

Board for International Mission Ends Policies

Guiding principles

1. The Board for International Mission (BIM) is charged with developing and determining policies in support of mission and ministry in foreign countries for the Office of International Mission (OIM) (Bylaw 1.2.1 [m]). The policies will be inclusive of witness (martyria), mercy (diakonia) and life together (koinonia) and will be assessed on an ongoing basis by utilizing the Policy Assessment Tool. Further, such policies shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS); and, in particular Articles II (Confession) and III (Objectives) of the Constitution, and the mission emphasis and priorities established by the Synod in convention.

Safeguarding the rights of partner churches

2. OIM promotes cooperative work and the unity of the true faith to evangelize the world.
 - 2.1 The protocol document guides the work between OIM and partner churches.
 - 2.2 Missionaries work cooperatively with partner churches to make certain that services adequately provided by partner churches are not duplicated.
 - 2.3 OIM works cooperatively with partner churches to support the programs of the partner church.
 - 2.4 OIM works cooperatively with districts, congregations, and RSOs to support the programs of partner churches by providing human, educational, and doctrinal resources.
 - 2.5 Missionaries follow the partner church's lead in producing materials with a theological education and mission emphasis.
 - 2.6 Missionaries promote the unity of faith by modeling life together and avoiding paternalism.
 - 2.7 Missionaries support emerging church partners' endeavors in areas of witness (martyria), mercy (diakonia), life together (koinonia), Lutheran education, and theological education, and wherever possible help the emerging churches establish Lutheran congregations.

Relationships with Partner Churches

3. OIM facilitates cooperation and collaboration between LCMS agencies, districts, congregations, auxiliaries, RSOs and partner churches so that the mission and ministry of the Synod is extended and our life together is enhanced.

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- 3.1 LCMS agencies, districts, congregations, auxiliaries and RSOs abide by the protocol documents between the LCMS and partner churches.
- 3.2 The BIM and OIM work cooperatively with LCMS agencies, districts, congregations, auxiliaries and RSOs in the sending of ordained or commissioned ministers of religion and other workers to the foreign mission areas of the Synod in accordance with the operative directives established by BIM. (2013 Bylaw 3.8.3)

Liaison with colleges, universities and seminaries of the Synod

4. OIM cooperates with synodical colleges, universities, seminaries, and emerging/partner churches to evangelize and provide a united defense of the faith against schism, sectarianism, and heresy.
 - 4.1 OIM promotes opportunities for college, university and seminary staff, professors and students to participate in international mission and mercy work.
 - 4.2 OIM identifies opportunities for synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries to help train church workers of emerging/partner churches in Lutheran theology.
5. OIM coordinates with synodical colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod in providing educational opportunities to church workers ensuring missionaries 1) have a solid Lutheran theological foundation, and 2) are prepared for work in the international mission field. (Constitution Article III 3)
 - 5.1 OIM works with the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod to develop and expand curriculum that trains church workers to effectively work in the international mission field.
6. OIM works with the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod to draw on their expertise and resources in matters of international mission.
 - 6.1 OIM works with the colleges, universities, and seminaries of the Synod to provide support to these institutions in matters of international mission.

Liaison with Chief Ecumenical Officer of the Synod (President)

7. OIM communicates with Synod's chief ecumenical officer or his representative.

Human Care

8. OIM provides opportunities for Synod's members to express Christian concern, love, and compassion in meeting human needs (Constitution Article III 4) in proximity to or leading toward Word and Sacrament.
 - 8.1 Missionaries are sensitive to partner churches' mercy needs and support the programs of the partner church.

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- 8.2 Missionaries work cooperatively with districts, congregations, and RSOs to support the programs of partner churches.

Chaplaincy

9. LCMS military chaplains offer pastoral ministry for all of the Synod's military personnel and families of military personnel.
- 9.1 LCMS military chaplains are primarily concerned with preaching and administering the sacraments, as well as making personal contacts and providing counseling from a Lutheran perspective.
- 9.1.1 LCMS military chaplains function as missionaries in their pluralistic and religiously diverse environments.
- 9.1.2 LCMS military chaplains conduct Lutheran worship services for Lutherans and offer the Lord's Supper to Lutherans.
- 9.1.3 LCMS military chaplains support LCMS worship services on a regular repeating schedule, begin LCMS worship services within their locale, or are appropriately involved with a local LCMS congregation.
- 9.1.4 LCMS military chaplains facilitate the religious needs of all those of their unit, ship, or institution.

