
Missions Statement

The purpose of the Missions Ministry is to glorify God through obedience to the Great Commission using Acts 1:8 as our direction, “and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” We will accomplish this by educating, motivating and mobilizing the church for this purpose.

OBJECTIVE

Hickory Grove Baptist Church to share the Gospel so lost people of the world accept Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.

METHOD

The method Hickory Grove Baptist Church uses to reach the lost is to encourage, equip and engage members to go on mission wherever God leads.

STRATEGY

Hickory Grove Baptist Church is active in short-term and long-term mission ministries, reaching local and world mission fields, supporting the Southern Baptist mission agencies, putting Acts 1:8 into action.

EMPHASIS

The emphasis of missions at Hickory Grove Baptist Church is the un-evangelized and unreached people groups in Charlotte, the United States and throughout the world. The ministry will always be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as to where God is working and where He wants us to join Him.

Informational Meetings

There will be an Informational Meeting before each trip. The main objective of these meetings is to offer an overview of the mission trip to those interested.

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading** (Matthew 28 and Isaiah 6)
- **Overview of the Mission**
 - Why are we going?
 - Where are we going?
 - When are we going?
 - What we can do to help while we are there?
- **Brief discussion of logistics**
 - Cost and Schedule of Deadlines
 - Team Fund Agreement
 - HGBC Mission Trip and Partnership Participation
 - Fundraising letter and donor list
 - Meeting schedule
 - Preparations
 - Passports/ Visa (if applicable) Review requirements for a Passport/Visa (you must have a valid Passport – valid for 6 months – before you can apply for a Visa)
 - Insurance
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Accommodations
 - Meals
 - Volunteer Application and deposit
 - Background
- **Questions?**
- **Once the Team is formed, there will be a minimum of eight preparation sessions.**
 - It is very important that you attend all Team meetings.
 - The day, time and location of the meetings will be determined by what meets the need of the majority of the Team Members.
 - Minimum attendance of 75% of the team meetings, not including the informational meeting.

First Team Meeting

(To be led by Missions Pastor)

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Biblical basis for missions: Matthew 28:18-20**
- **Introductions**
- **Detailed overview of the mission**
 - Location
 - Timing
 - Mission tasks
- **Brief discussion of logistics**
 - Review and complete the Activity and Deadline Schedule (Administrative Section)
 - Review Financial Policies and Procedures (Financial Considerations Section)
 - Fundraising letters
 - Create a list of donor names and addresses
 - Consider alternate fundraising ideas
- **Meeting schedule and attendance**
- **Journaling (Reflections Section)**
- **Accommodations**
- **Health considerations (Administrative Section)**
- **Cultural sensitivity (Culture Section) overview**
- **Preparation through reading Scripture and materials (Witnessing Section)**
- **Review Deciding To Go Checklist (Reflections Section)**
- **Team Covenant**
- **Questions?**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer focusing on lostness**

ITEMS to be SIGNED AND/ OR COLLECTED

- **Volunteer Application Form and \$100 non-refundable deposit (applicable to all qualified applicants), including Release of Liability form**
- **HGBC Global Mission Trip and Partnership form**
- **Team Fund Agreement**
- **Release of Rights form (does not need to be turned in; should be signed and kept in the manual)**
- **Team Covenant (does not need to be turned in; should be signed and kept in the manual)**

Note: The forms to be completed and signed are located in the Volunteer Application packet available on website. Copies of the forms for reference are located in the Volunteer Manual: Administrative, Financial Consideration, Team Building Sections.

Second Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Blessed to be a blessing: Genesis 12:1-3**
- **Introductions**
- **Team Building**
 - Review Team Building information (Team Building Section)
 - Each Team Member is asked to share the following with the group
 - Why they feel God wants them to go on this particular mission trip
 - What other ministries they are involved in at Hickory Grove Baptist Church or their church
 - What other mission activities they have participated in
- **Brief discussion of logistics**
 - Review the Activity and Deadline Schedule (Administrative Section)
 - Fundraising letters should be mailed by now
- **Passports/ Visas (Administrative Section)**
 - Confirm that all Team Members possess or have applied for a Passport
 - Reminder that it may take 4-6 weeks or more to obtain a Passport and Visa.
- **Immunization Requirements (Administrative Section)**
 - Discuss if immunizations are required and if so which ones specifically
- **Beneficiary Team List (Administrative Section)**
 - Inform each Team Member of the short-term insurance coverage
 - Ask each Team Member to complete the participant list indicating their beneficiary
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “Why am I going on this Mission Trip?”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

- **Short-Term Insurance Coverage and Beneficiary designation form**

Third Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Reaching all of the world’s people: Matthew 24:14**
- **Introductions**
- **Distribute list of Team Members’ addresses and phone numbers**
 - Discuss the importance of using the Team Member list to pray for each Team Member by name
- **Discuss onsite tasks**
 - Video photographer
 - Medic
 - Music leader
 - Prayer leader
 - Daily devotion while on mission – each Team Member should be given a schedule as to when they will deliver a 5 to 10-minute morning devotion
- **Share the culture**
 - Ask each Team Member to share something they have recently learned about the host country
 - Cultural Sensitivity (Culture Section)
- **Work available during the Mission Trip**
- **Personal testimonies (Testimony Development Section)**
 - Review “How to Share Your Testimony”
 - Develop a 5-minute personal testimony (when translated this will be a 10-minute testimony)
- **Discuss the prayer covenant list (Prayer Section)**
 - Emphasize the importance of the list
 - Explain the prayer letter
 - Ask Team Members to write their first prayer letter this week
- **Review logistics**
 - If a Visa is required, the Team Leader must collect all Passports at the next meeting (this is required to be completed 60 days before departure).
 - Describe the tasks that the Team will be performing: Vacation Bible School, evangelism, prayer walking, etc., and begin planning the items that are needed in order to accomplish the tasks, including equipment, craft items, etc.
 - Ask Team Members to bring in their ideas regarding tasks.
- **Financial matters**
 - Discuss deadlines
 - Provide updates of donations received for the Team
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “How have I personally seen God at work?”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

