

**A MISSION LEADER'S
GUIDEBOOK**

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Field Leaders: local church leaders or missionaries on the ground in the country where you will be serving.

Church Leaders: pastors, deacons and mission leaders in your local church at home.

Mission Partners: organizations that enable your mission team to enter the field (Virginia Baptist Mission Board, International Mission Board, Water Mission International, etc.)

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PREFACE	5
1. WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEAM LEADER?	6
✦ <i>MY STORY</i>	
✦ <i>GROWING STRONGER AS A LEADER</i>	
2. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEAM LEADER	9
✦ <i>HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TO DO?</i>	
✦ <i>GET THE BASICS</i>	
✦ <i>COMMUNICATING</i>	
✦ <i>LANGUAGE BARRIERS</i>	
✦ <i>SELECTING TEAM MEMBERS</i>	
✦ <i>TEAM MEMBER ROLES</i>	
✦ <i>CARING FOR CONFLICT</i>	
✦ <i>SECURITY CONCERNS</i>	
3. TRAINING YOUR TEAM	14
✦ <i>THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY</i>	
✦ <i>TEAM COVENANT</i>	
✦ <i>PRAYER PARTNERS</i>	
✦ <i>TELLING YOUR STORY</i>	
✦ <i>BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP</i>	
✦ <i>PERSONAL HEALTH AND TEAM SAFETY</i>	
✦ <i>PACKING LIST</i>	
4. RESOURCES FOR CHURCH LEADERS	19
✦ <i>SELECTING YOUR TEAM</i>	
✦ <i>PROVIDING FUNDING</i>	
✦ <i>SAYING 'NO'</i>	
✦ <i>WHO CAN GO?</i>	
APPENDIX A: TEAM LEADER TOOLBOX	21
✦ <i>TEAM LEADER TIMELINE</i>	
✦ <i>SAMPLE TEAM INFORMATION SHEET</i>	
✦ <i>SAMPLE MISSION APPLICATION FORMS</i>	
✦ <i>SAMPLE TEAM LEADER APPLICATION</i>	
✦ <i>PACKING LIST Word DOC Online @ http://aaronLee.co/missionleader</i>	
✦ <i>SAMPLE PRAYER GUIDE AND PRAYER CARD</i>	
✦ <i>SAMPLE COVENANT</i>	
✦ <i>RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL & TEAM DEVOTIONS</i>	
✦ <i>HELPING YOUR TEAM TELL THEIR STORY</i>	
✦ <i>OTHER MISSION RESOURCES</i>	
APPENDIX B: THE HEART SHAPE	39
✦ <i>SHARING A GOOD WORD</i>	
✦ <i>DOING A GOOD DEED</i>	

God has called, and you have answered. But now you're thinking, "What have I gotten myself into?"

And that's why you're here. Your pastor or missions leader wants you and your team to have the best possible experience on the mission field, and they want you to be prepared to lead and guide them through this experience.

Throughout these sessions, we will explore:

- what it means to be a good leader
- how you can best prepare your team for the experience, and help this experience be transformative in their spiritual journey
- communicating effectively with missionaries, pastors and field personnel before, during and after your experience
- staying flexible and keeping your team safe, healthy and secure
- bringing the stories home, letting God call others through your story to their own mission experience

We will tell stories, invite you to respond to and wrestle with questions, interact with each other and problem-solve through case studies from the mission field. At the end of this journey, you will have the tools you need to lead a team on mission.

President John F. Kennedy once said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." Simply by your presence here, you are showing that you take this call to mission team leadership seriously. Sharing God's love

The humility with which you approach this meaningful work is a trait to be recognized and kept. Ken Blanchard writes, "The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority." Humbling yourself before God in light of this call is witness to your trust being placed in God.

May God be "the lamp to your feet and the light for your path" as you shine God's light for others to see.

1. WHAT MAKES A GOOD TEAM LEADER?

*This section of the **Mission Team Leader Training Guide** should be completed in the weeks leading up to the training session. These pages will guide you through a reflection on your call, an identification of your gifts and abilities in leading a mission team, and help you prepare for what you will learn during the training session.*

Commitment. Character. Competency.

Whether they know it or not, the person(s) who recommended you to this training session considered these three characteristics as they evaluated your ability to lead a mission team.

Your commitment to the Gospel of Christ and the Church (both your local church and the Church throughout the world) has been evident in your life. Your love of Christ pours out of you and it can be seen through your actions that what you do and how you live your life is not for yourself, but for the glory of God and the building up of God's Church.

Through your commitment, you have shown to be of high character. You have placed your faith in God and trusted in Christ as your Savior, and that character is evident through your daily life.

Wherever you have gone, whatever you have done, you have shown to your church leaders that you can handle the work of being a team leader. All of the traits and abilities that we will uncover in this training session have been seen in your life as you have showed yourself to be competent in areas of leadership, as well as on mission.

Whether locally or internationally, you have experienced what it is like to be on the mission field, and God has woven those times of your life together to prepare you to lead this team. You may not have been in a place of leadership on the mission field (or maybe you have), but God has been doing a mighty work to get you ready for this experience.

Beyond those three characteristics, your story will vary greatly from one reader to the next. While your life story and your past mission experiences may vary, what does not differ is your call to follow Christ. That call is why we come, and it is our goal on mission: so that others may know of Christ's love.

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

How do you see yourself in light of the ideals of commitment, character and competency?

As you continue to prepare yourself to follow God's call, take a few minutes and use this page to write your faith story. This will help remind you of how you came to be here, and will also help us later in the training. *Only use this page; this is a summary, not your best-selling biography!*

MY STORY

- how has God changed your life
- where your desire to become a team leader came from
- what experiences have prepared you for this role
- who influenced your decision to follow through on this call

GROWING STRONGER AS A LEADER

Flexibility is a necessary trait for mission leaders and their teams. Like the 1950's TV icon, Gummy, we need to be flexible like clay, not simply in a spiritual manner but in our day-to-day experience on mission.

The same goes for your leadership toolbox. As you experience more, hear stories, have conversations and receive training, you will continue to grow. Your flexibility and willingness to be moldable is paramount to your continued success as a team leader.

When we discuss how to lead your team while on the ground, we will stress the importance of personal and team reflection. As you lead the team in these reflections, remember to ensure that you are caring for your own journey with the Lord.

In the International Mission Board's *Team Leader Training*, they list some key practices for leaders as you prepare for leadership:

1. Be a person of **prayer**. Let others know that you are counting on God's help with the responsibility of leading this team.
2. Maintain a consistently **positive** attitude in all situations. Remember that flexibility is your best friend!
3. Do your homework and be **prepared** as much as is humanly possible.
4. Handle sensitive or difficult situations **privately**. *Never correct or confront a team member publicly.*
5. Make this mission experience a **priority** in your life. People can tell what is important to us, so be sure to reflect absolute commitment.
6. Clearly establish your leadership **position**. Everyone needs to know "who's in charge." This can be done gently, but it must be done firmly. There can only be one head coach who makes the final call -- especially in the tough spots.
7. Expect and enlist the **participation** of other team members. Avoid the tendency to "micro-manage" but be careful to monitor the progress of those you are counting on. Don't fall into the trap of doing everything yourself -- delegate!

After this first mission experience, you will be an invaluable resource to future team leaders. Your first-hand perspective will help their preparation, and your knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of a team leader means you have a unique perspective to identify future team leaders.

