



SHORT-TERM MISSIONS/STUDENT MINISTRY TEAMS PROGRAM POLICY

STAMP = Short-Term Adult Missions Program

World Impact = High school (HYACKS) missions program

Justice & Compassion = High school (HYACKS) domestic ministry trips

Ministry Philosophy

We believe that those who participate in a cross-cultural or domestic ministry experience—adults and youth alike—begin to develop a greater Christian maturity and become not only more committed to ministry and global missions but also more effective church members who actively engage in praying, going and/or sending.

Purpose—Missions Teams

The purpose of the College Church short-term missions teams is to foster greater awareness and understanding of missions within the congregation of College Church by providing opportunities for adults and youth to participate in cross-cultural ministry. Short-term teams are sent in response to a request for assistance from a College Church missionary and/or national partner.

Purpose—Student Ministry Teams

Student Ministry Teams give high school students opportunities to meet the spiritual and physical needs of people in the United States in the name of Jesus Christ. Teams are sent in response to a request for assistance. Trips are designed to expose students to ministries and people who are intentionally proclaiming the good news of Christ, loving their neighbors, living as 'salt' and 'light' in the world (sustaining and improving living conditions and showing the world the glory of God by our patterns of living) and working for justice, peace and the common good in their neighborhoods.

Goals: Serve, Learn, Grow, Continue

Every STAMP and World Impact team has four goals:

1. **SERVE our partners.** Each team's primary objective is to serve our missionaries and ministry partners – to propel their ministry forward through our assistance.
2. **LEARN about the world.** Every team member on a missions trip will learn about the culture and language of their host country, the state of the national church and the nature of cross-cultural work. Ministry trips will expose and challenge team members to consider the poor and disenfranchised in the United States. These trips also foster closer relationships between members of College Church and our colleagues worldwide.
3. **GROW in Christ.** Team members are challenged to grow in their faith in Christ, their confidence in sharing the Gospel, and their awareness of how God is establishing and strengthening his church worldwide.
4. **CONTINUE in missions/ministry.** Serving on a missions/ministry team is another step in a lifetime of outreach and missions involvement. After a trip, we encourage participants to continue exploring ways that they can be involved in outreach that maximizes their gifts, skills and interests.

Guidelines

I. Oversight committees

- A. The STAMP and World Impact Committees shall be standing committees of the Board of Missions. The Board of Missions shall approve of each individual's membership on these committees.
- B. The STAMP committee shall be comprised of the Missions Pastor, one representative from the Board of Missions and up to eight additional members who have participated in recent STAMP projects. A new representative shall be nominated by each STAMP team upon the completion of its project. After the Board of Missions has approved the nominee, this person shall replace the committee member who has been serving for the longest time, unless this would result in a committee with fewer than eight recent STAMP project participants. (revised 6/03)
- C. The World Impact Committee shall be comprised of the High School Pastor, the Coordinator for Short-Term Missions, one representative from the Board of Missions, one member selected by the Board of Christian Education and one adult member of the HYACK ministry team. Up to an additional seven members of the committee may be selected from the pool of former World Impact/Justice & Compassion team leaders who shall agree to serve a term of two years. New members will join the committee at its August meeting. Committee members may continue to serve consecutive terms by consensus of the committee and approval of the Board of Missions. Inactive members may be replaced by consensus of the committee and approval of the Board of Missions.
- D. The Missions Pastor (STAMP) or High School Pastor (World Impact) shall nominate, with Board of Missions approval, one member of the committee to serve as chairperson. Once approved, the chairperson will serve in that position for a period of two years and then rotate off the committee upon completion of the two years as determined by committee protocol mentioned above.

II. Committee Responsibilities

The committees' responsibilities involve people, preparation and evaluation. Decisions made at the committee level are subject to approval by the Board of Missions. Specific responsibilities of the STAMP and World Impact committees include:

- A. Keep the Board of Missions(*) informed regarding team activities and plans.
- B. Submit long-term goals to the Board of Missions.
- C. Present a proposed annual budget to the Board of Missions each year for the fiscal year missions budget.
- D. In collaboration with the College Church missions staff, select suitable projects and submit them to the Board of Missions for approval.
- E. Approve proposed project budgets presented by team leaders, ensuring that the budget stays within reasonable parameters subject to approval by the Board of Missions.