Fourth Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – The Great Commandment: Luke 10:25-37**
- **Share the culture**
 - Ask each Team Member to share something they have recently learned about the host country
 - Discuss culture shock (Culture Section)
- **Financial matters**
 - 50% of the trip cost is due by the ticketing date
 - Provide updates of donations received for the Team
 - Check in with Team Members regarding their fundraising efforts
- **Onsite tasks**
 - Ask Team Members to sign up for their specific tasks
- **Supplies**
 - Identify what supplies are needed
 - Determine who will order or purchase the supplies. Remind the Team that it is expected that the supplies will be covered by the Team Fundraising activities.
- **Practice language skills**
 - Personal introductions
- **Building Team Unity (Team Building Section)**
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “One experience that I definitely want to have while I am in the host country.”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

- **Passport**
- **Visa application (if required)**

Fifth Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Luke 4:14-19, 40-43**
- **Financial matters**
 - Provide updates of donations received for the Team
 - Cover deadlines
 - Praise reports
- **Share the culture**
 - Ask each Team Member to share something they have recently learned about the host country
- **Logistics**
 - Confirm that everyone has a Passport
 - Cover the airline schedule
- **Pre-trip items**
 - Review list of items Team Members need to take on the trip
 - Review Country information
- **Practice language skills**
 - Personal introductions, e.g., “My name is.....”
 - Practice John 3:16
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “The spiritual gifts I bring to this Mission.”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

Sixth Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – We go as servants: John 13:12-20**
- **Our mission as servants**
 - Review “A Servant’s Heart” (Witnessing Section)
 - Review “Being a Bridge Builder” (Culture Section)
 - Be a help, not a stumbling block
 - Learn not to be critical
 - Remember it does not need to be done “my way”
 - Be a servant to each other
- **Share the culture**
 - Ask each Team Member to share something they have recently learned about the host country
- **Logistics**
 - Review mission Team Travel Protocol (Administrative Section)
 - Packing List (Personal Preparation Section)
 - Team assignments
 - Onsite work tasks
 - Supplies, discuss how the Team is going to transport the supplies
 - Ask the Team to consider if there is anything else that is needed
- **How to share your testimony in this culture**
 - Advise the Team to plan on spending most, if not all, of the time at the next meeting on witnessing and sharing their testimony.
- **Financial matters**
 - Provide updates of donations received for the Team
 - Cover deadlines
 - Praise reports
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “How I think this mission will affect my life.”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

Seventh Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Growing as disciples: Ephesians 1:17-19**
- **Share the culture**
 - Ask each Team Member to share something they have recently learned about the host country
- **Logistics**
 - Review onsite work tasks
 - Remind the Team that flexibility is key; God may change part or all of the Team’s plans
 - Designate an “at home” representative. The Team Leader is responsible for contacting this representative when the Team arrives at the destination. The “at home” representative is then to contact each Team Member’s family and update them on the status of the Team’s arrival.
- **How to share your testimony in this culture**
 - Team Members should practice sharing their testimony with one other Team Member.
- **Financial matters**
 - Provide updates of donations received for the Team
 - Praise reports
- **Prayer time**
 - Join hands and pray over specific, individual prayer requests, as well as requests of the Team
 - Ask each Team Member to pray aloud
 - Inform Team Members that they should send their second prayer letter this week
- **Questions?**
- **Journal assignment: “How I hope this trip will affect my life.”**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

Eighth Team Meeting

AGENDA

- **Opening prayer**
- **Scripture reading – Carry each other’s burdens: Galatians 6:2**
- **Restate the purpose of the mission trip**
- **Logistics**
 - Review the time the Team is to meet at the Church - 30 minutes before departure to the airport. This will give time to load the luggage into Church vans and to have prayer with friends and family
 - Provide list of phone numbers where Team Members can be reached in the event of an emergency
 - Review the airline schedule again in the event of any changes
 - Inform the Team that they will receive their airline tickets the day of departure along with their Passports
 - Review the mission Team Travel Protocol (Administrative Section) again
 - Discuss “what if.....”
- **Financial matters**
 - Discuss the options of using cash, traveler’s checks, credit cards
 - Ask the Team to consider how much spending money they will need
- **Prayer time**
 - Join hands and pray over specific, individual prayer requests, as well as requests of the Team
 - Ask each Team Member to pray aloud
- **Questions?**
- **Provide date, time and location of next Team meeting**
- **Closing prayer**

ITEMS to be COLLECTED

Team Reunion

Another highlight of any short-term mission project is the Team reunion. It is best to schedule this session three to four weeks after the Team returns, and it should include spouses, parents of youth participants and anyone who has endured the months of preparations of the Team Members. Ideally this is a covered dish picnic at the home of a centrally-located Team Member. After preparing, traveling, living, eating and working together, this reunion is the opportunity to relive some of those wonderful moments the Team experienced together. It also serves to bring closure to the experience.