Part of what makes a good leader is continuing to be a good leader. Don't neglect these conversations as "first-timers" give a new or fresh perspective to the role of leading a mission team. Your ongoing learning will enable you to continue to grow and become a stronger leader on the field.



2. WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEAM LEADER

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT TO DO?

You have a significant and awesome responsibility to your team and to those whom you will serve alongside, but that does not mean that you have to do everything.

Your primary areas of responsibility will be:

- Acting as the primary contact for communication with missionaries, pastors and church leaders on the ground
- Framing the experience for your team as they wrestle with how God is speaking as they reflect on what they encounter
- Ensuring the health and safety of your team; and leading them through trials and tribulation

GET THE BASICS

Through your mission partnership, many of the basic details will be communicated to you. Make sure you understand the who, what, where, when, why and how of this experience, and communicate that to your team. Clearly laying out the vision for the experience will help the team begin to prepare their hearts and minds for what they will see, hear, do and say.

Take a minute and use the space below to think about your upcoming experience:

WHO:

WHAT:

WHERE:

WHEN:

WHY:

HOW:

COMMUNICATING

Maintaining an open line of communication -- with Field Leaders and Ministry Partners, as well as your Church Leaders and family and friends -- will enable you and your team to have a successful and enriching experience. In those conversations, keep these items in mind:

- get the information you need and share the information they need. When will you arrive and when will you depart? How many people are on the team?
- use appropriate church publicity to let people know your team is going
- keep Church Leaders informed of your progress, and make sure to include the planning of the commissioning service (usually during a regular worship service) in these conversations
- keep the lines of communication open with field leaders
- give regular updates to family members and/or church leaders at home during the experience
- follow up with field leaders after you return home

Keep in mind that you may not hear the level of detail that you or your team would like. Again, keep in mind the illustration of flexibility and make plans as though you will need to be flexible.

LANGUAGE BARRIERS

If you are traveling to another country, chances are the primary language will be something other than English.

You will want to have an interpreter or translator with your team. As you make plans with the Field Leaders, ask whether a local interpreter can make time to be with your team, or if you will need to make plans to have a skilled member on your team.

Additional tips for speaking with a translator are available in the **Toolbox**.

SELECTING TEAM MEMBERS

What good is a team leader without members to lead?

Your church might already have a process for building a team. If you don't, there are three scenarios for recruiting a team along with other resources in ***Resources for Church Mission Leaders*** in the **Toolbox**.

TEAM MEMBER ROLES

One of the most exciting aspects of a mission experience is the growth you will see in your team as they encounter God in a new culture, form new relationships and explore a new way of serving our Creator. Each person comes with a set of gifts and, we hope, will leave with a greater understanding of new giftedness or passion.

Giving team members an area of responsibility on the team will enable you to lead the whole team and focus on the overall mission, as well as the spiritual growth of the team. Here are some ideas for getting your team members involved:

- **TEAM DEVOTIONS**

While the team leader can lead team reflections each day, a morning or evening devotion from a team member can be particularly encouraging and help to build the team. This person can lead the devotions themselves, or coordinate the empowerment of other team members to lead each day. Allowing the team members to tell their own story of God's work in their lives and in the experience will strengthen the entire team.

- **STORYTELLER [1 or 2 individuals]**

One of the most effective ways to communicate in the 21st century is through the web. If possible, and the context will dictate the feasibility, have a team member write stories and update prayer requests through the church website, a blog or social media outlet. This allows church members, prayer partners, friends and family the ability to follow along with your experience. The day-to-day updates also communicate the story as, if not more, effectively than a traditional mission trip report.

Depending on abilities, a second storyteller can be assigned to take photos and video that can be used, either during or after the experience.

- **PORTER**

From the front door of the church to the airport, throughout your host country and back home, your team will have a lot of bags to care for. The porter can track each bag and ensure that everything is loaded in and out so that nothing is left behind.

- **LOGISTICS/TREASURER [1 or 2 individuals]**

This person can handle transportation (all air and ground logistics), lodging and financial details. Some teams will need to carry cash for meal stipends, paying for hotels or transportation where credit cards or checks are not feasible. The Logistics Coordinator can help the team leader by providing accounting, tracking and planning for these needs.

- **COOKING TEAM**

Your team may need to provide its own meals throughout the experience. A flexible cook can adapt to the resources available and keep your team well-nourished.

- **PROJECT LEADER**

On a construction team, the Team Leader does not necessarily need to be an expert at construction. On a Vacation Bible School team, the Team Leader does not necessarily need to know a single detail about crafts. Depending on the project details, you may require a leader to ensure that the details of your work will be arranged.

- **TEAM MEDIC**

With a team of adults, you will not need an individual to manage the disbursement of over-the-counter or prescription drugs. However, it is helpful to assign a Team Medic to carry any pertinent medical information about individual team members in case of emergency. This team member should also be the one assigned to carry a general medical kit of first aid and

any other necessary supplies for the team. Your church may provide you with a simple kit to carry which can be left with your hosts for their use.

There are countless other possibilities and options available to you. Assess your team and the vision of the project, and see what other roles come to mind.

Each of these areas will be a significant help to the team leader, so that the leader can ensure that all the parts of the whole are working together to form a strong and cohesive team.

Which of these roles would you most likely fill yourself? _____

CARING FOR CONFLICT

Conflict is one reason why you should carefully claim your place as team leader early and often. The strong leader has made it known that they are responsible for the care of the team, and that will greatly enhance your ability to navigate the waters of conflict with your team. They will trust you and follow you when you encounter difficulty.

Conflict on mission can be within the team or in relationship with the local people you work alongside. No matter the individuals involved, your reaction should be the same:

- **TAKE A DEEP BREATH. AND PRAY.**

Grounding your reaction in your faith in God will increase your attentiveness to God's Spirit guiding you through. The deep breath -- literally a deep breath or figuratively, stepping away briefly -- will help you formulate a plan of action.

- **REMEMBER MATTHEW 18: START ONE TO ONE**

Remembering the basis of this Scripture passage about conflict will help you plan out your steps thoughtfully and carefully. The words of Jesus are timeless and true and can help you to guide your response.

- **EXTREME CASES**

There will be very few cases where the conflict involved requires that the individual be removed from the team. This should be handled with care and grace: amongst the team, with Field Leaders and once you have returned home. Nothing will hurt more than gossip amongst the team or amongst church members.

Hopefully your team building exercises will have allowed you the opportunity to build relationship and get to know the individuals who will be part of the team, so that these situations will not occur on the mission field.

SECURITY CONCERNS

Issues of security concerns will be rare. You will likely be aware of the possibility of security-related issues based on the travel advisories and warnings of the US Department of State or your partner mission agency. ***If you know that your team will be traveling to an area of concern, register with the Department of State before you leave the US [more information available in the next section].***

If your team will be traveling to a sensitive area, create a plan. Your mission partner can help you craft the plan based on the location and their expertise on the location and the field partners. Formulating this plan will be part of your ongoing growth as a team leader: each time you lead a team, take the opportunity to learn as much as you can from your mission partner in order to best provide and care for your team.

In the event that your team encounters difficulty, remain calm. Encourage your team to pray on an ongoing basis and ask for God's protection and provision.