- F. Recruit potential participants.
 - G. Oversee the application process. Interview and screen participants for each team.
 - H. Submit a list of recommended participants to the Board of Missions (*) for approval.
 - I. Assist the team leader in training and equipping team members.
 - J. Oversee fund-raising activities of project teams.
 - K. Monitor individual support letters so that no College Church member or attendee receives more than one such request per project.
 - L. Review team evaluations.
 - M. Make recommendations to the Board of Missions (*) as appropriate regarding future projects.
 - N. Recommend to the Board of Missions how any remaining contributions to projects are to be distributed upon completion of the project.
- (*) World Impact Committee also reports to the Christian Education Board via the CE Board representative.

III. Team composition

A. Team Leader(s)

1. Team leader selection

- a. A team leader must be a College Church member or regular attender (or same in a College Church daughter church).
- b. The team leader has overall responsibility for the team.
- c. Candidates for all team leader positions are recruited and recommended by the responsible oversight committee. Applications are not required; therefore, persons to be considered for the role of team leader(s) shall be the Missions Pastor, other pastoral staff, or proven, experienced ministry leaders.
- d. The Board of Missions and pastoral staff shall approve the selection of the adult team leaders prior to acceptance.
- e. Team leader(s) shall be selected before the project is announced to the church, if possible, and prior to any team member selection.

2. Team leader responsibilities

- a. Attend team leader training sessions.

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- b. Inform and work with the project sponsor concerning the purpose and goals of the short-term initiatives program of College Church.
- c. Work with the host to determine the size of the team for which he or she is the designated leader.
- d. In consultation with the trip host and admin coordinator, present a specific project budget to the oversight committee for approval.
- e. Work with the oversight committee to recruit, prepare and train participants in the project for which he or she is the designated leader.
- f. Coordinate fundraising efforts by team members.
 - i. STAMP: Special effort shall be made to ensure that no congregational member receives more than one request for support per project.
 - ii. World Impact: A support letter written by the missions and high school pastors for ALL World Impact teams will be sent en mass to the congregation. Individual letters will be required to possible donors outside the College Church family.
- g. Recruit no fewer than six (6) people as prayer partners. Contact prayer partners prior to and at the completion of the project.
- h. Distribute, collect and keep records of team members' health forms and insurance information.
- i. Communicate the need for team members' passports, visas and any required inoculations or health concerns prior to the team's departure.
- j. Facilitate the safe arrival of team members to and from their destination. It is expected that the leader(s) knows the location of each team member at all times during the project.
- k. Distribute and collect evaluation forms to/from team members during the team's on-field debrief.
- l. Develop a composite project evaluation based upon team member evaluations and submit the evaluations to the oversight committee within one month after completion of the project.
- m. Within one month after completion of the project, submit all outstanding cash advances and receipts to the admin coordinator, who will submit a written financial report to the committee showing income and project expenditures.
- n. Recommend to the oversight committee how remaining funds for the project are to be distributed upon completion of the project. Final approval is granted by the Board of Missions.
- o. Meet with the oversight committee in a post-trip interview, as requested by the committee.

- p. Coordinate a post-trip team meeting/social event to further process the experience and its impact in the life of the participant.

B. Team Members

1. Team member selection

- a. Each candidate shall submit an application to the oversight committee prior to the designated deadline.
- b. The oversight committee will screen and interview all applicants and submit a list of recommended candidates to the Board of Missions for approval. The committee may elect to waive the interview of an applicant if the applicant recently served as a team leader, is a member of the College Church pastoral staff or receives ministry support from College Church.
- c. Applicants under 18 years of age at the time of the trip require a recommendation letter from their youth pastor, adult small group leader or Sunday school teacher in support of his/her application.
- d. Approved applicants 18 and over who will be working with children, youth or disabled persons must submit appropriate paperwork authorizing the administrative office to run a background check. Applicants whose background information flags any concern will be thoroughly investigated by the oversight committee and/or the Board of Missions, and if warranted, may be excused from the team. (9/2011)
- e. Candidates who have not participated in a previous project shall be given priority in selection if the number of participants for the trip is limited.

