptist World Alliance, The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, or gifts equally divided among the three.

## **What is the Baptist World Alliance?**

“The Baptist World Alliance is a global movement of Baptists sharing a common confession of faith in Jesus Christ bonded together by God’s love to support, encourage and strengthen one another while proclaiming and living the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit before a lost and hurting world.”

It is a global network of 51 million Baptists in 130 countries and territories unified by a mission to impact the world for Christ. As a “Global Impact Church,” a congregation connects with other Baptist churches and conventions in five key ministry areas:

- Strengthening worship, fellowship, and unity
- Leading in missions and evangelism
- Responding to human need through aid, relief, and community development.
- Defending religious freedom and human rights and justice.
- Advancing theological reflection and transformational leadership.

## **Can we add missional partners in the future?**

Yes, the Missions Vision Council can evaluate adding any additional missions partners.

## **How will the congregation have continued input in our missions strategy?**

Every year, the Missions Vision Council will make recommendations on budget allocations for partners. The congregation will have a chance to ask questions about these allocations and also to vote on the budget.

## **How do I update my designation to Global Partners?**

- Similar to our Global Missions Offering, a card will be provided to make your preferences known or it can be done on the church’s website or Realm.

## **If someone doesn’t designate a Global Partner, where will their money go?**

- If someone doesn’t designate a Global Partner, then 10% of their budget offerings will go into *The Greater Way Partnership Fund*.

## **Will ESBC continue to have the Global Missions Celebration?**

- Yes, we will continue to have Global Missions Celebration (held in February) giving people the opportunity to make good faith pledges for missions over and above their budget offering designations.

## **When will these changes take effect?**

- August 1, 2024, pending congregational approval.