3. TRAINING YOUR TEAM

THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

It is important for the team to remember, first and foremost, their commitment to God is how they arrived on the doorstep of this exciting experience. Continuing to build their relationship with God is vitally important in the days and weeks leading up to the experience, as well as every day of your journey, through:

- Prayer
- Personal reflection and journaling
- Reading God's Word
- Sharing "God-sightings" as a team each day

The Spiritual Journey is a core component of your team's preparation meetings. A team meeting focusing on logistics, details, project expectations and travel concerns allows the focus to drift from God to ourselves. Consider beginning each team preparation meeting with a time of prayer, Scripture reading and devotional reflection. These times of spiritual preparation will foster the habit of putting God first in all you do, experience and encounter while on mission together.

Providing resources for personal and team reflection will be important. A list is available in the **Toolbox** for your reference. Also encourage your team to carry a Bible, journal and pen to capture memories and stories from their experience.

TEAM COVENANT

God had a covenant with Abraham. Jesus said that his blood, the cup, was part of the new covenant between God and humankind. The covenant is a sign of relational commitment that your team can utilize to symbolically represent your commitment to the call, each other and the growth of the Church worldwide.

The outline of the covenant enables a team to relationally hold each other accountable, rather than allowing a set of rules to become something legalistic. It allows the team leader and mission partner to help the team outline and understand their commitment to the expectations.

Sample team covenant components have been provided in the **Toolbox**.

PRAYER PARTNERS

This auxiliary team is one of the most important aspects of your experience. Whatever joys or trials you face, it is reassuring to know that friends, family and fellow church members are specifically lifting you up in prayer each day.

The team prayer leader can provide a comprehensive prayer guide with specific prayers for each day of the experience, inviting your prayer partners to pray to God on your behalf. These guides can

also be distributed to the entire church, but make sure each team member specifically asks a few people to pray for them. A sample Prayer Guide and Prayer Card are available in the **Toolbox**.

Remember, the work that God will do in your heart and life through this experience can be multiplied through those who follow your story, pray on your behalf and hear of the good Word and good deeds you share.

TELLING YOUR STORY

One of the reasons we asked you to write a summary of your life story in Section 1 was to prepare you to ask your team to do the same. Though the cultures may be different, God's story transcends those divides. It is important for your team members to prepare their story of God's grace and forgiveness in their lives so they can share it with those they meet.

You can ask them to share their faith story as an element of the registration process, or you can spend some time with a curriculum that will help your team reflect, process and refine the telling of their story to most effectively share it with others. A list of these resources is available in the **Toolbox**. You can also provide these resources to the team to complete as they are led.

Also, consider asking one team member to share their faith story during your team preparation meetings.

BUILDING A PARTNERSHIP

A mission partnership can be a most rewarding experience for the senders, the goers and the receivers. A partnership, by very nature, implies that three entities are working *together* toward a common goal, enjoying fellowship the way God intended. The fruit of a mission partnership comes when both groups work together to accomplish the mission.

It is a common reaction for team members to want to help with whatever need they encounter while on the ground. The needs are evident, in many cases, as soon as you exit the airport. Part of building a strong partnership is remembering the old adage:

*Give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day.
Teach a man to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime.*

An effective partnership is built on concerted efforts at how and what should be given, and when these things should be given. The long-term effects of a balanced partnership allow both sides to equally "buy in" to the work to which the local church has been called. Remember, God has been at work in this place and will continue to be at work long after your team leaves, as will the local church leaders. You and your team are laying one block in a large building project.

Ask yourself and your team, "How best can our team help our partners sustain their ministry and their call after we are gone? How can we allow them to invest in us, and how can we invest in them?" Let that guide your steps and reactions to the needs you encounter.

Resources are available to help you and your team consider the implications of your work.

Take a minute and reflect on a time and place when you were compelled by the great need you had encountered.

How did that sight make you feel? How did you respond?

PERSONAL HEALTH AND TEAM SAFETY

Teams traveling to many countries outside the United States will need to plan ahead and exercise great caution and care. It is better to be prepared than to have your experience marred by something that could have easily been prevented. Health and safety will be your most significant considerations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintains a current list of specific travel health information for destinations around the world. Team members should consult this list to find the latest travel notices, information about safety and security at your destination, preparation tips for travel and vaccine-preventable diseases.

TO REDUCE THE LIABILITY ON YOUR CHURCH OR TEAM LEADER, ALWAYS REQUIRE TEAM MEMBERS TO CONSULT THIS INFORMATION AND THEIR FAMILY PHYSICIAN. DO NOT LIST VACCINES AND INOCULATIONS THAT TEAM MEMBERS SHOULD RECEIVE.

Travel Documents

For international travel, a passport will be your universal identity document. The passport will be used for travel, identification in country and gives notice to international nations that your home country's embassy has an interest if you are in trouble.

Check the passport validity requirements for the country you are visiting. It must be valid at least 3-6 months beyond your intended stay.

Make copies of your passport, including a copy of the page with your visa on it (if applicable). Leave a copy with someone at home who could fax it to you if needed. Place another copy somewhere in your luggage. *There is no guarantee a copy will be of assistance if your passport is lost, but has proven to be helpful and expeditious in previous circumstances.*

If your host country's immigration department issues to you an entrance form, keep whatever portion is returned to you. This portion will be requested upon your departure from the country.

Your mission partner can help you determine entry requirements for the host country, including any visas required. Some visas may need to be obtained prior to departure (up to 45 days before).

Air Travel

Have a team member confirm your flight's schedule in the 24 hours leading up to your first flight.

Most airlines will ask you to check in 2 hours before domestic flights and 3 hours before international flights to allow for greater security screening. Unless otherwise noted, make the same allowances before return flights from your destination.

Travel Insurance

Some mission partners require particular travel insurance policies which include basic health and injury insurance, along with emergency medical coverage. If your mission partner does not require a specific policy, consider Voluntary Missionary Travel Insurance through Gallagher Charitable International Insurance Services (www.aaintl.com) or Allianz Travel Insurance (www.allianztravelinsurance.com), based in Richmond.

Travel Resources

Each of these links should be provided to the members of your team along with other information and details about your experience.

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Travelers' Health**
<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/>
Information about travelers' health, safety and necessary vaccines.
- **Transportation Safety Administration**
<http://www.tsa.gov>
Follow TSA Guidelines for packing, check-in and security procedures at US airports. TSA will require you to discard or re-pack any items not permitted for travel.
- **U.S. Department of State**
<http://travel.state.gov>
The State Department maintains a list of travel information, warnings and notices about travel to particular countries and regions of the world. They also provide information about traveling safely as a US-citizen outside the country.
- **Smart Traveler Enrollment Program**
<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>
Formerly known as "Travel Registration" or "Registration with Embassies," The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) is a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country. STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency.
- **Travel Document Systems**
<http://www.traveldocs.com>
Provides an overview of the entry requirements for most countries in the world

In-Country Travel

Team members may not drive while on an international partnership project. This is for your protection, as well as due to issues of insurance and liability. Local laws, customs and prosecution processes can be complicated and/or arbitrary and are not worth the risk.

PACKING LIST

What is the climate this time of the year? What is the custom dress for worship? Construction? Recreational time? Will there be laundry facilities, or should I pack clean clothes for every day? Will food be readily available, or should I pack snacks? Will bedding be provided, or do I need to pack a sleeping bag or cot?

Your team will have lots of questions, and providing a packing list will help you stay one step ahead of their needs. Here are some common packing needs for a mission experience. Your sending agency or mission partner should be able to help with specific needs, while others will become clearer after you talk to your field partners. Still some details may remain unclear until you arrive at your destination: this is a time to remind your team to be flexible! **Remember:** pack as lightly as possible. Long walks with your luggage and limited storage space may be concerns while on the ground.