2. Team member responsibilities

- a. Each candidate shall recruit no fewer than six (6) people to be their prayer partners. The candidate shall agree to contact their prayer partners prior to and at the completion of the project.
- b. Each candidate shall fully engage in the pre-trip preparation program.
- c. Each candidate shall raise sufficient funds to meet the proposed budget. Candidates may be asked to withdraw if sufficient funds have not been raised in a timely manner. Withdrawal may result in reimbursing the church for any expenditure made on behalf of the team member.

Gifts to College Church become the sole property of College Church. A gift to College Church is a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes to the extent permitted by law. Tax-deductible gifts cannot be refunded. In the event an applicant does not participate in the trip, gifts to College Church will go to support other members of the trip. (revised 10/8/06)

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- d. Each team member shall submit a written evaluation of the project to the team leader within two weeks after completion of the project.
- e. STAMP team members shall be willing to serve on the STAMP committee after returning from a STAMP trip.

C. Team Size and Makeup

1. Size and makeup of a team are primarily determined by the host missionary taking into account such factors as housing, transportation and scope of the project.
2. Teams will normally be between four and twenty people. Teams of unusual sizes must be approved by the Board of Missions.

D. Family-Oriented STAMP Guidelines

1. Families are encouraged to participate in the family-oriented STAMP trips that will occur occasionally. Such trips are excellent opportunities for families to serve and learn together (revised 8/08).
2. STAMP, as its name implies, is primarily a Short-Term Adult Missions Program. Other than family-oriented STAMP trips, and unless specifically approved by the Board of Missions, children accompanying a parent must be at least 14 years old. Children under the age of 14 may only accompany a parent in the context of a family-oriented STAMP trip unless specifically approved by the Board of Missions.
3. Children younger than 14 years of age may be considered, depending on demonstrated maturity and assurance that their participation will enhance the group goals and not detract in any way by needing extra parental supervision or care. The committee should consult with the team leader prior to delivering an approval. In addition to the STAMP application form, children will be required to secure a reference (revised 8/08).
4. A trip will only be considered as a family-oriented trip if the host missionary is excited and able to host adults and children. This includes having age-appropriate work and providing things to do, housing and transportation to meet the needs of families.
5. Families will be required to pay for any child under the age of 5, rather than those children raising support through College Church (due to their overall level of contribution to the trip).
6. Families will be interviewed in a two-step process. First, family members will be interviewed individually by STAMP Committee members, and then the family will be interviewed together. Families will be approved or not approved as a whole.

IV. Projects**A. Project definition**

1. Overseas teams will focus on foreign cross-cultural projects.

2. Domestic teams will focus on city, state, regional or national projects. Teams will work with a local missionary supported by College Church, local projects in cooperation with other local churches or with agencies, not limited to the Chicago area, which are working in compassion and justice ministries.

B. Sponsorship

Each project shall have an on-site sponsor, preferably a College Church missionary or national partner, who can help in the planning and logistics of each project. The team leaders will work together with the sponsor to accomplish the goals of the project

C. Types of Projects

1. Collaboration with the national church for outreach (e.g. evangelism)
2. Discipleship and training
3. Ministry service (e.g. choir tour)
4. Teaching (e.g. Vacation Bible School, ESL camps)
5. Humanitarian (e.g. medical)
6. Construction projects (e.g. church, educational or meeting buildings)
7. Other – approved projects that meet the purpose of the short-term program.

D. Frequency of Projects

1. There shall be no limitation on the number of projects fielded during a given year.
2. There shall be at least one project per year.
3. Projects may be scheduled during spring, summer and Christmas breaks.
4. Participants may be limited to one trip or project per year at the discretion of the Missions Pastor and/or oversight committee.

