

“The Great Commission Fulfilled Through Missouri Missions”

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Matthew 28:18-20 addresses the Great Commission which says, “Jesus said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age’” (“Bible Gateway Passage”). The Missouri Missions Offering (MMO) was introduced in 1985 when the Missouri Baptist Convention (MBC) voted to combine a number of offerings from different agencies into one offering to decrease burdens on churches and funding. Later, it was named the Rheubin L. South Missouri Missions Offering in honor of the MBC executive director who encouraged the combination (“About MMO”). Each September, Missouri Baptist churches collect this special offering. The Missouri Missions Offering supports seven key areas of ministry that help churches change lives with the gospel, which fulfills the Great Commission.

Missouri Missions funds are utilized in a number of ministries. In 2025, \$41,000 of the \$800,000 goal was allocated to Prayer and Evangelism. Within this area of ministry, a large portion of the funds are used to help sports evangelism. This covers a range of activities such as sports camps that are co-sponsored by Missouri Baptist Convention churches, inner-city sports camps, associational camps, ESports camps and tournaments, and international missions efforts. Additionally, more funds are given to both the Student Evangelism Conference and the VBS Regional Training Events. The evangelism conference is used to help prepare and inspire students to invest in their friends’ lives to lead them to faith in Jesus. Likewise, the VBS training events are used as a tool to share the gospel by equipping leaders to utilize VBS community ministry more effectively. Resounding Disciples, the Baptist Evangelism Tent at the State Fair,

and the Student's Preaching Lab are further ministries that use MMO funds in the Prayer and Evangelism category. These ministries promote discipleship through training and coaching, sharing the gospel with visitors at the Missouri State Fair, and hosting a statewide preaching lab for student ministry leaders to expand their preaching skills and form relationships ("Missouri Missions Offering"). All of these subcategories of Prayer and Evangelism carry out the Great Commission through these outreach movements.

The founder of Answers In Genesis, Ken Ham, states, "Over two thirds of young people will leave the church by the time they reach college age and very few return" (Ham 2025). The need for Collegiate Ministries becomes more and more relevant as the world continues to turn to evil. In 2025, \$142,000 of the MMO was apportioned to Collegiate Ministries. The Missouri Missions Offering helps fund collegiate ministries by providing them with enough money for summer missions mentoring, collegiate interns and apprentices, and the Redemption Ranch Youth Camp. The Summer Missions Mentoring Initiative is significant as it places college students with church planters, church staff, missions directors, and missions centers to serve as missionaries through the summer months. From there, those who feel they are being called to the Collegiate Ministry are provided with training. This then creates missionaries to go on mission to state campuses that have not yet been reached. Anna Taylor, a student at Northwest Missouri State University, served at the First Baptist Church in Maryville, Missouri as a summer missionary. She stated, "Most of the mission work I did was with the youth group was I equipped them with tools to share their faith. We got to share the gospel with the kiddos and also kids at a church camp called Super Summer. At Super Summer the kids had really great questions about things such as the Holy Spirit, worship, and how to live out faith practically. I got to see two kids from our youth group come to Christ at camp which was super awesome!"

(Taylor). Lastly, the collegiate funds are used for the Redemption Ranch Youth Camp where ten college aged counselors are sent to mentor 450 students. Their goal is to pour into the students' lives by sharing the gospel with them through discipleship, worship, small Bible study groups, and personal quiet times ("Missouri Missions Offering"). In all, this ministry is designed to decrease the number of college students and younger from straying away from their faith the older they get, and the Missouri Missions Offering plays a great role in making this happen.

The Great Commission is also fulfilled through the Disaster Relief Ministry. In 2025, \$122,300 of the \$800,000 MMO was given to the Disaster Relief program. The funds aid in maintaining or replacing equipment and securing transportation for volunteer mobilization to ensure disaster relief readiness. Additionally, they help with funding the Disaster Relief collegiate internships, giving students practical skills and promoting spiritual development. MMO is also helpful in supplying food for the Hunger Relief Network that assists MBC churches as they look to lower hunger and share the gospel ("Missouri Missions Offering"). While the Disaster Relief ministry seeks to provide life-saving assistance and long-term recovery support to those who have been impacted by emergencies such as natural disasters, their primary goal is to share the love of Jesus to those affected by trauma with the hope of leading them closer to Christ ("Disaster Relief"). Johnie Alden, a blue hat team leader for the Missouri Disaster Relief program, expressed that the state does get money from MMO, but it stays at the state level. He said it helps to feed volunteers while they are deployed and provides some supplies and equipment (Alden). Once again, the Missouri Missions Offering seeks to provide for these ministries so that they are properly equipped to carry out the Great Commission in whatever way is needed.