Activities might include asking each Team Member to:

- Share one entry from their journal
- Describe the most meaningful part of the trip
- Share “Gospel Stories”
- Illustrate how their life will be changed because of the experience
- Tell about something God enabled them to do that they did not think they could
- Describe their relationship with Jesus Christ before and after the trip
- Share each other’s photographs and view the Team video
- Prayer time

Guidelines for HGBC-Sponsored Mission Trip Approval

All trips must be approved by the Missions Committee prior to any plans made or Teams formed in order for the trip to be considered a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored trip. The benefits of being a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored trip include: 1) receipt of Partnership (financial) support, 2) commissioning service, 3) support from the Missions Ministry, and 4) insurance and reservation support.

HGBC-sponsored Mission Trips are approved annually, collectively in October of each year. While there may be extenuating circumstances that necessitate the consideration of mid-year requests, the approved mission trips are part of an overall Missions Ministry strategy and vision and, therefore, require thoughtful and coordinated planning.

A member of HGBC must submit a Mission Trip Approval Request Form to the Missions Office. Forms may be obtained from the Missions Office. The Forms are to be completed in their entirety. It is appropriate for the preparer to confer with either the Missions Minister and/or members of the Missions Committee in order to complete the Form.

Each HGBC-sponsored Mission Trip should be part of a larger plan. Therefore, each Mission location needs to have a documented three to five-year strategic plan, and the individual mission trips should have clear goals and objectives for accomplishing the strategic plan.

If the mission trip is exploratory, a vision needs to be established as well as goals and objectives of the exploratory visit. The participants of the Visionary Mission Trip will be comprised of a small team, typically three individuals, including the Missions Pastor, if available, the proposed Team Leader, and member(s) of the Missions Committee.

The Assessment of the mission trip is a critical component of the Approval Process for the following year. An Assessment of each completed Mission Trip is to be conducted within 30 days of the Team's return. The Assessment will be completed by a combination of the Team Members, the Team Leaders, the Missions Committee Member assigned to the Team and the Missions Office, including the Missions Minister. The Assessment should include:

- Evaluation completed by each Team Member
- Team Leader's report of the results
- Review of the results compared to the goals and objectives
- Confirmation of the long-term strategic plan or adjustment if necessary
- Recommendation for the continuation (or not) of the Mission Trip in the coming year.
- Recommendation for age limits and health considerations.

Mission Volunteer Manual

In September of each year, the Missions Pastor will collect all of the Assessments and review the results. Based upon this review, the Missions Pastor will recommend the list of mission trips for the coming calendar year in the October meeting of the Missions Committee.

Concurrently, in September of each year, the Missions Pastor will assess the effectiveness of each Mission Team Leader based upon:

- Evaluations completed by each Team Member
- Annual Review with the Missions Minister. The Annual Reviews must be completed by the middle of September.

The recommended mission trips will be combined with the recommended Team Leaders, and certain details of the trip will be established: timing, number of Team Members, etc.

In September of each year, the Missions Pastor will submit his recommendations to the Missions Committee.

Once the Budget is finalized, the Missions Committee will establish the amount of Partnership contribution and communicate the results to the Team Leaders.

Visionary Mission Trip Procedures

A Visionary Mission Trip is a mission trip to a location where Hickory Grove Baptist Church does not currently support short-term mission activities. The purpose of the Visionary Mission Trip is to visit the site with a small group to discern God's will for a people/group location.

The participants of the Visionary Mission Trip will be comprised of a small team, typically three individuals, including the Missions Pastor, if available, the proposed Team Leader, and a member of the Missions Committee. It is critical that the Team members go with no preconceived ideas and lean on God's wisdom and discernment. The participants' focus is to identify ministry opportunities for HGBC in that people group and location. The members will also assess logistics of the trip, e.g., housing, food, culture, etc. It is fully expected that God will provide a clear answer to His will, resulting in unity among all participants, both within the HGBC team and with the field partners.

The Missions budget will cover the expenses (airfare, ground costs, Visa, etc.) of the Missions Pastor and the Missions Committee Member(s). Any other Pastor of HGBC desiring to go on a Visionary Mission Trip as a proposed Team Leader will cover 50% of the trip expenses through his own budget. As with any other Mission Trip, a Pastor must obtain prior approval from his supervisor. Proposed Team Leaders will have their expenses covered at 50% by the Missions Budget.



HGBC Mission Trip Approval Request Form

Calendar Year _____ Prepared by: _____

| | | |
|-----------|---|------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Mission Location</i> | |
| 2 | <i>Established HGBC Mission Activity for this Location or New Location?</i> | |
| 3 | <i>Long-Term Strategy if an Established Location</i> <i>If a New Location, Describe Vision</i> | |
| 4 | <i>Proposed Mission Trip Goals and Objectives</i> | 1. 2. 3. |
| 5 | <i>If an Established Location, Provide a Summary Assessment of the Prior Results</i> | |
| 6 | <i>Who is the Field Contact?</i> | |
| 7 | <i>Proposed Team Leader</i> | |
| 8 | <i>Proposed # of Team Members</i> | |
| 9 | <i>Cost Projections per Individual</i> | |
| 10 | <i>Total Mission Trip Cost, including airfare, ground costs, materials and supplies</i> | |
| 11 | <i>Sub Team of Committee Recommendations</i> | |
| 12 | <i>Committee Disposition</i> | |
| 13 | <i>Partnership Amount (after Budget Approval)</i> | \$ |

A member of HGBC must sponsor the trip and prepare the form. Please submit to the Missions Office by September.