V. Financial matters

A. Project Funding

1. General information
 - a. Each project shall have an independent budget. Support funds required by participants will vary according to the budget of the individual project.
 - b. Support funds required for an individual project will be equally divided among the team members as their support goal.
 - c. Support raised by an individual team member beyond his or her support goal will be applied to the overall team funding.
 - d. Each team member is expected to raise his or her proportionate share of the cost of the trip (revised 8/08). Team members are responsible for raising 100% of their individual support.
 - e. Each member must contribute to his/her personal support. World Impact requires a

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deposit for each student as determined by the committee. No specific amount is required for STAMP teams, but the gift should be sacrificial and generous according to the means available to him/her, just as is anticipated of potential donors. (6/11)

- f. First time members must participate in raising support through support letters. New participants may contribute no more than 50% of the needed support from personal funds or that of family members.
 - g. Team members who have participated in previous projects may pay their own expenses in full, may raise support or a combination of both.
 - h. Funds raised generally for all teams (i.e., annual pancake breakfast) are to be shared proportionally among all teams.
 - i. Exceptions to a team member's support requirements will be evaluated individually by the oversight committee.
 - j. Candidates will be advised that they may be asked to drop out if sufficient funds have not been raised in a timely manner.
2. World Impact Team Funds
- a. Support raised by a project team beyond the team's support goal may be applied to the overall support of World Impact projects for the year.
 - b. World Impact participants pay a deposit as determined by the World Impact Committee.
 - c. Funds may be allocated for the following:
 - i. Team leader support. While not exempting them from the support process, emphasis on student fund-raising activities may make it difficult for team leaders to raise full support.
 - ii. Travel by team leaders to World Impact destinations for pre-project planning if needed and approved by the World Impact Committee.
 - iii. Scholarship fund for individual student or project support.
3. STAMP Funds for Children
- a. Parents are generally expected to secure the funding for any child approved as a team member.
 - b. In family-oriented STAMP trips, each family is expected to secure funding for all its family members.
 - c. Funding for team members under the age of 5 cannot be raised through contributions made payable to College Church, but team members may make arrangements through other charitable organizations for donors to make tax-deductible contributions for team members under the age of 5 (revised 8/08).

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4. Distribution and transportation of team funds for overseas travel
 - a. Team leader must consult with host missionary about possible options for accessing funds while in country. Expenses to consider include costs of food, transportation, housing and activities that the team funds will cover.
 - b. All expenditure of funds must be supported by expense reports and receipts to equal the exact amount of the monies received on behalf of the team and return any balance of unused funds.
 - c. Acceptable options include the following:
 - i. Advance deposit. Deposit money in advance into the account of the missionary, seminary or organization with which the team is working. Bank name, account number, and the name of the person on the account are required for this transaction.
 - ii. Wire transfer. Contact the Administrative Coordinator for Short-Term Missions for specific information required for this option. Bank charges may apply for this service and will be charged to the team account.
 - iii. Pre-pay
 - a) To providers. College Church checks will be issued and made payable to guesthouses, in-country travel providers, etc. to hand-carry and deliver personally.
 - b) To the missions agency. Checks may also be sent directly to the missions agency of the host missionary. Checks are not prepared in the last two weeks of May. Team leaders should anticipate these dates and request checks well in advance. Funds sent to missions agencies may incur administrative charges and should be considered in the disbursement request.
 - iv. Credit cards. Individual team members or the team leader may pay for expenses using a personal credit card and request reimbursement upon submission of supporting documentation and/or receipts.
 - v. Travelers' checks.
 - vi. Cash. Each team may bring some cash to cover unexpected travel expenses. For security reasons, a team may not carry more than \$500 cash from team funds per adult/family. (Only one adult member of a family may carry cash.) Cash advances should be requested two weeks prior to departure.
 - vii. For those expenses that cannot be paid in advance or covered by pre-pay arrangement with the team's host, the team may request an advance of team funds of up to an additional \$5,000 per team. These funds must be deposited into the bank account of a team leader or into the account of a team member designated to handle the team funds for access via ATM withdrawal or cash advance in the team's host country.