For specific packing and security guidelines, visit www.TSA.gov/travelers/index.shtm and your airline's website for what you can/cannot pack and what luggage to carry without added fees.

A sample packing list is available in the **Toolbox**, but here are a few specific tips:

TRAVEL TIPS FOR YOUR TEAM

- pack a small selection of toiletries and one complete change of clothes in your carry-on
- sunscreen, bug repellent and medical supplies [individually or by the Medic]
- copies of documentation [passport, visas (where appropriate), etc.] including travel insurance policy information
- money: credit cards or money exchange; if disbursing expense funds, distribute to each team member rather than carrying large sums of money

Additional tips for international travel are available in the **Toolbox**.

4. RESOURCES FOR CHURCH LEADERS

SELECTING YOUR TEAM

As was mentioned previously, your team leader will be ineffective without a team to lead! Your church may already have a process for building mission teams or you may not. Perhaps you are considering a change in how your teams are formed.

Here are two scenarios of how teams can be formed to participate in a mission experience:

- **INVITE TEAM MEMBERS**

The leadership of your church knows the people in the church. Knowing those who might be good candidates for the team, individuals can be invited by church leaders.

- **OPEN ANNOUNCEMENT**

Using the church newsletter, e-mail, website or other communication channels to issue an open announcement about upcoming mission experiences.

- **TEAM LEADER SELECTS TEAM**

In some structures, once the Church Leaders have selected a Team Leader, that individual can be charged with the task of promoting, recruiting and assembling the team.

PROVIDING FUNDING

Each church can choose a different way of paying for a mission experience. With the increasing costs associated with travel, it takes commitment to support and participate in global missions. Here are a few ways your church could support the people serving on mission:

- **FUNDRAISING**

There are many websites and resources available to help your group fundraise. Whether through a gift card program, where the church purchases gift cards at a discounted price and members buy them at full price, or a bake sale, every dollar helps.

- **CHURCH BUDGET**

Baptist churches have a long history of supporting missions through their church budget, so consider whether your church can add support of church members serving on mission. A stipend can be provided for each member, or scholarships can be offered particularly to those who need the assistance.

Churches with a longer history may also have the support of an Endowment Fund. Consider how these resources can be used for the purposes of missions.

- **SCHOLARSHIPS & DONORS**

Church leaders know the members who have a generous spirit and a heart for missions. At times, these members can anonymously support the mission experience of another member.

- **SUPPORT LETTERS**

A form letter that team members can use to send to family, friends and fellow church members provides team members a way to ask individuals and families to support their mission endeavor. The church can provide a standard letter that each team member can customize for their own needs.

- **FULL COST OPTION**

Don't worry if your church cannot provide financial assistance to team members. There are methods and options available to help individuals participate without the church offering support. If this option is chosen, surround the team with prayer warriors to show support, even not financial.

SAYING 'NO'

Some people are not ready for a mission experience. Perhaps their skill set does not fit the goal for a particular team, or there are others who have that skill set already on the team. There are many scenarios for which church leadership may decide a person should not participate on a team. Here are a few things to keep in mind as you prepare to tell someone, "Not now":

- Pray: as your church leaders make the decision
- Communicate: don't let time lapse without communication from your leadership. The longer you wait, the harder this conversation will become.
- Guidelines: know what you are looking for in a team, and why someone should not be part of any given team
- No lone rangers: it is important that the missions leader, team leader, pastor and/or other church leader(s) work together on this decision.
- Be clear: whatever the reason, let the person know this.
- Provide other opportunities: utilize the resources of ***Building A Support Team*** and offer a way for this person to support the team in prayer, gathering supplies, etc.

With grace and clarity, the Holy Spirit will work through this situation and provide guidance -- both to church leaders and to the person who is told, "No" or "Not right now."

WHO CAN GO?

Churches differ on whether a person who is not a member of their church or who does not yet follow Christ ("explorer") can participate on a mission team.

- Some churches will allow an explorer to participate on a team with a partner who will help them frame the experience on a one-on-one level.
- Some churches only allow church members to participate.
- Some churches have different policies depending on the location, local culture and type of experience. For example, a construction experience can include skilled labor and may help non-believers or those young in their faith an opportunity to experience God in a new way. An evangelistic experience in a highly-sensitive culture may require greater care in the spiritual journey of those on the team.

These conversations are much larger than any one person, and will vary based on the culture and conviction of the local church. Have these conversations with Church Leaders to ensure that the church will be able to fully support your whole team.

APPENDIX A: TEAM LEADER TOOLBOX

Elements of the Toolbox can be downloaded as individual files at www.AaronLee.co/missionleader. These items can be customized to the needs of our team.

TEAM LEADER TIMELINE

1. Contact local partners to review trip purpose, trip details, etc. Plan for frequent contact as trip gets closer.
2. Research air transportation options (departure cities, flight times, and costs).
3. Plan for transportation to and from the airport.
4. Establish an estimated team budget based on number of nights in country and submit to Pastor and/or Missions Leader (air, ground transportation, meals, etc.). (Note: travel day meal expenses are not included and are paid by team members)

Typical costs (per person):

- airfare
- travel insurance (optional; VBMB requirement)
- travel agency booking fee
- trip cancellation (optional)
- housing and meals
- in country ground transportation
- mission partnership fee (VBMB fee; otherwise, if applicable)
- background check (once a year)
- t-shirt (optional, per team)
- luggage tips & miscellaneous expenses
- supply cost (VBS, construction supplies, etc.)

5. Recruit team members as needed.
6. Establish due dates for trip deposits, remaining balances and forms. Generally, the deposits should be made 6-8 weeks out; remaining balances should be collected about 30 days ahead of the trip.
7. Email or hand deliver required forms to be completed by members and returned with a copy of passport and personal testimony. All forms with photo should be turned in 30 days prior to trip departure (collect at first meeting). Send mission partner forms to contact along with a team roster.
8. Once team members have been identified, book plane tickets. This should happen 4-6 weeks from trip date.
Needed: Passport names and birth dates of team members. Also, attempt to book team members in aisle seats for optimum comfort.
9. Identify key leader roles
10. Set up at least 2-3 team meetings, establish agendas and stress the importance of these meetings to team members:
 - Team building
 - take team pictures for the prayer guide
 - trip review (work on the ground, expectations, need for flexibility, etc.)
 - Cultural information

- devotions
- language 101 lessons
- packing lists
- solicit prayer partners
- vaccine recommendations

11. Establish daily schedules with local ministry/missionary contacts
12. Create team room pairings for housing. Follow up with contacts on reservations and room assignments.
13. The last team meeting can be with the team and family members. Go over final trip details and answer family questions. May want to consider doing this after the commissioning service and have a team luncheon after the Sunday worship service.
14. Create a prayer partner guide to be shared with prayer partners
15. Plan R & R day (sightseeing, shopping, reflection, etc.), if applicable.
16. Two weeks before departure have ministry partner [if applicable] send an invoice to cover all fees and charges to ministry partner [VBMB, IMB, etc.] and forward through church finance officers for payment.
17. Pray

SAMPLE TEAM INFORMATION SHEET

PANAMA JANUARY 2012

DATES: January 14-22, 2012

LODGING: Panama City/Pedregal-area Hotel

TOTAL COST: \$1,350 - \$275 (GBC missions stipend) = **\$1,025 per person**

Cost includes housing, meals, ground transport, emergency medical insurance, tips and group incidentals.

