

FUNDAMENTAL MISSIONARY DECLARATIONS

“Missions Together” of the Assemblies of God of Latin America

Prepared by MEC committee, Oct. 25-26, 2000
And considered and approved by Supt. and Missions Leaders, in their
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Translated into English for WAGF Missions Commission

1. OUR REASON FOR BEING

1.1. The Urgency of the Hour

WHEREAS we live in the last days in a world rife with great challenges, full of many unreached people groups and God has raised up the Latin American church for such a time as this, **WE MUST**, like Esther, recognize that God has brought us to the Kingdom for this hour (Esther 4:14) and reaffirm our commitment to the great commission.

1.2. Our Reason for Being

WHEREAS God has blessed the church of Latin America in a supernatural way, and blessings are to bless others, and the final imperative of Jesus is the great commission, and the arrival of Pentecost was to initiate and prepare the church to fulfill that commission, **WE MUST** declare that missions is our reason for being.

1.3. What is the Priority of Missions in the Lives of Our Fellowships?

WHEREAS we have been blessed by missionary efforts, great revivals, and a phenomenal growth, but without a corresponding missionary outreach, **WE MUST** truthfully ask ourselves if missions is the priority of life in our fraternities.

1.4. Moving Missions Commitment to Practice

WHEREAS the majority of leaders, local churches, and national churches of the Assemblies of God of our countries lack both missions commitment and practical response, **WE MUST** take concrete and practical steps in the realization of the missionary commitment among which are:

- 1.4.1. Organize missionary short term trips of executives to unreached countries.
- 1.4.2. Schedule a night of missions in the annual conference (general council) and in the pastor retreats of each of our countries.
- 1.4.3. Raise awareness in the national churches that missions is more than a division or department (It functions as an missions agency): it is the heart of God, of the church, and the work of all.
- 1.4.4. Make a financial pledge supporting missions and/or a missionary.

- 1.4.5. Promote missionary conferences and conventions in every local church and at regional and national levels in order to motivate missions and the formation of missions departments and committees in each local congregation.
- 1.4.6. Celebrate concerts of prayer and all night prayer meetings for missionaries and for missions.
- 1.4.7. Encourage every believer to participate in foreign missions through a minimum faith promise of \$1 a month.
- 1.4.8. Invest with integrity the funds raised up in the name of foreign missions in the same making sure that administration costs do not exceed 10-15% clarifying the difference between foreign missions, intercultural evangelism and domestic evangelism in order that the offerings be used for that which they were raised.
(It is advisable to prioritize individual missionary offerings even if a general missions fund exists.)
- 1.4.9. Rejoice as a fraternity when missionary investments surpass the administration budget of the national church council.
- 1.4.10. Challenge every leader of the local and national church to be practically involved in the missionary vision.

2. PENTECOSTAL MISSIOLOGY

2.1. The Fire of the Holy Spirit

WHEREAS the New Testament church expanded throughout the known world through messengers full of the Holy Spirit beginning with the day of Pentecost, **WE MUST** as the Assemblies of God of Latin America affirm that the purpose of the fire and baptism of the Holy Spirit is to give witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations, and recognize that missionary work depends wholly on the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

2.2. The Call of the Spirit

WHEREAS the Biblical model is that the work of God is accomplished by men and women called by the Spirit, and that the strategy of the Spirit manifests itself through those who are called, and that it is the Holy Spirit who calls and not the church, **WE MUST** as a church identify and support those who have a call to go thereby fulfilling the call to send, (Romans 10:14) giving priority both to the missionary call in the selection and formation of the missionary and to divine direction in the development of missionary strategies.

2.3 The Pentecostal Message

WHEREAS the Bible demands stewardship of the message of the Gospel (I Tim. 6:20, II Tim. 1:12-14, II Cor. 4:1-2) and states that only “the truth will set them free” (John 8:32) **WE MUST** lift up the communication of the Christ-centered message of

the full gospel in order to respond in the power of the Holy Spirit to the felt needs of our world and of every human being, affirming the fundamental doctrines and integrating the Word and experience in the life of the believer.