HGBC Missions Committee Member and Itinerary Report

Prepared By: _____ Date presented to the Missions Committee: _____

| | | |
|-----------|---|-------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Mission Team Name</i> | |
| 2 | <i>Mission Team Leader</i> | |
| 3 | <i>Mission Trip Goals and Objectives</i> | 1. 2. 3. |
| 4 | <i>Mission Trip Fit Within Long-Term Strategy of the Location</i> | |
| 5 | <i>Dates of the Mission Trip</i> | |
| 6 | <i>²Team Member List</i> | (List or Attach a Copy) |
| 7 | <i>Team Member Exception Requests</i> | |
| 8 | <i>Cost of Trip per Individual</i> | \$ |
| 9 | <i>Total Cost of Trip for the Team, confirm that the Total Cost includes Materials and Supplies, if applicable</i> | \$ |
| 10 | <i>Partnership Amount</i> | \$ |
| 11 | <i>Itinerary</i> | (List or Attach a Copy) |

Note:

¹ The Date the Report is presented to the Missions Committee is to be 30 days prior to the date of the Mission Trip.

² All Team Members listed in this section must attend Sunday school at least 50% of the time and be Tithers.

³ Missions Committee Presenter is to bring copies of the form and Team List and Itinerary to the Missions Committee Meeting

HGBC Missions Committee Mission Trip Assessment

Prepared By: _____¹Date presented to the Committee: _____

| | | |
|----------|---|------------------------|
| 1 | <i>Mission Team Name</i> | |
| 2 | <i>Mission Team Leader</i> | |
| 3 | <i>Dates of the Mission Trip</i> | |
| 4 | <i>Team Member List</i> | |
| 5 | <i>Team Leader Evaluations of All Team Members Completed?</i> | |
| 6 | <i>All Team Member Evaluations of the Mission Trip Received?</i> | |
| 7 | <i>Original Mission Trip Goals and Objectives</i> | 1. 2. 3. |
| 8 | <i>Assessment of the Results of the Mission Trip compared to Goals and Objectives and fit into long-term strategic plan.</i> | |
| 9 | <i>Recommendation to Continue or Cease this Mission Trip in the coming year and reason.</i> | |

Note:

¹The Date the Report is presented to the Missions Committee is to be 30 days after the date of the Mission Trip.

²Committee Presenter is to bring copies of the form and Team List and Itinerary to the Committee Meeting

Qualifications of Team Members

It is expected that each Team Member of a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored Mission Trip demonstrates the spiritual maturity to represent Jesus Christ and this body of believers faithfully and with a servant's heart. The following qualifications for a Team Member have been established with the intent of identifying individuals who are mature disciples of Jesus Christ. Any concerns about individual situations should be discussed with the Missions Pastor at the time of application. The Missions Pastor will submit recommendations to the Missions Committee for final approval. Either the Missions Office or the Team Leader will contact each individual who meets all of the qualifications. The Missions Pastor or the committee chairman will contact each individual who does not meet all of the qualifications.

Note: The Missions Committee/ Missions Pastor or Senior Pastors of Hickory Grove Baptist Church reserve the right to refuse any HGBC applicant for a HGBC Mission trip, Adult or Student Participant.

HGBC Adult Member (18 years or older): International and Domestic

In order to participate in a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored Mission trip (a trip that is commissioned, provided administrative support and funded in part by Hickory Grove Baptist Church), each Team Member is to meet all of the following qualifications at the time of application

- Baptized believer in Jesus Christ who can clearly present the plan of salvation.
- A member of Hickory Grove Baptist Church for at least six months.
- Verifiable and established record of tithing 10% of their annual income to Hickory Grove Baptist Church.
- Active in Sunday School (serving in ministries such as Greeter, Shuttle Bus Driver, Children's Sunday School Teacher/ Helper also counts toward meeting this requirement) with at least 50% attendance for the last six months. Being a decision counselor or usher will not qualify as an exception for this requirement.
- Eighteen years or older as of the departure date.

If a pastor of HGBC desires to participate in a mission trip, he must obtain the approval of the Senior Associate Pastors prior to submitting an application. This requirement does not pertain to the Senior Pastor.

As with all volunteers of the church, a security background check will be performed on each volunteer 16 and older. The security background check is valid for two years. The interpretation of the results will be discretely managed by the Pastoral Staff.

Note: The Missions Committee/Missions Pastor or Senior Pastors of Hickory Grove Baptist Church reserve the right to refuse any HGBC application for a HGBC Mission trip.

HGBC Member Student Participants: International and Domestic

Students may participate in a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored Mission trip (a trip that is commissioned, provided administrative support and funded in part by Hickory Grove Baptist Church), subject to their age, spiritual and social maturity, and daily oversight by a parent or legal guardian that also meets all criteria for Adult team membership. For students to participate, they must meet the following criteria:

- Baptized believer in Jesus Christ who can clearly present the plan of salvation.
- A member of Hickory Grove Baptist Church for at least six months.
- Active in Sunday School with at least 50% attendance for the last six months.
- Twelve years of age or older, whose demeanor and maturity require minimal supervision.
- Capable of carrying out tasks necessary for the accomplishment of mission objectives.
- Directly accountable to a parent or legal guardian without impairing that adult's ability to carry out mission tasks.

In instances where a student's suitability is questioned, the Missions Committee may select a panel to interview the student in the presence of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to insure effectual witness for Jesus Christ, and their discipleship in serving Him.

Student Ministry mission trips in which students comprise the majority of the team will follow the same criteria established above with the exception that daily oversight will be provided by adult leaders selected by the Student Ministry. All Student Ministry leaders must also meet all criteria applicable for an Adult team member.

For all team members, the HGBC Administrative Office evaluates tenure with HGBC, Sunday School attendance and tithe fulfillment, and reports the results to the Missions Office.

Non-HGBC Member Adult Participants: International and Domestic

As a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored trip, our policy is that each non HGBC Team Member meets all of the following qualifications as an outward sign of their spiritual maturity.

