



Cooperative Baptist Mission Distinctives: Commitments and Contexts

The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's mission is to serve Christians and churches as they discover and fulfill their God-given mission. At the vanguard of the modern missionary movement, Baptists have been forming together for more than two centuries to make disciples of all nations. The Fellowship supports 120 long-term field personnel serving in 30 countries, 50 Student.Go interns and hundreds of short-term mission teams annually.

Our Mission Distinctives offer Cooperative Baptists common language for our common witness to the Triune God. The *commitments* reflect the values inherent to the Fellowship's mission engagement, while the *contexts* focus more intentionally on the work of our Global Missions field personnel. Since the world has come to the doorstep of many of our communities, CBF field personnel live out the following commitments alongside CBF congregations within the contexts of global poverty, global migration and the global church.

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OUR MISSION COMMITMENTS

1. Cultivating Beloved Community

We cultivate communities of reconciliation and hospitality that serve as signs, instruments and foretastes of the kingdom of God.

The gospel compels us...

- To offer radical hospitality to strangers and aliens, because we were once strangers and aliens.
- To reconcile all peoples, because Christ has broken down the wall of hostility between us.
- To demonstrate the kingdom we proclaim through the character of our life together in the local church.

2. Bearing Witness to Jesus Christ

We bear witness to the gospel through words that invite faith in Jesus and actions that embody the way of Jesus.

The gospel compels us...

- To practice the Great Commission and the Great Commandment.
- To confess Jesus Christ as Lord to the glory of the Triune God.
- To follow the example of Jesus who healed the sick, fed the hungry and befriended sinners.

3. Seeking Transformational Development

We seek to transform systems that suppress the capacity of individuals and communities in order to recognize, claim and celebrate the God-given gifts of all people and places.

The gospel compels us...

- To celebrate the image of God in every human life and the gifts of every community.
- To develop sustainable local assets with community stakeholders through advocacy, education, and solidarity.
- To make long-term commitments to transform structures that oppress people and degrade God's creation.

OUR MISSION CONTEXTS

1. Global Poverty

In a world where 1 in 8 persons suffers hunger, 2.8 billion live on less than \$2 per day, 1 billion lack access to clean water and 35.8 million are enslaved, Cooperative Baptists seek sustainable responses to systems of poverty that devalue life and diminish the image of God.

A few examples include:

- With half the world's population living in cities, CBF field personnel move into urban neighborhoods from Nairobi to New York City and Macau to Marseille.
- Together for Hope, CBF's rural poverty initiative, draws together neighbors, congregations, CBF state and regional organizations, practitioners and other partners to map assets and make long-term investments in the future of rural communities in the United States.
- Through longstanding work among the Romany in Europe, the Dom in the Middle East and the Banjara in India, CBF congregations, partners and field personnel advocate for the most economically marginalized peoples in the world.

2. Global Migration

With more than 232 million migrants in the world, including 16.7 million refugees, we live in an age of unprecedented human mobility. Such movement affords Cooperative Baptists the opportunity to extend hope and hospitality to those who are driven by circumstance or drawn by opportunity away from their homes.

A few examples include:

- Heeding the call to welcome the stranger, CBF field personnel and Together for Hope practitioners befriend newcomers from urban Houston, Texas, to the rural border of Mexico.
- With 70,000 Bosnians calling St. Louis, Mo., home, CBF field personnel with relevant cultural and linguistic skills address the spiritual and material needs of refugees through a network of partner congregations.
- Committed to care for the displaced and to free the captives, CBF field personnel in Malaysia and Indonesia offer disaster relief and combat human trafficking.

3. Global Church

We live in the era of a global church where no single tradition or culture can lay claim to the center of Christianity. Cooperative Baptists befriend Christians from around the world to share and receive gifts and to engage in God's mission together through worship, fellowship, education and service.

A few examples include:

- A CBF theological education partner in New Bern, N.C., and partner congregations in Richmond, Va., and Louisville, Ky., have experienced spiritual renewal when they welcomed Christian refugees from Burma into their midst.
- In Chinese cities like Chengdu where Christianity is experiencing rapid growth, CBF field personnel assist in starting new churches and training lay and pastoral leaders.
- Spanish Baptists invited long-term CBF field personnel and short-term mission teams to help them reach Sub-Saharan Africans who have immigrated to Spain.