

# Philosophy of Ministry: Center for the Blind

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**Assemblies of God U.S. Missions  
Compassionate Missionary Council**

## **“Making the Cross Accessible”**

The four-fold mission of the Assemblies of God includes the demonstration of compassion as its fourth reason for being. Compassion can be seen in the fellowship’s core values: to proclaim Jesus, to invest in the next generation, to plant churches, to resource our constituency, and to pray.

Millions of people in the United States and tens of millions in the world are alienated from hearing the gospel or from actively participating in Christian fellowship and discipleship because they are functionally blind. U.S. Missions, through the Compassionate Missionary Council and the Center for the Blind, implements the mission and core values by resourcing missionaries in each of the Seven Windows of U.S. Missions, enabling these ministries to make the gospel accessible to the broadly-diversified people group of functionally blind.

Compassion is a direct reflection of the heart of God. *“We love, because He first loved us”* (1 John 4:19 NASB). God’s special love for the Blind can be seen in verses such as Leviticus 19:14 (NLT): *“Do not insult the deaf or cause the blind to stumble. You must fear your God; I am the LORD.”* An offense against the Blind is an offense against God.

The mission of the Center for the Blind of the Assemblies of God is that those who are blind or vision-impaired will have the opportunity to experience the full benefits of the gospel, as listed below:

**Freedom in Salvation** - The greatest need of a person who is blind or vision-impaired is to see Jesus.

*“What good is it for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:36-37).*

**Joy in belonging** - The Lord intended every believer to be an integral part of a local church.

*“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27).*

**Fulfillment in living** - People with vision impairments need accessible Christian resources to assist in finding fulfillment in Christian maturity.

*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18).*

**Honor in serving** - All Christians are gifted to serve. Serving is an honor that belongs to all, with or without a vision-impairment.

*Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all (Mark 10:43-44).*

Blindness crosses every segment of humanity, regardless of language, age, or gender; across cultural and geographical borders; from every sociological and economic situation. Because blindness has a broad spectrum of causes, it has a multiplicity of symptoms; and each situation hosts its own set of barriers to making the gospel accessible.

The CftB creatively uses media and technologies to conquer the barriers and make the gospel accessible to the Blind, wherever they are located. Partnerships are created for funding and efficient distribution. Networking with other non-profits and with government agencies helps steward valuable resources, such as expensive equipment, to deliver the best products and serve more people. For example, the CftB takes advantage of special Postal Regulations and copyright laws to produce and mail specially-formatted literature for the Blind. Some projects are outsourced to those who are better equipped to provide these services. Partnerships are also valuable in a holistic approach to serving other needs, which may be made more challenging in the context of blindness.

Those who are blind or visually impaired are equally as skilled and talented as those with vision. Recognizing this, the CftB works to equip the Blind for teaching and leadership roles by offering the following services:

1. Lending library of Christian books for Bible study and Christian growth
2. Many Assemblies of God Sunday school materials and devotionals, including teaching materials for teachers who are blind
3. Berean School of the Bible textbooks in accessible formats
4. Evangelism materials in a variety of formats
5. Advocacy for the Blind
6. Training for those serving or ministering to the Blind
7. Free NLS-compatible audio Bibles
8. Special attention to the needs of blind children

The CftB has a large national network of volunteers who donate time to record books, prepare materials for audio and Braille transcription, and many other vital services.

Matching content with formats and with the needs of the recipient is a constant challenge. For example, a book in English Braille will be useless to a Spanish Braille reader or an English speaking non-Braille Reader. An audio book in National Library Service for the Blind format would be worthless to a child in Malawi and might be illegal to distribute to a non-U.S. citizen in Canada. Therefore, the CftB stays informed about laws and regulations and works with many formats, languages and technologies to achieve accessibility.

As a part of the Intercultural Ministries department of U.S. Missions, the Center for the Blind works with the Compassionate Missionary Council, providing information about services, resources, and local or national events through the Compassionate Ministries website, [www.agusmresources.ag.org](http://www.agusmresources.ag.org). The goal is to minister effectively to the Blind, and to assimilate them into the community of faith.