- Baptized believer in Jesus Christ who can clearly present the Gospel.
- Their church of membership should hold to the same doctrinal beliefs as Hickory Grove.
- A church member for at least six months.
- Tithe to church of membership.
- Sunday School or Small Group Bible Study attendance of at least 50% for the last six months (serving in ministries such as Greeter, Volunteer as Usher, Choir, etc. also account toward meeting this requirement).
- Eighteen years old or older as of the departure date.

A letter from the pastor of their church of membership is needed in order to confirm spiritual maturity. The letter template is provided in the following section. These Team Members are expected to pay the total cost of the mission trip without financial assistance from Hickory Grove Baptist Church.

As with all volunteers of the church, a security background check will be performed on each volunteer 16 and older. The security background check is valid for two years.

Note: The Missions Committee/ Missions Pastor or Senior Pastors of Hickory Grove Baptist Church reserve the right to refuse any non HGBC applicant for a HGBC Mission trip,

Non-Member Letter Template

Date: _____

Subject: Missions Team Member Participation

Dear _____,

A member of your congregation, _____, has applied to participate in a Hickory Grove Baptist Church mission trip to _____, Dates of trip: _____

We would be pleased to have them join us on mission with God and need your assistance to confirm they meet our short-term mission trip requirements. As a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored trip, our policy is that each team member meets all of the following qualifications as an outward sign of their spiritual maturity:

- A baptized believer in Jesus Christ who can clearly present the plan of salvation.
- A church member for at least six months.
- Tithe to the church of membership.
- Sunday school or Small Group Bible Study attendance of at least 50% for the last six months. (Serving in ministries such as Greeter also accounts toward meeting this requirement.)
- Eighteen years old or older as of the departure date

Once you have answered the following question and sign below, please return this letter in the enclosed envelope. Feel free to provide additional information as the situation warrants.

Is this individual an active participant in your church who meets ALL of the above qualifications? **Yes** **No**

Pastor Signature

Date

Thank you for your assistance.

Blessings,

Missions Ministry
Hickory Grove Baptist Church

Qualifications of Team Leaders

It is the desire that each Team Leader of a Hickory Grove Baptist Church-sponsored Mission Trip demonstrates the Spiritual maturity, skills and qualifications to represent Jesus Christ, this body of believers and the Team Members faithfully and with a servant's heart. The following qualifications for a Team Leader have been established with the intent to identify those who are prepared to lead. It is understood that there may be extenuating circumstances to the qualifications stated below, which support individualized disposition. Any concerns about individual situations should be discussed with the Missions Pastor.

In addition to being a member of HGBC and meeting the Team Member qualifications, a Team Leader should also meet the following criteria:

- Traveled to the mission site previously (with exception in some cases).
- Satisfactory Evaluation results from the previous trip(s), if applicable.
- Satisfactory Annual Review with the Missions Pastor.
- Demonstrated administrative skills to manage all of the mission trip details and planning.
- Effective interpersonal skills.
- Actively sharing their faith.

Activity and Deadline Schedule

| Activity | Where to Submit | Timing | Actual Date Due (Please Fill In) |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Volunteer Application | Team Leader or Missions Office | 1 st Team Meeting | |
| \$100 Deposit | Team Leader or Missions Office | 1 st Team Meeting | |
| Release of Liability form | Team Leader or Missions Office | 1 st Team Meeting | |
| Team Fund Agreement | Team Leader or Missions Office | 1 st Team Meeting | |
| HGBC Global Mission Trip and Partnership Participation Form | Team Leader or Missions Office | 1 st Team Meeting | |
| Short-Term Insurance Coverage and Beneficiary designation | Team Leader or Missions Office | 2 nd Team Meeting | |
| Passport | Missions Office | 4 th Team Meeting | |
| Visa application (if required) | Missions Leader | 4 th Team Meeting | |
| 25% of Trip Cost | Team Leader or Missions Office | 8-10 weeks before departure | |
| 50% of Trip Cost | Team Leader or Missions Office | By the ticketing date | |
| Balance of Trip Cost | Team Leader or Missions Office | 2 weeks before departure | |

Note: The forms to be completed and signed are located in the Volunteer Application packet. Copies of the forms for reference are located in the Volunteer Manual: Administrative, Financial Considerations, Team Building Sections

Short-Term Insurance Coverage

Hickory Grove Baptist Church will purchase short-term insurance for each Team Member participating in a mission trip through Gallagher Charitable International Insurance.

Toll-free, multilingual assistance is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to help in locating English-speaking physicians and attorneys, and to facilitate the direct payment of claims to the providers of covered medical services.

Refer to the benefits listed on the next page for details.

Short-Term Insurance Coverage International Missions

| Coverage | Persons Ages 13 to 69 | Persons Age 70 and Over and Children |
|--|--|--|
| Accidental Death and Dismemberment Principal Sum | \$100,000 | \$10,000 |
| Disability Income, per month for 1 st through 100 th months, Accident | \$1,000 | |
| Disability Income, per month for 101 st through 200 th Months, Accident | \$500 | |
| Disability Income, per month for 4 th through 54 th months, Sickness | \$250 | |
| General Liability | \$1,000,000 | |
| Medical Expense, \$100 Deductible <small>Note: \$2500 of this benefit can be used to meet eligible medical expense incurred in the US</small> | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Medical, Legal, Passport and Baggage Assistance | See AIG International Services Summary | See AIG International Services Summary |
| Emergency Medical Evacuation | \$100,000 | \$100,000 |
| Repatriation of Mortal Remains | \$25,000 | 25,000 |
| Family Coordination | Combined limits with Repatriation of Mortal Remains coverage | Combined limits with Repatriation of Mortal Remains coverage |
| Crisis Management Services | Included | Included |
| Assistance Service | Included | Included |
| Property & Baggage Insurance, \$100 deductible, per family unit – not applicable to Children | \$2,500 | \$2,500 |

Note: Travel Accident Insurance for USA and Canada-based mission operations provide coverage based upon location and duration. See the Missions Office for detailed coverage based upon your specific North American mission trip.