Personal funds will be needed for purchase of souvenirs, snacks and meals to and from Panama, tour of the Panama Canal and any other cultural experiences.

DEPOSIT: \$100, due **November 6**. A copy of your passport and the attached forms must be turned in with the deposit to reserve your place.

THE MISSION: To support our brothers and sisters at Primera Iglesia Bautista-Pedregal as they seek to reach their community with Christ's love.

THE PROJECT: Each year, Primera Iglesia Bautista-Pedregal (First Baptist Church, Pedregal) holds a Vacation Bible School for the children of their church and the surrounding community. Church leaders write their Bible School curriculum, hold an opening worship session and lead the Bible story/teaching time each morning.

After a snack break, the younger children have crafts while the older children participate in recreation time. With the teachers as translators, the GBC Team will lead the craft time and assist with recreation. Craft supplies and ideas will be gathered by GBC's VBS Team Leader, and a plan will be laid out for each day, in conjunction with the theme given by FBC Pedregal.

In the evening, the church will hold an outreach to Vacation Bible School parents, with the GBC Team providing support with drama, music and testimony.

PREPARATION: Team meetings will be scheduled to orient the team to each other, the call and to make logistical preparations as a team. These meetings are required, and will be scheduled by Team Leaders and the Missions Council.

COMMISSIONING: This Panama Team will be commissioned on Sunday, January 8 at both morning worship services.

IMMUNIZATIONS: For more information on immunizations required for travel to Panama, consult your family physician and the CDC's Travelers' Health page on Panama: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/panama.htm>.

SAMPLE MISSION APPLICATION FORMS



GAYTON BAPTIST CHURCH MISSION VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT FORM

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name (Initial)	Date
Address			Telephone
City	State	Zip	

PERMANENT CONTACT PERSON

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name (Initial)	Relationship
Address			Home Phone
City	State	Zip	Business Phone

MY COMMITMENT

I am committed to make spiritual preparation for this assignment, to read carefully the orientation materials and fulfill requirements of the experience. I will pray for the heart of a servant to work with the family of our Lord abroad. I will honor the Lord Jesus Christ in conduct, word and deed. I will use my skills, talents and spiritual gifts to build up and expand the Kingdom of God in the place I serve, seeking always His will and His purpose.

Signature _____ Date _____

*** PLEASE WRITE YOUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY AND RETURN WITH THIS FORM. ***

GAYTON BAPTIST CHURCH MISSION VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT FORM

Last Name	First Name	Middle (Initial)	Preferred Name	
Address	Street/Box	City	State	Zip
Date of Birth	Do you have a passport? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Passport # _____	County/State/City of Issue	Social Security #	
Name of Spouse	Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____ Email Address _____	Marital Status <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	
Emergency Contact (Name, Phone Number & Relationship)				
Current or Last Employer (If student, name of school)		Position Held (Year in School)		Dates Employed
Address (School Address)		City	State	Zip Retired <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
High School/Technical School/College/University/Seminary	Location	Major/Minor	Graduated <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Year Graduated
1.			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
2.			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
3.			<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Professional Certifications/Awards/Diplomas, Etc.		Foreign Language Fluent <input type="checkbox"/> Limited <input type="checkbox"/>		
		1. _____ 2. _____		
Skills/Talents (ex: Music Teacher, etc.) Rate your skills on a scale 1-3		1 (Above Average) 2 (Average) 3 (Poor)	Skills/Talents (Carpentry, Music Teacher, etc.) Rate your skills on a scale 1-3	1 (Above Average) 2 (Average) 3 (Poor)
1. _____			4. _____	
2. _____			5. _____	
3. _____			6. _____	
Local Church Name [if other than GBC]		Joined (Month/Year) Ministry?	Member Size	Ordained to the
Street Address		City	State	
Pastor's Name		Zip		
		Association Name		
Responsibilities at GBC:				
PLEASE USE THE BACK SIDE OF THIS FORM TO EXPLAIN ANY DISABILITIES OR HEALTH CONCERNS.				
List countries and dates of any previous volunteer service				
1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____				

SAMPLE TEAM LEADER APPLICATION

MISSION TEAM LEADER APPLICATION

The Missions Council desires to empower and equip interested individuals to lead a mission team. As mission teams seek to share a good word and do a good deed, team leaders provide effective leadership as teams reflect on, process and adapt to the ever-changing mission landscape.

The Missions Council will meet with prospective individuals after receiving this completed form, and discuss their interest based on the following criteria:

- **COMMITMENT**
First and foremost, the individual should be committed to God through a relationship with Christ. This will allow team members to be led effectively in reflections and devotions throughout the experience. Second, team leaders should be committed to and part of the church family, and be familiar with the mission and vision of the church, ensuring a strong connection to the lifestyle of mission through the church and in our community.
- **CHEMISTRY**
A strong rapport with others will be a necessary aspect of leading a mission team. The ability to connect relationally, both with the team and with the local ministry leaders with whom we serve, is vital to the success of the experience.
- **COMPETENCY**
Prior mission experience, to the same mission location or another, will be considered by the Council. The mission field is very unique from other ministry areas, and prior experience will prepare the leader to serve and adapt as he/she leads the team.

Interested leaders should complete the reverse side of this form and return to the Missions Pastor or appropriate Missions Council member (International, National or Local) after signing up for the team. In addition, two non-related individuals should provide a copy of the **Personal Reference Form** to the Missions Council.

NAME: _____ **PROJECT:** _____

Tell us about your relationship with God through Christ:

Tell us about your commitment to the ministry at our church:

How have you previously led others? What was that experience like?

Describe a previous mission experience, and any leadership opportunities (if applicable):

How do you feel like your personal gifts, abilities and personality would support this leadership opportunity?

rev: 11/2011

Mission Leader Application: Personal Reference

_____ [insert applicant's name] has expressed an interest in Mission Leadership at the Church. Thank you for taking a few minutes to provide your confidential perspective on this individual. Your comments will be shared only with the Missions Council.

How long have you known this individual? In what context?

Briefly describe your relationship with this individual?

Have you seen this individual provide leadership in a group setting?

In your opinion, is there anything that would inhibit this individual's ability to lead a mission team?

Would you recommend this individual to the Missions Council to lead a team?

YES or NO

[circle one]

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

*Please return this form to:
Our Church, Attn: Missions Council, 2345 Main Street, Richmond, VA 23294*

rev: 11/2011

PACKING LIST

Word DOC Online @ <http://aaronLee.co/missionleader>

Below is a sample packing list to share with your team. Not all items need to be packed for each person; this is an exhaustive list that includes many contextual items.

