

Faith Communities Mission Trip Policy

As a congregation we value short-term mission experiences for how they invite us to learn:

- » about the work God is doing in the world around us;
- » about ourselves in how we can be part of God's love, shared with others;
- » about other people, cultures, and ways of understanding life.

Short-term mission opportunities also form bonds between team members that are tangible expressions of community within our congregation.

A successful short-term mission trip will have a plan for the following items:

1. Developing a team that is committed to the shared goals of the mission;
2. Developing a clear budget for the costs associated with the mission; and
3. Developing a timeline for reaching fundraising goals and receiving commitments from the team.

A short-term mission trip sponsored by our church is different from a learning trip or educational tour where participants are required to support their own costs. For the short-term mission trip to be a part of the congregation's ministry there is a mutual accountability among the team in helping each person develop the resources they will need in order to participate. The short-term mission trip experience includes participation in any fundraising associated with the trip.

Fundraising is an invitation to allow others to participate with you in the mission that is proposed. While you are asking for their financial support, you are also inviting these individuals to partner with you in this experience. You are accountable to them for how you will use this gift in the building of God's kingdom, the learning you will do, and how you will witness through your actions and words. Fundraising is not begging for money or simply making an appeal. It is a way of joining with others in the work God is calling us to do.

Members of a short-term mission trip sponsored by our church will be responsible for raising the funds required for:

- » their personal travel;
- » daily living expenses; and
- » their portion of general team expenses necessary to fulfill its ministry.

Although funds are raised and accounted for individually, all funds raised by individual team members will be treated as team funds. If a person raises more than enough to cover their individual cost for the trip, the balance of the funds designated for them will go to offset any shortages incurred by other team members. If the funds raised by the entire team exceed the amount needed for the trip, the Church Council will decide how the excess funds will be used.

Fundraising

All participants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the fundraising policies established for the mission trip and will put forth their best effort to raise the specified amount for their trip.

- ▶▶ Participants are encouraged to speak personally to or send support request letters to family and friends. Participants may want to compare lists of those who will receive request letters in order to avoid multiple letters to the same potential donor. While it is permissible for participants to individually approach or send letters to our church members who are close personal friends, appeals for funds should not be made to organized groups (such as a Sunday school class) nor should any church mailing list be used for fundraising.
- ▶▶ All support letters should be sent with the express purpose of soliciting contributions for expenses directly related to the mission trip only. Contributions donated through our church on behalf of an individual will be applied to the announced cost of the trip unless the total amount raised exceeds the announced cost of the trip.
- ▶▶ Each participant should submit the required trip deposit no later than the announced deadline.
- ▶▶ Each individual is responsible for the payment of any fees required for the following (unless these fees are included in announced trip costs):
 - ▶▶ Passport and passport photos;
 - ▶▶ Visas;
 - ▶▶ Immunizations;
 - ▶▶ Country entrance and exit fees; and
 - ▶▶ Personal items such as clothing, toiletries or prescriptions.

Donations given through the church on behalf of the participant will not be used for these items, unless they are included in the announced trip cost.

The designated trip leader will review the financial status of each person and the team prior to buying any airline, train, or bus tickets to ensure that adequate funds are available to cover the expenditure. Each person should raise at least 50 percent of the trip cost by the non-refundable purchase date for any tickets. Tickets will not be purchased for individuals who haven't met this guideline.

Refund policy

Donors should be made aware that if the particular participant that they are supporting is unable to attend the mission trip for any reason, any donated funds will be used to support the overall trip.

Speak with an Account Manager at your nearest Kindred branch for advice and options for your church.

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