

An Introduction to International Mission Project

Serving those who serve



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Children in Malawi

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HOW DID I.M.P. BEGIN?

In 1988 a number of Christians with links in Malawi agreed that a mission co-ordinating prayer and support would be beneficial to a developing work among the churches there; this agreement resulted in the founding of Malawi Mission Project in 1990. It soon became evident, however, that the area of interest was much wider than Malawi, and the name was changed to International Mission Project (I.M.P.), reflecting the broader scope and direction of the work. In February 1993, International Mission Project received approval from the Charity Commissioners.

WHAT ARE ITS AIMS?

1. To serve missionaries and national churches that they may fulfil their calling to preach the gospel and glorify God in works of faith

Scripture declares that the conversion of a sinner from darkness to the light of Christ is of eternal value. With this in mind, I.M.P. uses all means at its disposal to enable missionaries to concentrate on their callings and to be free to preach, teach, and glorify God by good works.

2. To promote prayer support for missionaries

Recognising the spiritual significance of the Scripture, "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood..." (Eph.6:12), I.M.P. seeks to keep supporters informed of current events in the lives of missionaries and to notify them of specific prayer requests.

3. To promote financial support for missionaries and mission related projects

I.M.P. does not pay a salary or provide regular funding to any missionaries associated with it; however, it will join with the sending church and other supporters in

believing the Lord to supply all their need. Where a specific project is part of the calling, I.M.P. will do all in its power to assist the establishing of that project through its many and various contacts.

4. To assist with the preparation and training of missionary personnel

I.M.P. is not a sending agency but is ready to provide advice in a number of areas of necessary preparation. Help is available with cultural understanding, health needs, bookkeeping, computer skills, and schooling methods.

5. To promote an awareness of mission principles among churches at home and abroad

If it is asked to do so, I.M.P. is able to give presentations to churches on a number of subjects such as culture, communication, and financial matters.

6. To supply literature and support literature work

I.M.P. works closely with one literature agency and hopes to establish links with other organisations that operate in this field.

7. To raise the awareness of social and humanitarian need and to facilitate its relief where possible

I.M.P. recognises that there are many opportunities to show the love and mercy of God by meeting men's temporal needs and that "... faith without works is dead" (James 2:20). It is not a humanitarian agency, however, and needs to know the mind of the Lord in respect of any specific request.

8. To provide opportunities for short term workers and summer teams

As a consequence of its numerous overseas contacts, I.M.P. is well placed to provide many different opportunities for those willing to serve the Lord for periods ranging from one month to two years.



Gathering rice in Thailand

WHAT ARE ITS KEY PRINCIPLES?

1. To honour and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ

I.M.P. desires above all to bring glory to the Lord Jesus and to do His will. To this end, all who are involved in its work need to be conscious of the need to listen to the Lord and then believe and obey Him; as Scripture says: “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom.10:17).

2. To recognise the autonomy of both the sending and the indigenous church

Although I.M.P. is registered in a number of countries, it believes that the sending church bears a unique responsibility for the prayer, financial, and pastoral support of its missionaries; its aim is to assist the sending church in fulfilling its responsibilities in this area and not to overshadow it. Where a missionary is not linked to a sending church, I.M.P. can often help in identifying a church that is willing to take on this role.

3. To affirm the integrity of the individual missionary under the authority of the Lord Jesus

The role of I.M.P. in the missionary's life is solely one of support, and the missionary is left in all circumstances to follow the personal leading of the Lord. I.M.P. is always willing to give its assistance, and it will give its counsel if asked to do so, but it does not seek to enforce that counsel in any way.

4. To serve the Lord's people at home and abroad

Serving the Lord's people is the essence of I.M.P. This service may take different forms or come in a variety of ways, but I.M.P. always stands ready to help in any way possible that is consistent with its trust document.



Street boys in LaPaz, Bolivia

WHAT SERVICES DOES IT OFFER?

1. Pastoral Support

The trustees of I.M.P. are mature Christians with wide pastoral experience and are available to help and advise in various ways and in different circumstances, including the visiting of missionaries in the field, or during furlough. They also seek to maintain close relationships with the sending churches, thus strengthening local support and care.

2. Prayer support

I.M.P.'s "Prayer Prompt" is circulated by email on or around the 25th of each month, and contributions are requested of all missionaries or their representatives a week earlier. A magazine is also published biannually to provide news and information that will assist in understanding the work of the missionaries and the various particular needs.

3. Financial advice

I.M.P. provides updated information sheets on insurance, investment, pensions, and National Insurance contributions. In addition to this, it administers freewill offerings and is registered with the government for tax relief through the Gift Aid scheme.

4. Orientation, Church, and Family Support

This service, called GoCom, offers advice and assistance to cover the need of the missionary to prepare for field conditions; I.M.P. recognises such preparation as essential. Re-entry into the home culture is also an important time in the missionary's experience and here too I.M.P. is prepared to help. In addition, it is willing to advise sending churches on any aspect of the support of a missionary and to offer pastoral counsel for the support of families at home and abroad, particularly at the difficult time of separation.

5. Forget-Me-Not

This is a child sponsorship agency that operates under I.M.P.'s charitable registration and functions in a number of countries. It has two main objectives: firstly, to provide for children's basic needs of food, clothing, health care, and education and secondly, to lessen the demands on the personal finances of missionaries by providing funds to meet the specific requests often made to them to help children in need.

HOW IS I.M.P. ADMINISTERED?

I.M.P. is administered by a body of trustees which is officially responsible to the Charity Commissioners. It decides on all matters of policy, and one of its number oversees the daily administration of I.M.P.'s affairs with the assistance of a small part time staff; neither the trustees nor the staff receive a salary. In the same way as those it supports, I.M.P. trusts the Lord Jesus to supply its needs; freewill gifts, Gift Aid claims, legacies, and company donations are some of the means which the Lord uses to provide. The accounts are audited every year by a firm of chartered accountants in accordance with the rules of the Charity Commissioners.

A scene from the Solomon Islands



STATEMENT OF FAITH

All those associated with I.M.P. are expected to hold to the following Biblical truths:

- 1.** The full inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, their authority and sufficiency, as not only containing, but being in themselves the word of God; the reliability of the New Testament in its testimony to the character and authorship of the Old Testament, and the need of the teaching of the Holy Spirit to a true and spiritual understanding of the whole;
- 2.** The unity of the Godhead and the divine coequality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the sovereignty and ability of God in creation, providence, and redemption;
- 3.** The sinfulness of human nature in consequence of the fall and the necessity for regeneration;
- 4.** The deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, His real and perfect manhood, the authority of His teaching and the infallibility of all His utterances; His work of reconciliation of sinful men by His vicarious sufferings and death; His bodily resurrection and His ascension into heaven; His present priestly intercession for His people and His present function as the Baptiser with the Holy Spirit; His headship in the Church;
- 5.** Justification of the sinner solely by faith through the reconciling merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
- 6.** The necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit in conviction of sin, regeneration, conversion, and sanctification; also in ministry and worship and in the exercising of spiritual gifts through the body of believers;
- 7.** The resurrection of the body; the judgement of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ with the eternal redemption of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked;
- 8.** Baptism by immersion of believers; the Lord's Supper as a commemoration of our Lord's death, but not as a sacrifice for sin, or involving any change in the substance of the bread and wine;
- 9.** The personal return of the Lord Jesus Christ for His Church.

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