CLOTHING

- Culturally appropriate, comfortable, easy to layer, wash and wear. *Don't over pack!*
- Ladies: shorts to the knees, capris, long pants, dresses/skirts to the knee or longer, long/short sleeve tops (sleeveless OK, but no tank tops)
- Men: long pants, shorts, long/short sleeve shirts
- Bandana/handkerchief
- Bathing suit
- Comfortable shoes, sturdy walking shoes (broken in) and shower shoes
- Hat or visor
- Lightweight jacket or sweater
- Rain gear (poncho & umbrella)

ESSENTIALS

- Passport
Make copies and put inside each piece of your luggage (including carry on). Also leave a copy with a family member.
- Travel documents (tickets/boarding passes/visas, hotel confirmation, insurance information, etc.) [*keep with you!*]
- Bible, journal/paper and pen
- Glasses and/or extra contact lenses (contact solution)
- Pocket Knife or scissors (such as a Swiss Army knife: pack in your checked luggage)
- Language helps (Phrasebook/dictionary, translation books, notes, etc.)
- Medications/vitamins (pack in your carry on)
- Money belt or neck wallet
- Reading material (for the wait times in airports, etc.)
- Sunglasses
- Watch
- Bedding

TOILETRIES

- Anti-bacterial gel or towelettes (alcohol based)
- Aspirin/pain/allergy/cold medication
- Cosmetics
- Eye drops
- Feminine personal products

- Hair dryer, razor, curling iron, etc.
- Laundry detergent
- Lip balm
- Nail clippers and tweezers
- Q-tips, cotton swabs
- Scissors
- Sewing kit
- Shampoo, conditioner and soap (bar, liquid)
- Shower cap
- Skin moisturizer/hand lotion
- Small clothesline/pins
- Small first aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Tissues (pocket size)
- Toothbrush/toothpaste, dental floss
- Towel and washcloth

POSSIBLE TRIP-SPECIFIC NEEDS

- Boots/galoshes
- Candles/matches
- DEET (mosquito repellent)
- Gloves (leather gloves if physical labor is anticipated; rubber gloves if handling blood or body fluids or for kitchen/clean up duty)
- Safety goggles
- Toilet paper
- Tools for construction, repair, or renovation work

MISCELLANEOUS

- Addresses and phone numbers of family and friends
- Alarm clock
- Backpack/fanny pack
- Camera, film, extra memory card, charger
- Cash (US dollars in small denominations)
- Cell phone with charger
- Credit Card [no AMEX or Discover] (*Inform your card company of your travel plans!*)
- Dirty clothes bag
- Ear plugs
- Extra batteries
- Family pictures to share
- Flashlight
- Gifts for hosts (postcards, candy, peanuts, local shirts or hats)
- Power converters/adapters
- Sleep mask
- Snack foods (granola bars, trail mix, crackers, beef jerky, dried fruit, instant drink packets)
- Water bottle
- Ziploc bags (various sizes)

SAMPLE PRAYER GUIDE AND PRAYER CARD

Prayer cards [right] can be handed out to specific prayer partners and to the church community. This gives prayer partners a tangible and visual reminder to pray throughout the week.

The invitation letter [below] can be customized for each team member and e-mailed or given to potential prayer partners.

*Your eternal word, O Lord,
stands firm in heaven.
Your faithfulness extends to every generation,
as enduring as the earth you created.* *Psalms 119:89-90*

Hey friends,

Next month, I have the opportunity to participate in a mission trip. Along with 13 other people, I will be traveling to serve alongside local church leaders as we lead a Vacation Bible School together.

I am so excited about this trip and know that God is going to work powerfully through us. We have such an amazing opportunity to serve these children, so they will hear how special they are to God and how much Jesus loves them.

I would like to ask you to be a prayer partner for me while I am away, to be in prayer for me, my ministry to these children and the church, and God's impact on their lives through us.

Being a prayer partner means:

- ☉ Praying for me before the trip.
- ☉ Checking the team blog online each day to learn of prayer requests.
- ☉ Praying for something specific each day I am away.

Would you be willing to petition God on my behalf? I would love for you to be a part of the work of God this January! Let me know, I look forward to hearing from you.

Your Sister/Brother in Christ,

(Your personal info here)



Alex Smith

INTERNATIONAL CITY, COUNTRY
January 8-15, 2011

FOLLOW OUR BLOG
JanuaryMissionBlog.org

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Acts 1:8

The last tool for prayer partners is the Prayer Guide [below]. While specific prayer requests will be unknown until you are on the ground, a general prayer guide can be written by the team leader or prayer leader to help prayer partners have specific requests to pray for.

Thank you for being a part of my prayer support team!

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8

Please pray for these specific requests daily, and check our blog at country.MissionBlog.org for updates.

January 8: Safe Flight & New Relationships

After a 2:30 PM flight, we will arrive around 9:30 PM. Our host church will greet us at the airport and take us to the church building, where they will have a late-evening snack waiting for us. Pray for these first conversations and for the relationships that will begin forming. And pray for rest!

January 9: Worship & Plans

Our first full day! This morning we will worship with First Baptist Church, our host church and the site of VBS. Pray that as we worship and spend time with our hosts throughout the week that God will work through language barriers, and that we will communicate through the common language of faith.

And as the sun rises on a new day, and we take in the city with "eyes wide open," the specifics of our mission will begin to unfold. Pray that our God will continue to prepare our hearts for working with these kids, teenagers and young adults throughout the week.

January 10: The First Day of VBS!

Already the third day of our experience, yet we are still experiencing "firsts." Pray that God will use our hands and feet to share the love of Christ with each child we meet on this first day of VBS.

January 11: Ministry of Presence

In the first few days, we started to build some great new relationships. Pray today that God will help each of us continue to meet and get to know the individuals who need to hear about His love from us, and that we will not get "comfortable" with the people we have already met.

January 12: Midweek!

The experience is halfway through, but there are still plenty of opportunities to behold. Pray that our team will continue to build each other up, and that God will continue to highlight ways for each of us to use our gifts and talents to glorify Him as we serve alongside our new friends.

January 13: Endurance // Families & Friends

Tired probably only begins to explain our team as we near the end of the week. Pray that God will give us strength and endurance to continue working hard, building each other up and supporting the ministry of First Baptist Church. Also, pray that God will comfort our friends and family back home.

January 14: Last Day...Celebrate!

The last day of VBS is usually a great day of celebration and excitement. Pray that God will allow us an opportunity to celebrate with the kids we have met, with the volunteers we have served with and with our team, as we recognize all that God has done through our hands and feet this week.

January 15: Almost Home

We will board a plane around 8 AM and arrive home around 6 PM. Pray for safe flights and good conversation and reflection with the team as we travel.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL INFORMATION

Driving

Our volunteers may not drive while on a partnership missions project. This is for your own protection, as well as because of insurance and liability issues. Usually we don't know the written traffic laws of our host country, much less the unwritten laws. The prosecution of those laws can also be complicated and perhaps even arbitrary, as well as the driving customs. Therefore it's not worth the risk during a short-term mission trip.

Air Travel

Checking In: Before you leave for the airport, it is a good idea to check with the airline to make sure your flight is on schedule. Most airlines ask travelers to begin the check-in process a minimum of 2 hours before domestic flights and at least 3 hours before international flights to allow for tighter security procedures. Each person must show government-issued photo identification, such as driver's license or a passport, during check-in and prior to boarding.

Luggage: Check with your airline about national and international luggage restrictions for your flights, including checked and carry-on baggage.

Tips While Traveling

- Take your cell phone with you, even if it will not work outside the US. You can let your family and appropriate contacts know when you have a flight schedule change, miss a flight, or have an emergency, etc.
- If your group is departing from different origins, make sure you all have cell phones, as well as the phone numbers for all the team members.
- Call your Mission Partner and/or church/family contact if there is an itinerary change, if you miss a flight, if your flight is delayed. When you arrive at your destination, call to let them know you have arrived safely.
- A general guideline: "Any step closer to your destination is a good thing." Sometimes an airline will suggest or even pressure you to get off a plane because you would not make your next connecting flight anyway. Beware: Once you get off the plane, the airline might no longer feel obligated to help you. However if you stay on the plane and get stuck at the next airport, they will be obligated to help you. If you are "in transit" and in front of their desk - in other words if they are stuck with you - they are more likely to try and get you onto an alternative flight.
- The team leader must give Mission Partner contact information for someone in the States who will contact the volunteers' families if there is an emergency, or if there is vital information to be passed on.