The next category of ministry the MMO supports is Missions Mobilization with \$78,000 being allocated in 2025. Missions Mobilizations seeks to engage MBC churches and their members in missions at home and around the world. They also serve to benefit the Missouri Woman's Missionary Union. This program was created to educate, support, and involve church members of any age in missions via prayer, fundraising, and taking action ("Home"). MMO supports WMU ministries across the state such as age-level events and the Missions Celebration each year. This then assists with leadership training, board meetings, and WMU ("Missouri Missions Offering"). While their goal is to aid in getting people prepared for these ministries, they also help in many ways through church renewal.

Church Renewal is another area supported by the Missouri Missions Offering, Last year, \$89,000 was earmarked for this ministry. Church Renewal supplies resources to allow churches to return to health and kingdom growth. Church Renewal also consists of connecting church leaders with systems of care, refreshment, and development, ultimately to increase their leadership skills in order to share the gospel more effectively. This ministry also identifies the needs of senior pastors and their spouses in their churches while offering coaching and encouragement. Lastly, Church Renewal includes the Pathway Journalism Retreat. This retreat provides training for writers and photographers from MBC universities. Overall, the retreat serves as a way to create a new generation of Southern Baptists that pursue Christian journalism ("Missouri Missions Offering"). Through Church Renewal the Great Commission is portrayed by keeping churches healthy so that they can continue to make disciples.

Church Planting is one more category of the MMO, and \$75,000 was set aside for this in 2025. MMO helps with church planting as it funds strategic Missionary Development and next step requests, providing resources that disciple, coach, and mentor church planters. Funds are

disbursed to church planters that might be in need of building a new facility and to those who are interested in planting churches overseas (“Missouri Missions Offering”). Planting churches is a crucial role in making disciples, as they help witness to people who have never heard the gospel. The more opportunities church planters have to start churches internationally, the more disciples will be made in all nations.

The final, and some may argue the most important, ministry the MMO allocates for is Entity Relations, with \$141,700 being apportioned last year. Entity Relations includes many areas that benefit the less fortunate. To start, the Missouri Baptist Children’s Home seeks funding as they provide intensive in-home services, anti-trafficking services, family resource development, foster care, transitional living programs, church engagement, therapeutic group homes, programs for intellectually and developmentally disabled adults, as well as maternity home and in-home pregnancy services, treatment family care, and counseling services. Ben King, the Northwest Missouri Regional Representative with the MBCH foundation, explained how this program is located in multiple places across the state. His position promotes the organization as a whole to individuals who may be in need of any of the services provided. He explained how MBCH receives funds from the MMO which help with Christian counseling sessions, necessities for the children in their care, respite care for Missouri Baptist foster families, and help to cover the cost of adoption assessments through MBCH. He continued by expressing that in 2026 the funds will be used for their Stronger Family Services program, which is a preventative program that keeps children out of the foster care system. The program is completely self-funded through donations from Missouri Baptists (King). Another large organization MMO supports is Baptist Homes & Healthcare Ministries which provide Christ-centered care for individuals as they age. Spencer Hutson, Church Relations specialist for

BHHM, shared that Baptist Homes is, and has been, a recipient of MMO funds. He stated, “The initiative to do Senior Deer Hunts on our campuses was funded through MMO. This initiative has been going on for about five years now. It is basically funded now through volunteers from our churches. Additionally, Soul Care in the current budget assists us in training volunteers from local Baptist churches to do ‘soul care’ usually with pastors, staff and others. Professional Development then includes Gospel Centered conversation within the Professional Development work” (Hutson). In all, MMO serves to benefit Entity Relations as they seek to reach individuals, both young and old, that are in need of help in a Christ-like manner.

Overall, the Missouri Missions Offering allocates in total around \$800,000 in funds for these seven categories of ministry. By meeting the basic physical needs of people, the objective is to open doors to ultimately meet their spiritual needs. Through the generous gifts of Missouri Baptists to the MMO, the Great Commission is carried out each and every day.

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