B. Material and Equipment Funds

1. Funds for material and equipment shall primarily be the responsibility of the sponsoring mission agency.
2. If funds for material and equipment are to be raised by team members in addition to travel and per diem expenses, the amount shall be clearly stated in the proposed budget which is presented to the oversight committee by the team leader. Funds of this nature will be added to the overall support requirements of the particular project and will then be allocated to each team member.
3. The cost of equipment and supplies brought or purchased on site should not exceed \$500 per participant unless specifically approved by the Board of Missions.

C. Residual Funds

1. Funds remaining after all the expenses of a project have been paid shall be returned to the respective Board of Missions budget (STAMP or World Impact). No monetary gifts may be left with the host missionary or national partner.
2. The project leader may recommend an appropriate distribution of residual funds to the appropriate committee. The committee may make a recommendation to the Board of Missions for distribution of funds.
3. Any post-project distribution of residual funds (funds remaining after all expenses have been paid) will be from the Board of Missions and is at the sole discretion of the Board.

D. Cancellation/withdrawal procedure

1. If withdrawing, applicant must submit a letter in writing to the Missions Pastor and appropriate committee stating the reason s/he will not be participating in the trip. World Impact students should notify the High School Youth Pastor or trip leader.
2. Applicant must send a letter to supporters informing of his/her not going on the trip and that support will go toward supporting others on the trip.
3. If airline tickets have already been purchased, the applicant is personally responsible for any costs associated with the cancellation/withdrawal, up to and including the entire cost of the ticket, if it is a nonrefundable ticket. Exceptions to this policy may be considered by the committee on a case-by-case basis.
4. Other expenses incurred in preparing for the trip (for example, immunizations, visas, etc.) will not be reimbursed.
5. Gifts to College Church become the sole property of College Church. A gift to College Church is a charitable contribution for federal income tax purposes to the extent permitted by law. Tax-deductible gifts cannot be refunded. In the event an applicant does not participate in the trip, gifts to College Church will go to support other members of the trip. (revised 10/8/06)

VI. Special Project Teams (GAP teams)

GAP (Go Again People) teams are small teams of former STAMP participants returning to the site of a previous STAMP trip to provide specialized assistance.

A. GAP Teams

1. GAP teams serve in places where a STAMP team served in the previous 24 months.
2. GAP teams provide specialized assistance, often providing similar service as the original STAMP team but on a smaller scale.

B. GAP Team Members

1. Each candidate shall recruit no fewer than six (6) people to be their prayer partners. The candidate shall contact their prayer partners prior to and at the completion of the project.
2. Each candidate shall be involved in a pre-trip preparation program.
3. Each candidate shall raise sufficient funds to meet the proposed budget. Candidates will be advised that they may be asked to drop out if sufficient funds have not been raised in a timely manner.
4. GAP team members may pay their own expenses and/or may raise support.

C. GAP Team Size and Makeup

1. Teams must be comprised of at least two people.
2. Participants must have formerly served on a STAMP team.
3. GAP team members must go through the normal application and interview process unless they have served on a STAMP team in the last 24 months. In such cases, the STAMP Committee has the discretion to interview the candidate; but, in all cases the candidate's application must be reviewed by the STAMP Committee and approved by the Board of Missions.

D. GAP Time Limits

1. Length of trips may vary. Teams are not required to fulfill the two-week expectation of regular STAMP teams.

VII. Consideration of STAMP Applicants who are not Members or Regular Attendees of College Church

A. STAMP teams are intended for members or regular attendees of College Church. In deciding if an exception should be made to this policy, the STAMP Committee will consider the following points. Each applicant will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

1. No more than *two* non-College Church members or regular attendees will be considered as

applicants for any *one* STAMP trip.

2. The STAMP team leader will bring the name of each non-College Church member or regular attendee to the attention of the chair of the STAMP Committee in a timely manner. Ideally, the person(s) should *not* begin the application process until approved to do so by the STAMP Committee.