Source: Gallagher Charitable International Insurance, 1/24/12

Beneficiary Information List

Purpose of Trip:

Country:

Dates:

| Name (As it appears on your passport) | Birthday / Age | Passport Number | Beneficiary | Relationship to Volunteer |
|--|-------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
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Policy on Team Leader/ Team Member Communication with Host

It is the Missions policy that all correspondence between Hickory Grove Baptist Church and the hosts concerning the Team's ministry, Team logistics, Church commitments and any other business-related matters be shared with the Missions Office. Team Leaders are the primary contact with the hosts. As it is critical that the Missions Office be aware of the details of each mission trip, the Team Leader is expected to share all relevant information with the Missions Office.

Due to the large amount of work and planning that is involved with each Team, it is essential that the Missions Office coordinate and be kept informed of all arrangements, logistics, and ministry involved with each Team. In order to successfully coordinate each trip and make it the most productive it can be, individual team members must not take it upon themselves to request any additions, deletions or changes involving the Team's ministry and/ or logistics with the host. All such requests and suggestions must be directed to the Team Leader.

It is also understood that a copy of all **non-personal** correspondence between Church members, Team Leaders and Team Members and the host will be forwarded to the Missions Minister. These copies can be sent in any of the following ways:

Fax Number: 704-531-4010

E-Mail: dawnmorton@hgbc.org

Address: Hickory Grove Baptist Church
 Missions Ministry
 6050 Hickory Grove Rd.
 Charlotte, NC. 28215

Team Covenant

We, the members of the short-term missions Team, believing that God has called us together to serve, agree together concerning the following:

1. **Our Mission**

We desire to be a Team of people characterized by Christ-like behavior exhibited through unconditional love, unselfish service and unified teamwork. Our ultimate purpose as a Team and as individuals is in accordance with I Corinthians 9:23, “I do all things for the sake of the Gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.”

2. **Our Team Objectives**

We believe that we can fulfill this vision through the following commitments to each other:

- A. **Teamwork.** We commit ourselves to be a group of individuals who unite as one, striving to accomplish the same goal: glorifying Christ and increasing His church.
- B. **Communication.** We commit ourselves to resolve all inter-team conflicts according to Biblical principles. This involves prayer as the first step, personal confrontation as the follow-up step, and the counsel of a third party (namely, a leader) as a third and final resort. In all issues of conflict, we commit ourselves to maintain a humble spirit of confidentiality, while seeking to obey Ephesians 4:29, “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”
- C. **Forgiveness.** We commit ourselves to the recognition of sin as our common enemy so that we each may be sensitive to our human failings and forgive each other. We recognize that forgiveness is manifested through an understanding, forgetful attitude and the continuation of demonstrated love. We commit ourselves to resolving any bitterness because we realize that bitterness will drag down the whole Team. In accordance with Hebrews 12:15, “See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it may be defiled.”
- D. **Spiritual Growth.** We commit ourselves to personal worship and fellowship with God through obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and an openness to learn from God’s Spirit in all situations. We agree to have the same attitude of Paul the Apostle with respect to:

Failure – Philippians 3:12-14. “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have

taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.”

Perseverance – I Corinthians 9:24-27. “Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”

3. **Our Team Structure**

We believe that the following structural elements will enable us carry out our Team objectives:

- A. **Team Meetings.** Before, during and after the project, our Team meetings will be crucial for fulfilling the commitments mentioned above. The Team meetings shall include Team devotions, Team prayer, time for communication of details and plans, and time for individual relational development.
- B. **Personal Quiet Times.** We commit to be faithful in our daily time with God because we believe that growing individually is essential to growing as a Team.
- C. **Affirmation.** We commit ourselves to encouraging one another through verbal affirmation and/or sending notes of encouragement to one another as often as possible.
- D. **Ministry Opportunities.** We will seek to be a witness of the love of Jesus Christ to the people we meet throughout our trip. This shall include testimonies, speaking at churches and Christ-like behavior. John 4:35 says, “Do not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest?’ I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest.”
- E. **Work.** We recognize that, if our objectives are to be completed, we must all commit ourselves to work to the best of our God-given ability every day of the trip. I Corinthians 10:31 says, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”
- F. **Prayer.** We commit ourselves to pray every day for each Team Member and the trip.
- G. **Leadership.** In situations of Team concern, we commit ourselves at all times to be in a submissive attitude to our Leader. We also recognize that this Mission trip is an opportunity for all of us to develop God-given leadership abilities, and

we commit ourselves to that end through the pursuing of individual growth opportunities that may arise.

H. Evangelism. We commit to sharing our faith as often as the Holy Spirit leads.

4. **Evaluation and Accountability**

We shall hold each member of this team accountable to this covenant, and we shall measure our success in keeping this covenant by

- A. **Correcting each other according to Biblical and covenantal principles.** Colossians 1:28 states, “We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone will all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.”
- B. **Responding without defensiveness when we are corrected.** We believe that other Team Members have our best interest and the best interest of the Team in mind. Proverbs 27:5-6 states, “Better is open rebuke than hidden love. The kisses of an enemy may be profuse, but faithful are the wounds of a friend.”
- C. **Meeting as a Team within one month after we return home.** We will review the covenant and evaluate our performance as a Team.