2.4. The Pentecostal Strategy

WHEREAS the strategy of the New Testament was the raising up local churches, using the five ministries and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, **WE MUST** have as a strategic focus the founding, developing and strengthening of indigenous local and national churches filled with the manifestations of the Holy Spirit including signs, wonders, and miracles.

2.5. The Missionary Prayer

WHEREAS the Lord himself ordered “Pray that the Lord of the harvest send forth workers to his harvest,” (Matthew 9:38, Luke 10:2) **WE MUST** intercede to the Lord with words and in the Spirit for divine direction in the development of missions and for future workers, open doors, missionaries in the field, a growing church, the persecuted church, the sending church, and the growth of the work around the world.

3. MISSIONARY METHODS AND STRATEGY

3.1. The Indigenous Church

WHEREAS the New Testament church depended on the Holy Spirit for its economic support, leadership, and growth, and used a variety of strategies and methods, **WE MUST** be flexible in our strategies and methods in order to respond to the context of the field, depending on the Spirit, maintaining our focus on raising up self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating indigenous churches which fulfill the ministry of the church: to worship and serve God, edify its members, and communicate the gospel to the world showing compassion to those in need.

3.2. The Career Missionary and the Role of Short Term Missions

WHEREAS raising up and establishing the church in a unreached people requires a long term investment, **WE MUST** commit ourselves to long term missions and to career missionaries as the key to the growth of the work and its permanence, recognizing and valuing short term ministries as support to those that sow their lives in the establishment of the indigenous church. Therefore, all short term missions activity and short term missionaries should go in support and submission to the career missionary and the national church for the establishment new works.

3.3. The Priority of the Local and National Church

WHEREAS the goal and objective of the missionary work in the New Testament was to establish local churches that related to one another, **WE MUST** follow the example of making disciples, integrating new believers in local churches and local churches in national fraternities (councils) in order that every activity and ministry have as its objective contributing to the strengthening and development of the local church and national church.

3.4. The Formation of Leaders

WHEREAS the method of Jesus and Paul was shaping disciple-leaders in theory and practice, **WE MUST** prioritize the formation and action of a indigenous Pentecostal leadership that operates in the power of the Spirit.

3.5. Pioneer Missions

WHEREAS Paul and the leaders of the New Testament church focused on fields that were unreached, **WE MUST** develop a pioneer spirit in our missionary activities that focuses on the unreached and on innovative ministries.

4. MISSIONARY SENDING STRUCTURES

4.1. The National Organization

WHEREAS the New Testament model emphasizes unity and stewardship of resources in missionary sending structures, **WE MUST** unify efforts at the national church level, utilizing missionary sending structures such as national missions departments or agencies that facilitate and allow the called to be sent and every local church to participate.

4.2. The Preparation of the Missionary

WHEREAS those called by the Spirit in the Word are also shaped by the Spirit and the church, **WE MUST** foment the formation of future missionaries beginning in the local church and taking advantage of complementary missionary formation offered by missionary training structures such as Bible Schools, schools of missions, missionary training centers, and missiological educational programs.

4.3. The Economic Support of the Missionary

WHEREAS the sent require adequate, long term economic support, **WE MUST** create missionary awareness in local churches in order to support the missionary in the field through a national structure responsible for the receiving and responsible administration of economic resources, recognizing that there is not a lack of resources in our churches of Latin America but a lack of missionary vision and commitment.

4.4. The Care of the Missionary and His/Her Family

WHEREAS the sending of missionaries means more than financial support, but also includes moral support and pastoral care, **WE MUST** include in our sending structures practical ways to fulfill the church's responsibility to morally and spiritually support the missionary, caring for his/her family, ministry, and spiritual life.

4.5. Missionary Categories

WHEREAS there is a diversity of gifts and ministries reflected in the Word in the sending of missionaries in the first century, **WE MUST** be open, allowing and facilitating the missionary in the fulfillment of his/her call, through missionary structures which are flexible in their forms but stable in their principles.

