

**Domestic and International Missions Guidelines
St. Andrews**

St Andrews is refocusing and rededicating our commitment to domestic and international missions to more effectively and meaningfully alleviate poverty. Our outreach programs will be based on the idea that the root causes of poverty are found in dysfunctional relationships rather than the traditional view that poverty is the result of a lack of things (e.g. food, shelter, health care, education, etc). Using the principles discussed in When Helping Hurts, our outreach programs will focus on four relational dimensions:

- Spiritual
- Self
- Others
- The Rest of God's Creation

Recognizing that everyone lives in these four relational dimensions drives us to recognize that, when dealing with the issues of poverty, there is no difference between us and the materially poor we feel called to serve – all of us are dealing with dysfunctional relationships in one way or another.

This approach will prompt us to shift our missions work from a mindset of the Helper (us) and the Helped (materially poor) to a partnership mindset in which we will come alongside the materially poor and seek to enter into long term relationships that will help all of us move from a poverty caused by dysfunctional relationships to a condition of well being in which we are living in right relationships with God (Spiritual), ourselves, our neighbors, and the rest of creation.

An integral piece of this approach is an intentional effort to encourage our own faith journey as well as the faith journey of those individuals and communities being uplifted through our missions outreach programs, as St Andrews also supports its members in their own faith discipleship, reconciliation with God, witness and in personal evangelism in His name.

We will learn as a Church how to walk with the materially poor in humble relationships that work intentionally toward a condition of well being, rather than simply providing temporary handouts to them. Poverty alleviation is the ministry of reconciliation through recognition of the need for mutual reconciliation for both provider and recipient. We will seek to move people closer to glorifying God by living out right relationships with God, themselves, other people, and the rest of creation. Equipping the church to empower the poor involves [shifting the way churches think about poverty](#) – and how to alleviate it. When Helping Hurts, a biblically based book, is moving churches toward a healthier framework of engaging with low-income communities. We are all equal in God's eyes and we are all His children.

When Helping Hurts identifies three forms of outreach support that all have a place and important role in the circumstances of those in need:

- **Emergency relief** is appropriate to sustain individuals or communities in situations of dire need until conditions stabilize and begin to move toward restoration.

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- **Rehabilitation** is appropriate to come along side and assist individuals or communities as they themselves begin working to restore individuals, families, and communities to the positive elements of pre-emergency or pre-crisis conditions.
- **Development** is actually the most commonly appropriate form of outreach support. It is the act and commitment of walking along side individuals or communities to encourage and support them in faith and sustained improvement in quality of life. This requires an ongoing change that brings everyone (us and the materially poor) much closer together as we work alongside each other toward right relationships with God, ourselves, other people, and the rest of creation. This requires a long term commitment on our part to work with the materially poor in programs designed to move them to conditions of well being – conditions in which the materially poor are able to economically support themselves through work that allows to realize their God-given potential and to glorify Him through their work and self-worth.

All three forms of mission support have an important role within the Missions Programs of St Andrews, however, we will attempt to assess the specific situations and insure that we apply the appropriate form of support in an effort to effectively help, and minimize the possibility that our good intentions may, in fact, be doing more harm than good. In general, the Missions Programs at St Andrews will focus on Development, because this form is thought to be the most commonly needed, and it is the only form of outreach support that addresses the root causes of poverty that we are all dealing with.

Implementation:

1. Provide a structured program for all members which condenses this framework for missions into a manageable period of instruction that will create buy-in and understanding of this fundamental view of poverty and poverty alleviation and how the church can make a real difference. When Helping Hurts will be used as the resource for instruction. Life groups can play an essential role.
2. Implementation and follow-through will require the development of and adherence to specific governing policies, guidance, and a decision making process, as well as an appointed body of the church to consider when each of these three forms of outreach support may be appropriate. The Vestry and the Mercy Team will oversee this step in collaboration with the Missions Committee.
3. Asset assessment is the critical evaluation process that will be used to identify our strengths and weaknesses, including all within St Andrews who wish to serve, and the strengths and weaknesses of those we feel called to serve. This process prompts us think of ourselves and those we feel called to serve in terms of a partnership rather than as “we” and “they” as we identify the talents and assets everyone brings to the table.
4. Each of the St Andrews campuses and all St Andrews members will be involved. St Andrews will initiate, with prayerful preparation, a renewal of mission outreach and poverty alleviation for individuals, families, and communities, both domestically and internationally, as an ongoing

commitment to relationship building with those we feel called to serve who have made the ultimate commitment to turn their lives around.

5. St Andrews will partner with other faith based groups and churches in the communities we work in. We will identify leaders in these communities who can provide perspective and understanding, and partner with us to enable us to build relationships based on love, trust, and mutual respect. The initial launch should be sharply focused in order to maximize the probability of success and to build a solid foundation for our Missions Program to encourage all members of St Andrews to be engaged.
6. Domestic Missions Programs will begin with two initiatives.
 - a. The first initiative to allow St Andrews and its members to fully embrace and understand poverty alleviation and asset based community development, will focus on the Town of Mt Pleasant (TOMP) Miriam Brown Center in our immediate neighborhood. This initiative will lead to the development of long term relationships with some of the families of the children who utilize the Center. As noted above, our focus will be on those families who commit to this walk in faith and self-improvement. This will require a long-term commitment for all of us. Faith-based partners within this community will include Friendship AME Church, Shem Creek Presbyterian Church, the East Cooper Faith Alliance and partnership with the Town of Mount Pleasant which manages the Miriam Brown Center.
 - b. The second initiative, the St Andrews Community Medical Clinic, is already in operation. This clinic will serve those in need in our neighboring areas and beyond and provide opportunities for the members of St Andrews to serve. The clinic can also serve as a focal point for access and receiving walk-ins in need with support and follow-through provided within St Andrews for appropriate response involving emergency relief, rehabilitation, and development assistance under an expanded Mercy Team role.
7. International Missions Programs are still being developed, but are expected to include at least three initiatives.
 - a. Short term missions teams will continue to be a mainstay of our international missions programs, however, they will be restructured around the guidelines for short term teams presented in When Helping Hurts.
 - b. We will continue to partner with Palmetto Medical Initiatives and Water Mission.
 - c. We will evaluate other current international initiatives including missionaries, individual activities of members of St Andrews, and long term relationships with international organizations with the intent to more effectively support and engage in activities that align with St Andrews' overarching strategy.