As a member of the Team, I commit myself to abide by this covenant.

Team Member Signature

Date

Note: Please sign this form and review it frequently to remind you of your commitment.



Release of Liability

In signing this form, I _____, agree not to hold Hickory Grove Baptist Church, its officers, employees or other agents liable for any injury, loss, damage, or accident that I might encounter while on one of their mission trips.

I realize and acknowledge that my participation on a mission trip to a foreign country includes many risks and possible dangers. I am well aware that my travel to such a foreign country exposes me to such risks as accidents, disease, war, political unrest, and injury from construction projects and other calamities.

I hereby assume any such risks that might result from my travel to a foreign country, and I unconditionally agree to hold Hickory Grove Baptist Church, its officers, employees or other agents blameless for any liability concerning my personal health and wellbeing, or any liability for my personal property that might be lost, damaged, or stolen while on a mission trip.

I have carefully read the foregoing and I understand that my signature herein holds Hickory Grove Baptist Church, its officers, employees or other agents harmless for any liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in schedule.

Signed _____ and dated this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Witnessed by: _____

Witnessed by: _____

Parent Signature if the volunteer is less than 18 years of age

Note: This copy is for your records. The form to be signed is in the Application packet and must be turned in to the Team Leader at the First Team Meeting.

Travel Protocol

- All Team Members will wear Team shirts while in route to the mission city. The only exception will be when the Team is going to a country that is hostile to Christianity.
- All Team Members will “look out” for each other in regard to luggage, Passport checks and security.
- When in the airport or on airplanes, “look out” for one another’s carry-ons and personal items.
- Be aware of where the other Team Members are at all times. When you must leave the group, leave with another Team Member always. Never leave the group by yourself. Always notify another member of the group before leaving.
- Never, never leave your Passport or tickets with anyone; keep these with you at all times.
- Several times in route, you will need to show your Passport with your airline tickets. Have them together and readily available.

HGBC Missions Team Leader Evaluation of Team Member

| | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Mission Team: | Team Leader: | Team Member: |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|

Please circle the appropriate numerical response and provide additional comments on your response.

A rating of a 5 indicates excellent performance, a 4 is above average performance, a 3 is satisfactory performance,
2 is improvement in performance is needed, 1 is unacceptable performance

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Completion of Assignments | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments: _____

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Submission to Authority | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments: _____

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. Servant's Heart | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments: _____

| | | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Team Player | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|

Comments: _____

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 5. Enthusiasm – Circle One: | Higher than Most | Equal to Most | Lower than Most |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|

Comments: _____

| | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|
| 6. Spiritual Maturity – Circle One: | Higher than Most | Equal to Most | Lower than Most |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|

Comments: _____

| | | |
|--|-----|----|
| 7. Recommended for Future Teams? Circle one: | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|

| | | |
|---|-----|----|
| 8. Recommended for Team Leadership? Circle one: | Yes | No |
|---|-----|----|

9. What additional comments would you like to provide?

Note: Please complete the form for each team member and turn them in to the Global Missions Office within 30 days of return.



HGBC Missions Team Member Evaluation of the Mission Trip

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Mission Team: | Team Leader: |
|----------------------|---------------------|

Please circle the appropriate numerical response and provide additional comments on your response.

PREPARATION

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. How effective were the Team Meetings in preparing you for the trip? Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Not Effective</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Extremely Effective</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | Not Effective | Extremely Effective | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Not Effective | Extremely Effective | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 2. Assess your Team’s ability to raise funds. Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Unable to Raise Funds</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Raised all Funds</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | Unable to Raise Funds | Raised all Funds | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Unable to Raise Funds | Raised all Funds | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 3. How supportive was the Missions Office? Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">No Support</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Tremendous Support</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | No Support | Tremendous Support | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| No Support | Tremendous Support | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 4. How supportive was the Church overall of your Mission Trip? Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">No Support</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Tremendous Support</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | No Support | Tremendous Support | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| No Support | Tremendous Support | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 5. Rate your knowledge/ understanding of the Mission policies and procedures. Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Don't Understand</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Clearly Understand</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | Don't Understand | Clearly Understand | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Don't Understand | Clearly Understand | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |

MISSION TRIP

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. What were the goals of the Mission Trip? _____ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. Were the goals achieved? Please describe. _____ _____ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. How effective was the Team Leader in leading the Team? Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Not Effective</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Extremely Effective</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | Not Effective | Extremely Effective | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Not Effective | Extremely Effective | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 4. Assess your Team’s teamwork: bonding, ability to work together. Comments: _____ | <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="font-size: small;">Lack of Teamwork</td> <td style="font-size: small;">Strong Teamwork</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">1</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">2</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">3</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">4</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">6</td> <td style="border: 1px solid black; text-align: center;">7</td> </tr> </table> | Lack of Teamwork | Strong Teamwork | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Lack of Teamwork | Strong Teamwork | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | | | | |
| 5. How many people were on the Team? _____ Was this the “right” number? _____ Please explain. _____ _____ | | | | | | | | | | |

REFLECTIONS

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. How did the trip affect your personal relationship and walk with Christ? _____ _____ | |
| 2. Are you likely to participate in a future mission trip to the same country? Why or why not? _____ _____ | |
| 3. What 1 or 2 changes would have made the Trip more effective/ satisfying/ successful? _____ _____ | |

Note: Please complete this form within 30 days of return of the trip and submit it to the Missions Office.