Money

Ask someone who has previously traveled to this country about best practices for carrying money. Credit cards, travelers' checks and cash are useful in different situations. Knowing local customs and practices will allow for easier exchanges.

Telephone

Calling cards and cell phones are good options for calling home to family and church contacts.

For best results when using a calling card, purchase an international calling card with US access when you arrive at the airport or destination.

Some US-based international cell phones will work in any international destination, but for best results, consult your cell carrier. Some carriers require activation before international use.

Medicines

Pack an emergency medical kit for yourself. A general first aid kit should also be carried by one team member. In your personal kit, include what you normally need in an emergency. Anticipate common illnesses, including travel illnesses.

Keep medications in their original packages. Don't put important medications in your checked bags.

Packing

Don't pack too much. The place you are going might not have huge cars for carrying volunteers and large luggage. There also might not be an elevator where you are staying. You might have to walk a significant distance to your lodging, and there will not be someone to carry your luggage.

Gifts for your host

Consider taking a small gift from Virginia for your hosts. It should not be extravagant because you do not want to make your host feel obligated to give you a gift. You also do not want to flaunt your disposable income, especially in a country where the economy forces people to concentrate on the more important things in life.

Pictures or small mementos which represent your local culture are appropriate gifts. A photo of your church or the team in front of the church before you leave are also good options.

Team Leader Info Sheet

The team leader should compile an info sheet for each volunteer including the medical info (see above), passport number and contact information for the volunteer's family.

Please provide your team leader with your vital medical information, so she/he has this information if something happens to you and you cannot speak for yourself. Include age, blood type, allergies (also allergies to medications), pre-existing conditions (heart trouble, epilepsy, etc.) and medications you take regularly (blood pressure, blood thinner, insulin).

The team leader should give the Mission Partner the contact information for someone at home who will communicate with team members' families in case of an emergency. This person also makes it possible for you to let all the families know you arrived safely by making only one phone call.

The team leader should treat this information as confidential!

Field & Traveling Tips

- On the overseas flight, drink plenty of fluids and regularly walk (good for hydration and for giving you the opportunity to stretch your legs).
- Be a flexible, team player, learning as you go along.
- Carry important information in a secured pouch tucked under your clothing: insurance cards, money, passport, personal ID, phone numbers (including the name of your host, host church and/or hotel).
- Completely cover pay phones with your body when making a calling card call. Also keep your calling card out of sight to prevent unwanted usage of your account.
- Give inexpensive gifts to your friends and hosts as you leave; this avoids creating pressure to reciprocate. If you are given gifts, accept them graciously.
- Pack a complete change of clothing, medications, and other essentials in your carry-on.
- Have healthy snack foods and light reading materials available for unexpected delays.
- Keep luggage keys on your person or use combination locks.
- Learn as much as possible before you depart about the geography, customs, and history of the country you will visit.
- Purchase an electrical converter and plugs for small appliances such as hair dryer, etc.
- Make and give copies of all your important travel and medical documents both to your team leader and your family members/friends.
- Medication dosages and instructions should be in original containers and clearly marked on the label. Inform your team leader of any chronic medical condition you have and make him/her aware of where your medicines are kept at all times.
- **Never go out alone!**
- Travel light (You bring it, you carry it!). Luggage on wheels is helpful.

General Guidelines for Using an Interpreter

You will discover that interpreters possess varying degrees of skills depending on a) their grasp of the English language, and b) their experience in actually serving as an interpreter. But no matter what degree of skill an interpreter possesses, you can improve that skill by following certain rules and procedures.

Remember that you are communicating in your terms. The national is attempting to understand your language.

- Speak distinctly, but do not exaggerate the pronunciation or the slowness.
- If necessary, repeat the idea using other words. Repeating words which the national does not understand does not help. Do not raise your voice if you are not understood.
- Be patient and appreciative. If possible, share with your interpreter the information you will use before going into action. Try not to surprise your interpreter.
- Identify any printed materials you propose to use, such as a tract and the scriptures you expect to read or refer to during your presentation.
- Point out to the interpreter in advance any points you particularly want to stress so that he/she can place the emphasis on those points in harmony with you.

- Identify in advance any unusual or difficult words or numbers you intend to use to give the interpreter time to develop the translation correctly. When the English words you choose do not have corresponding meanings in the national language, select substitute words which can be translated.
- Some interpreters prefer that you say a complete sentence, others prefer shorter units of thought.
- Avoid using jokes, poems, hymns, long stories, idioms, alliterations, metaphors, difficult names, and rambling statements. Stick to essential content and place emphasis on clarity rather than on beauty of language. Use literal meaning of words. For example, say “Very good” instead of “Awful good.” Do not use idiomatic sayings, i.e., “middle of nowhere,” “out on a limb,” “a shot in the arm.”
- When given ten minutes to share a testimony, plan to speak a total of five minutes and allow five minutes for interpretation. It takes twice as long to speak because of the translation.
- Face the people, not the interpreter.
- Though you may want to publicly compliment your interpreter, refrain from doing so. He cannot brag on himself, and that is the position you place him/her in when you attempt a compliment in public. Save your praise for sharing privately.

SAMPLE COVENANT

Here are sample commitments to include in a Team Covenant:

- pray for each other as we prepare to go
- pray for our partners who will receive us, host us and serve with us
- pray for my own experience, that I will be open to God’s work in the world around us
- make our team gatherings a priority, before, during and after our mission experience
- I will respect the culture, traditions and expectations of our partners and my fellow team members

RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL & TEAM DEVOTIONS

- **Deep Justice Journeys**
<http://amzn.to/vi9o9j>
 While this was created as a youth resource, the content is well-written to the three stages of a mission experience: preparation, experience and reflection.
- **Called/Challenged/Changed** [adults] **OR** **Anticipate/Experience/Reflect** [youth]
<http://amzn.to/sfnFNU>
 This three-part series is available for adults or youth. You can provide a copy to each member of your team, or use one copy for the devotion leader to

RESOURCES FOR MISSIONAL PREPARATION

- **Foreign to Familiar**

<http://amzn.to/Ub32PE> [paperback] or <http://amzn.to/UarVsU> [Kindle]

This is a splendidly written, well researched work on cultures. Anyone traveling abroad should not leave home without this valuable resource on interacting and relating to other cultures.

- **When Helping Hurts**

<http://amzn.to/S6DouC> [paperback] or <http://amzn.to/TMWeD8> [Kindle]

While this book exposes past and current development efforts that churches have engaged in which unintentionally undermine the people they're trying to help, its central point is to provide proven strategies that challenge Christians to help the poor empower themselves. Sustainable change for people living in poverty comes not from the outside-in, but from the inside-out.

HELPING YOUR TEAM TELL THEIR STORY

If you or your team are particularly interested in more effectively communicating your faith journey, here are a number of resources that you can use. These may be especially effective for teams focused intently on evangelism.