International Schools

10. OIM assists emerging/partner church bodies to establish and maintain Lutheran schools in the geography of that Lutheran church body all in accord with the Constitution of the LCMS, in particular Article VI.
- 10.1 The LCMS provides assistance through personnel or other forms of guidance in understanding the process for the start-up of Lutheran schools.
- 10.2 The LCMS provides ongoing assistance through personnel or other forms of guidance in maintaining and/or expanding the operation of such schools.
- 10.3 The LCMS assists with furthering a program of 1) the highest level of Lutheran education; 2) proclamation of the Gospel; and 3) responding to human care needs of the communities around the school consistent with the doctrine and teachings of the Lutheran Confessions as found in the Book of Concord.
11. The LCMS supports a worldwide network of Lutheran educators who provide assistance for Lutheran schools within faith-based communities in support of partner and associated Lutheran churches. The LCMS supports (through direct or indirect ownership or otherwise) world-class international schools in major metropolitan centers, leveraging academic excellence with the opportunity to clearly proclaim the works and Words of God to both Christian and non-Christian

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students, thereby equipping and training Christian students and faculty to witness and show mercy in their present and future lives by 1) supporting the three existing international schools either owned on behalf of or associated with the LCMS, i.e., the schools located in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Hanoi; and, 2) where the opportunity presents itself, establishing, through appropriate ownership or otherwise, and thereafter assisting in the operation of additional Christian/Lutheran schools.

11.1 As part of the international operations of the LCMS, each school:

11.1.1 Offers a program of Lutheran education at the highest level of academic standards.

11.1.2 Serves the community in a manner consistent with the doctrine and teachings of the LCMS as defined in Article II of the Constitution.

11.1.3 Provides an American model and standard of education.

11.1.4 Functions under the leadership of a Lutheran administration where:

- 1) The Head of School, or senior administrator with other appropriate title, where at all possible, is a rostered LCMS church worker, and if not, a member of an LCMS congregation.
- 2) A majority of the senior administrators of the school, where at all possible, are rostered LCMS church workers.
- 3) There is a strong nucleus of Lutheran teachers, with as many positions as possible filled by graduates from LCMS universities who are trained as Lutheran educators.
- 4) The faculty, administration and local governing body of the school recognize and uphold the Lutheran ethos of the school, in particular as found in the Lutheran Confessions and the Constitution of the LCMS.

11.1.5 Offers a program of religious studies and spiritual life exclusively taught and practiced from the perspective of the doctrine and teachings of the Christian Church as found in the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, using Luther's Small Catechism and other materials approved through Synod's doctrinal review. (Constitution Article II; Article III 5; Article VI 4)

11.1.5.1 Such a program of religious studies of each school is under the oversight of an LCMS rostered Minister of Religion—Ordained specified by the Office of International Mission.

11.1.6 Provides regular Lutheran worship for the school staff for spiritual support of the school, and wherever possible a Lutheran congregation is planted.

11.2 OIM coordinates with LCMS colleges, universities and other institutions and agencies in developing and implementing a system for the education, training, equipping, and certifying of qualified teachers and administrators for calling or appointing to international schools that are owned by the LCMS, are in partnership with the LCMS or are associated with a partner church of the LCMS.

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International Ministry

12. OIM provides spiritual support through Word and Sacrament ministry for OIM personnel serving internationally.
 - 12.1 OIM ensures a continuing availability of LCMS theological material and personnel for the spiritual edification and growth of LCMS personnel in the field.
13. OIM provides spiritual support through Word and Sacrament ministry for OIM personnel and LCMS members serving internationally in major metropolitan centers.
 - 13.1 Worship centers in major international metropolitan areas serve as mission outposts, meeting the spiritual needs of expatriates, whether LCMS (but in particular LCMS) or not, and equipping them for witness, mercy and life together in their respective vocations for the building up of the Kingdom of God.
 - 13.2 Worshipping communities are centered around catechesis, Bible study, mercy and worship with a core group of laity being served by at least one or more clergy.