5. HOW TO RELATE TO EACH OTHER THROUGH NETWORKING

5.1. Cooperation (What does cooperation mean or not mean?)

WHEREAS the Church of Christ is one, but with a diversity of members, and cooperation and unity are much discussed in Latin America, **WE MUST** participate in a Biblical unity that gives witness to the world (John 17) but allows freedom that the many members (I Cor. 12:12) be able to respond to the call of our Lord without losing their identity and Pentecostal missionary philosophy.

Note: What does cooperation mean or not mean?

5.1.1. What cooperation does not mean:

1. It does not mean: A single world organization (organic unity).
2. It does not mean: A single Latin American Assemblies of God nor a single Latin American missions agency.
3. It does not mean: Giving up our identity and working philosophy as the Assemblies of God to satisfy other missionary movements.
4. It does not mean: Raising up local and national churches on the mission field that do not directly identify nor affiliate with the Assemblies of God because of pressure from the ecumenical community,.

5.1.2. What the cooperation does mean:

1. It does mean: Communication with and sharing our support and respect with other missionary movements of the body of Christ, even when they have a different missionary working philosophy.

2. It does mean: Respecting the national church of the Assemblies of God that already exists and not raising up various national churches of the Assemblies of God in a single country and/or people group.
3. It does mean: Uniting the missionary efforts of the Assemblies of God of different countries with the purpose of establishing, developing, and serving a single national Assemblies of God church in the target people group while allowing and supporting missionaries in the exercise of a diversity of gifts given by God for the edification of the national work.
4. It does mean: Communication between Assemblies of God missions departments and agencies of Latin America and the world while respecting the autonomy of each nation.

5.2. The Communication between Assemblies of God Missions Departments/Agencies of Latin America.

WHEREAS the Assemblies of God has a common doctrine and philosophy and the challenges of the world are great, **WE MUST** recognize the urgency of cooperation between the Assemblies of God missions departments/agencies of our countries in order to take advantage of the resources, contacts, and experiences of everyone.

Note: For this reason, we affirm the benefits of the network called “Missions Together” in order to share information through:

1. Communication:

- 1.1. Reports of missionary activity.
- 1.2. Communication by way of electronic mail.
- 1.3. An electronic journal.

2. Contacts and Resource Sharing:

- 2.1. A database of Latin American missionaries
- 2.2. Resources related to missionary contacts and needs from the mission field.
- 2.3. Current statistics.
- 2.4. Activities and resources for missionary training.
- 2.5. Resources for the development of the missionary vision and the organization of missions department and agencies.

3. Meetings and Conferences of Missionary leaders which:

- 3.1. Address current issues and trends.
- 3.2. Dialogue with missiological issues.
- 3.3. Form an ongoing network of fellowship and information.

5.3. The Communication with Receiving Countries.

WHEREAS there are many unreached people groups that lack a national church, but at the same time there are many national churches already established in many mission fields that must be respected by those that come from other countries, **WE MUST** concern ourselves with establishing the national church together with other Assemblies of God missionary efforts already functioning in the receiving country; when a national church already exists, all missionary effort should be to strengthen and support it.

5.4. Communication between Multinational Missionary Teams

WHEREAS in the actual missionary context, Assemblies of God missionaries are arriving from many countries, **WE MUST** work together in the development of multinational missionary teams, in which there is cooperation, mutual respect, maximization of resources, and opportunity for each missionary to realize their diverse gifts through the national church.

(The study of English is advisable to facilitate communication between missionaries, as internationally English has become the common tongue among missionaries.)

5.5. Communication between Missions Departments/Agencies and the local sending church.

WHEREAS it is the local churches who send the missionary through the missions agency/department, **WE MUST** facilitate communication between the agency/department, the local churches, and the missionaries.

History and Development of the Document:
Fundamental Missiological Declarations

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