B. Factors the STAMP Committee will consider prior to making a decision on each applicant:

1. The person possesses special skill(s) or other unique qualifications (e.g. musical or other artistic talent, medical training, writing skills, etc.). These skills are of a high degree of value for the specific STAMP trip in which they are applying for team membership.
2. The person is a member or regular attendee of one of the missions consortium churches or College Church's daughter churches. Currently, consortium churches include Wheaton Bible Church, Moody Memorial Church, and Christ Church of Oakbrook. Daughter churches are Holy Trinity Church (Chicago), Christ the King (Batavia), New Covenant Church (Naperville) and Hope Fellowship (Lombard). If approved for a trip by the College Church BOM, the person will solicit some of his/her support from within the membership of his/her home church.
3. The person has been specifically requested by the missionary and/or the missions agency with whom the STAMP team will be partnering.
4. The STAMP team leader is supportive of this person joining their STAMP team.
5. The person agrees to actively participate in all pre-trip preparation with the team and fulfill all team member responsibilities.

VIII. Special considerations

- A. Applicants eligible for World Impact international trips are students regularly involved in HYACKS who have completed at least one year of high school. Freshmen are encouraged to intentionally apply for the Chicago Impact team or other domestic trip. The committee may consider an exception for a freshman if a parent has agreed to be an overseas team leader.
- B. Applicants who are not members or regular attendees of College Church will be considered on a case-by-case basis according to the guidelines described in the Section VII of this policy.
- C. Family members of participants are not permitted to join a trip in progress on the field. Family members may connect with participants before or after a trip if the family has plans to travel on its own (and at its own expense) before or after a trip.
- D. If it seems necessary to send a team member home during a trip, the team leader will first contact the College Church missions pastor and determine with the missions pastor (or the chairman if the missions pastor is unavailable) the appropriate course of action.

IX. Considerations for Trip Selection

A. Service

- Does it serve our national partners through evangelism, community development, training nationals, praying with and listening to the local church?
- Does it serve our host missionaries? How will it propel their ministry forward?

B. Exposure

- Does it help team members learn about the team's host culture and language, the state of the national church and the nature of cross-cultural work?
- Does it help team members better understand missionary life? Will it encourage them to empathize and to pray more effectively for our missionaries and national partners?

C. Discipleship

- Will the trip challenge team members to grow spiritually?
- Does the trip provide planned opportunities to share the Gospel?
- Does the trip encourage maturity in working with other members of the Body of Christ?

D. Recruitment

- How will this trip ignite a passion for missions in the lives of participants? How will it encourage participants to explore ways to be involved in missions that maximize their gifts, skills and interests?

E. Cost

- Is the projected budget reasonable given the current economy and fiscal health of the church?
- Team members are permitted to raise up to \$500/person for program supplies. Will the project happen if project monies are not raised?
- Does the host agency mandate ministry fees above the actual trip expenses that support the agency's general operating costs? For example, Kids Alive charges \$440 per person above field expenses for program development and construction supplies that may or may not be used by the team. G.O. Ministries requires \$300 per person to cover mercy ministry and ministry advancement.

F. Length of trip

- How does the length of the trip affect budget?
- How will the length of the trip affect availability of team leaders and applicants?
- How much ministry time remains after travel? A one-week trip with four days travel time yields three days of ministry. Will goals be accomplished? Is it worth the time and money invested from the perspective of the Board of Missions and potential donors?

G. Other considerations

- Is this project strategic? Does this project align with our strategic emphasis on reaching the least-reached and training national leaders?
- Have we done this trip before?
- Is this project a good fit for the selected team members, i.e., high school vs. adult?
- Does the trip match the pool of skills that we have available within the congregation/youth group?

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- Is there a variety of choices in terms of project location? Ideally each year we will send teams to a variety of locations/ continents around the world and to various religious blocks (Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian/Catholic, Atheist)
- Is there a variety of choices in terms of project goals? For example, we wouldn't send all construction teams in one season. A selection of teams that focus on different specialties will attract more of the congregation to consider applying.