- **Contagious Christian**

<http://amzn.to/vukS1f>

Evangelism doesn't have to be frustrating or intimidating. Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg believe that effectively communicating our faith in Christ should be the most natural thing in the world. We just need encouragement and direction.

- **Walk Across the Room**

<http://amzn.to/t0eTMs>

You may be only a conversation away from having an eternal impact on someone's life---if you will just walk across the room.

OTHER MISSION RESOURCES

There are a selection of other resources available to make available to your team for their personal enrichment and awareness of global missions. If you find one of these resources, let us know!

APPENDIX B: THE HEART SHAPE



“Have a heart!”

“Bless her heart!”

Each expression reminds us of how many ways we use the word “heart” in our culture. Yes, there is that beating organ in our chests that pumps our blood to the far reaches of our cells. But in the Western world we have equated the heart with love, emotion, and even pain at such a deep level that this “heart” can break.

The heart shape describes how God calls each of us to relate to those who have yet to begin a relationship with Jesus Christ.

If you have had a tween daughter living in your home, you are probably familiar with the “Best Friends” necklace; each girl wears a half of the heart shape, but it’s only when the two pieces are put together that the heart becomes a whole. Our representation of the Gospel to the outside world is just like that necklace: two essential pieces that make up the whole. One without the other does not a heart make.

So what has God called us to do to extend the good news of Jesus Christ to the world? It’s really quite simple: Share a Good Word and Do a Good Deed.

SHARING A GOOD WORD

Sharing a Good Word is the way we describe verbally relaying the good news of Jesus Christ (sometimes called the “gospel”) to the lost, to those without a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. As followers of Jesus, we should know what the gospel is and be ready to share it whenever we have an opportunity.

Peter, one of Jesus’ closest friends, said it like this:

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3:15)



Well, what is the good news of the gospel? If you've ever tried to share the basics of what you believe with a friend, you may have experienced "share fright" (the evangelistic version of "stage fright").

One reason we experience "share fright" is not knowing the content of the gospel well enough to share it. The next page is a succinct yet thorough retelling of the story we need to be willing and able to share with people who don't yet follow Jesus Christ.

Becoming familiar with this content will help you relax and share naturally!

The Bible describes God's salvation as a gift.

Here's why we need but [don't] deserve the gift:

God created mankind in his own image – as good people who through obedience could live in a right relationship with Him. But each one of us has sinned.
(Genesis 1:27-31; Romans 3:23)

We all deserve eternal separation from God because of our sin.
(Romans 6:23)

Here's why God wants to give us the gift:

God loves us and has offered us the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.
(Romans 6:23; Romans 5:8)

Here's how the gift was purchased:

God sent Jesus Christ to earth. He lived a sinless life, and yet died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin.
(2 Corinthians 5:21)

God raised Jesus from the dead, powerfully showing that Jesus was God's Son, and that death could not contain Him.
(Romans 1:4; Acts 2:24)

Here's how we open the gift:

Anyone who confesses with their mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believes in their heart that God raised him from the dead will be saved.
(Romans 10:9)

Here's how the gift changes our life:

Christians are made alive with Christ so that they can live a new life that will continue even beyond death.
(Ephesians 2:5; Romans 6:4; 1 Corinthians 6:14; John 11:25)

The Scripture verses are given above so that you can know where to find the truth you are sharing in the Bible. Since each of the bullet points above are paraphrases of the Scriptures, you can be confident that when you share them you are sharing God's truth.

Oh how many ways there are to share this incredible story! You've heard preachers preach it, singers sing it, and street evangelists yell it. But if you are like most people, you simply need to ask God to give you opportunity to share, and then be ready and willing to share when the opportunity arises.

You may soon have the challenge of sharing with a close friend or family member, or you may have the unique challenge of sharing with someone you barely know. Each opportunity to share is a different adventure requiring faith...not faith in your ability to come up with the perfect words or to have all the answers...but faith that God will help you share His story the best way you can.

And remember, you're not selling yourself or your ability to follow Jesus Christ – you are telling people about Him and how He is in the process of changing your life. Be willing to tell people how God has changed you, and feel free to be honest by letting people know God still has work to do in your life.

One final word about sharing a good word. How we tell this good news is really important to God. Let's revisit the passage we looked at earlier from 1 Peter 3:

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.

But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience.” (1 Peter 3:15-16)

Our world needs more people who are willing to share the timeless truth of the gospel with winsome gentleness and kindness. People have probably heard some of the truth you need to share before, but the truth may have come through judgmental, harsh, or disrespectful lips. People seldom care what you know until they know you care about them. Every person you share with is created in the image of God and deserves to be spoken to with respect.

God, may You give us opportunities to share the gospel with a strong conviction that Your truth is life-changing, and a deep commitment to sharing that truth in love.

DOING A GOOD DEED

Doing a Good Deed is the way we describe our responsibility to demonstrate the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus was not a talking head. He practiced what he preached, and we are to follow His example. As we live as followers of Jesus, we are weaving together a beautiful tapestry of words and actions just like He did.

Early in his ministry Jesus made it clear that he was sent to the earth to share a good word and do a good deed. Listen to how he describes his mission on earth:



“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor. (Luke 4:18-19)

Jesus healed people, fed them, performed miracle after miracle, all the while proclaiming God’s Word to the people. Jesus was described by those who knew him as “powerful in word and deed before God and all the people” (Luke 24:19).

Well, you may ask, what are the good deeds that God wants us to do? Here are a few examples from the Scriptures:

- look after orphans and widows in their distress (James 1:27)
- care about justice for the poor (Proverbs 29:7)
- feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, clothe the naked, heal the sick, visit the prisoner, show hospitality to strangers (Matthew 25:32-46)
- invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind to eat with you (Luke 14:12-13)

Why all this talk about the poor and those in such great need? Many folks who are prosperous honestly struggle with their attitude towards those who are in need (especially with those whose irresponsible choices created their need).

But consider this: our attitude to the poor reveals a lot about our understanding of God’s grace, which was given to us despite our irresponsible choices that created our need. Embracing the parallel between our spiritual condition and others’ physical condition is a great step toward seeing the poor the way God sees them.

Let’s allow Jesus to summarize “do a good deed” in His typically powerful and concise way: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39). To Jesus, love is not just something we feel inside; love is a deep emotion that is demonstrated. Think of how God loved us from the beginning of time, and yet demonstrated his love to us by sending His one and only son into the world that we might live through Him.” (1 John 4:9)

Jesus’ followers continued His example. Listen to one of those followers, James, as he gives us an example of how this demonstration fleshes out in real life:

“Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.” (James 2:15-17)

The beauty of the heart shape is that it visually depicts the two halves together making a whole. When “word” and “deed” are combined in our life, God does amazing things!

For example, as you go about doing good deeds, occasionally someone will ask why you’re doing them. That’s the perfect opportunity to join the two halves of the heart together. Consider putting this idea into your own words: “I am a follower of Jesus, and this is the kind of thing He did for people to show them that He loved them.”

Or suppose you have been sharing the gospel with someone. Pray about a specific way you can meet one of their physical needs. Let the powerful combination of word and deed help someone understand how much God loves them!

God, help us to see the needs of the people You have created. Transform our heart so that we genuinely love those who are in need. Empower us to extend Your hands of merciful help so that they may see our good deeds and worship You.

*As we live out the two halves of the heart,
may our church become a church who answers
the challenge Paul set before us in Colossians:*

*“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed,
do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.”*

Colossians 3:17





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