

Columbia Metro: Mission Local – January 26th Dispatch

By
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During the first half of 2022, CMBA plans to focus on **Columbia Metro: Mission Local**. The purpose is to raise awareness of the need for missional engagement by our family of congregations in the Midlands of South Carolina within our local context. This does not suggest missional engagement beyond the Midlands is unimportant. It is. It is essential to fulfill the Great Commission in the spirit of the Great Commandment.

It is simply to say that we cannot go to other places in our state, country, and world in missional engagement, and ignore a primary responsibility in our own setting. The need for Christ-like, compassionate ministry in the Midlands is great. We have people groups and communities without effective Christian ministry.

If we cannot love, serve, and minister with the character and nature of Jesus in the Midlands, what makes us think we can do it effectively elsewhere? When we go other places to minister, and they ask us about our local missional engagement beyond growing our own congregation, we must have a great answer. We must have missional integrity locally, and not just see our missions as *over there* somewhere.

Let's call our focus *glocal*. This word suggests we are simultaneously globally and locally focused on our missional engagement.

Organizing for Glocal Missional Engagement

With this dispatch, I want to point out that one of the greatest challenges to glocal missional engagement can be that congregations are not organized for it. Our heritage as Baptists includes several types of missions organizations, fellowships, societies, auxiliaries, and emphases. The program of missions was at the heart of our identity.

Women, men, youth, and children organizations within congregations focused on our glocal missional tasks. In recent decades, various denominational and societal shifts moved away from this approach. Yes, it may have been time for rethinking how we organize for missional engagement. But what has replaced it that is better?

Consider These Questions

1. Who is the leader in your church of missional engagement beyond your congregation and directs its missional programs, ministries, and activities? The pastor? A staff person? A lay leader?
If it is only the pastor, a staff person, and one lay leader, that is not good.
2. Is there an ongoing organization in your church of people who pray, think, support, plan, and take actions of missional engagement locally in addition to any global initiatives? How many people are in this organization? Is their work seen as a top priority emphasis of your congregation?

Even in the smallest of congregations this must be at least three to seven people. In larger congregations it should be three to seven percent of the average number of people engaged weekly with the congregation.

3. How does your church distinguish between actions of missions support such as praying, giving money, collecting, and sending commodities (gift boxes, health kits, prisoner packets, hunger ministry items), and those of missions action of reaching out and directly engaging with people who need a Christ-like, *high touch* ministry from a caring Christian?

What percentage of what you do is missions support and what percentage of what you do is missions action? How can you increase the percentage of action so that persons in need of the Good News are personally and compassionately encountered?

At least 50 percent of local missional engagement should directly encounter the people who are the object of your mission actions. Only doing missions support satisfies for some people their obligation to be engaged in missions. The reality is that this is not enough to change our world. Many more people than we currently reach need to experience the love of Jesus.

A Call to Action

Seek to ask and answer these three questions in your congregation during the next two weeks. If you would like to share your answers, send them to CMBA@ColumbiaMetro.org.