Strong Mission Leadership

14. OIM encourages strong mission leadership that accomplishes directives mandated by the Synod in convention and its Constitution and Bylaws.
 - 14.1 OIM encourages the church at large in carrying out God's mission internationally through prayer, witness, mercy, and life together activities and their financial stewardship so that the love of Christ and the message of salvation might be made known to and for the eternal benefit of the nations.
 - 14.2 OIM encourages individuals to grow in their capacity to live the mission of God through their personal stewardship of witness, mercy, and life together at home and for the sake of international mission.
 - 14.3 OIM provides opportunities for missionaries to grow in their mission leadership skills.
 - 14.4 OIM requires missionaries to take advantage of educational opportunities to develop their mission leadership skills as well as personal professional development.

Training of Missionaries

15. Missionaries possess an adequate theology of missions consistent with LCMS theology.
 - 15.1 OIM maintains minimum requirements for continuing theological and missiological training for all workers in the field.
16. OIM provides appropriate levels of ongoing training, goal-setting, and sharing of the unifying OIM vision.
 - 16.1 OIM provides missionaries training on establishing and reviewing goals.

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16.2 OIM communicates the strategic plan to all missionaries.

Sending of Missionaries

17. The BIM calls and releases rostered ordained and commissioned ministers, and the BIM makes solemn appointments and releases to laity to serve as LCMS missionaries in foreign areas. (Bylaw 3.8.3)

17.1 Persons receiving solemn appointments (non-rostered) are members of LCMS congregations.

17.1.1 The BIM follows the policies established by the appropriate Synodical supervisory authority for the calling of ordained or commissioned ministers of religion.

17.1.2 OIM follows the established Human Resources policies of the Synod in the recruitment and selection process for all missionaries and other workers for ministries in foreign areas.

17.1.3 OIM provides appropriate and consistent background information for all calls, appointments and the withdrawing of missionaries in foreign areas according to procedures established by the BIM.

Disaster Response

18. Synod members and individuals have opportunities to express their Christian concern, love, and compassion in meeting human needs (Art. III,4), both ongoing and in times of international disaster in proximity to or leading toward Word and Sacrament ministry.

18.1 OIM aids and facilitates LCMS agencies, districts, congregations, auxiliaries, RSOs and individuals in serving their neighbors in immediate human need as the result of international disaster or catastrophe.

Deaconess Ministry

19. International church partners, RSOs and emerging church bodies are aware of the deaconess ministry of the LCMS.

19.1 OIM aids international partner churches and emerging church bodies seeking consultation in identifying opportunities for the service of deaconesses in their church bodies.

19.2 OIM collaborates with international partner churches and emerging church bodies seeking LCMS consultation in developing deaconess programs appropriate to their church bodies.

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Health Ministries

- 20. International church partners, RSOs, and emerging church bodies have opportunities to promote good health for their members and address health issues in their communities.
 - 20.1 OIM assists international church partners, RSOs and emerging church bodies in promoting good health among their members.
 - 20.2 OIM assists international church partners, RSOs and emerging church bodies in addressing the emotional, nutritional, and medical needs of their communities.
- 21. OIM upholds the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death.
 - 21.1 OIM assists international partner churches and emerging church bodies seeking consultation in promoting the sanctity of all human life.
 - 21.2 OIM collaborates where appropriate with other Christian churches to strengthen the LCMS' international witness and programs for life.

International Grants

- 22. OIM provides grants to international church partners, RSOs, and emerging church bodies and assists them in obtaining other grants, thereby extending the capacity of the LCMS and its ministry partners.

Care of Missionaries

- 23. OIM ensures that regular pastoral care, including Word and Sacrament, is provided to all missionaries and their families in the field and that pastoral care is maintained upon return from the field.
- 24. OIM oversees the living and work environment of missionaries prior to and during their deployment.

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