Disciplinary Action

In the unlikely event that disciplinary action is required, it is important that everyone on the Team understand that there are instances which warrant a Team Member being asked to leave the mission field. The Team Leader will counsel the Team Member and provide ample opportunities, in most cases, to prevent requiring them to return home; however, there are situations, which will require the immediate removal of the Team Member from the mission field. Any costs incurred as a result of the early return home are the full responsibility of the Team Member. The following are examples of situations, which would require disciplinary action; this list not all-inclusive.

Situations requiring Team Leader counseling of the Team Member include

- Inappropriate attire
- Causing disharmony among the Team Members
- Inappropriate actions or words, e.g., cursing, verbal abuse
- Insubordination to the Team Leader

Situations requiring the immediate removal of the Team Member include

- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Physical violence
- Misconduct including significant disruption among the Team, continuation of inappropriate attire and/or insubordination to the Team Leader

Financial Policies and Procedures

Hickory Grove Baptist Church's short-term mission ministry is an experience in faith for all those who participate. Individuals must exercise their faith in believing the Lord is leading them to go on a trip, and that faith must be exercised throughout every aspect of the mission experience. Trusting the Lord to supply the funds necessary for their trip is one of those aspects that an individual does by faith, and it is a wonderful opportunity to have their faith increased and developed as they see God move on their behalf.

It is the stated policy of the Missions Ministry that each individual who chooses to participate as a member of a short-term mission team will be responsible and accountable for raising the amount of money required for their personal travel, daily living expenses, and their portion of any general Team expenses that are necessary for the Team to fulfill its ministry.

The following policies and procedures are offered to ensure that each individual fully understands their personal financial responsibilities in regard to the Missions Ministry as well as to ensure consistency and equity in the application of the financial policies.

Missions Ministry Responsibilities

Each volunteer will be fully informed of their personal responsibility for raising the specified amount by the Missions Office and the Team Leader at the first team meeting.

All volunteers will be reminded that failure to meet the financial requirements as outlined in these financial policies and procedures may result in their not being able to participate on the short-term mission trip.

The Missions Pastor or the Missions Chairman will be present at the team's first meeting to ensure that these financial policies and individual responsibilities are fully covered.

The Missions Office will prepare timely and updated financial reports for the Team and will make these reports available to the Team Leader prior to each weekly meeting.

It is the Team Leader's responsibility to discuss the financial status of each individual and the Team during each Team meeting. Financial deadlines will be reviewed, and those individuals who are behind in their fundraising will be talked with on an individual basis.

Individual Fundraising

The primary method of raising funds for an individual's trip is through writing letters and requesting people to contribute to the ministry of that individual while on the mission trip. Experience has shown that this type of fundraising has many advantages, including being a great opportunity to witness to non-believers who support them as well as increasing the total number of people who are involved in meeting the need of the Team and the mission.

Another very important aspect of writing letters is that it forces an individual to be totally dependent on the Lord to impress people to contribute to their trip and therefore helps to accomplish the goal of building their faith.

The following policies govern fundraising and the individual's responsibilities:

- Each Team Member will fully comply with all fundraising policies established for the Mission Trip and will do all that is required by those policies to raise the specified amount.
- Each Team Member may send letters requesting support to any individual they wish, but they are NOT permitted to send letters to Hickory Grove Baptist Church Members other than members of their Sunday School Class, family members and personal friends.
- All support letters are to be sent with the express purpose of soliciting contributions for expenses related directly to the mission trip only. Under no circumstances are individuals permitted to seek financial assistance for personal use or to offset possible income loss that may occur as a result of participating on the mission trip.
- Each Team Member is required to submit a \$100 non-refundable deposit with their application for the trip, and this amount must be submitted no later than the first Team training meeting. The Missions Pastor must approve any exception to either the amount or the deadline. It is also understood that this deposit is totally non-refundable in the event an individual must cancel their participation on the mission trip. The only exception is if the individual does not meet the qualifications. If the applicant does not meet the qualifications, the \$100 deposit will be returned.
- Each Team Member is personally responsible for the payment of any fees and expenses required for the following:
 - Passport
 - Passport photos
 - Immunizations
 - All personal items such as clothing, toiletries, prescriptions, etc.

Hickory Grove Baptist Church Partnership

Mission volunteers are expected to raise 100% of their financial needs. However, the Church desires to partner with Church volunteers and has a program to support the financial requirements of the mission trip. Only active members of Hickory Grove Baptist Church are eligible to participate in this program.

The amount of the contribution will be determined annually based upon the approved Church budget.

Multiple Family Members

When there are multiple family members that are participating on the same Team, they may elect to either send individual or joint letters requesting financial support. However, it is understood that contributions must be credited according to the instructions of the donor. If contributions are received and the donor has designated the support for all individuals or is silent on the distribution, then those funds will be equally divided among all individuals. If contributions are received and the donor has designated the support for only one of the individuals, then those funds will be fully credited to the individual designated by the donor.

Dates and Deadlines

Although specific dates will vary from Team to Team, the date when non-refundable airline tickets must be purchased for the Team's travel is critical in the fundraising process. These dates will be outlined in each Team's Activities and Deadline Schedule. The Missions Office will review the financial status of each individual and the Team prior to purchasing the airline tickets to ensure that adequate funds are available to cover the expenditure. The following policies and procedures apply:

- Each individual must have raised at least 50% of the trip cost by the ticketing date.
- Team Members who have not raised at least 50% of their funds by the ticketing date will not have an airline ticket purchased for them. All funds raised by these individuals, are to be refunded to those who have supported them, less any money already expended by the Church in anticipation of their participation, e.g., airline deposits.

It is the Team Leader's responsibility to collect all receipts from the mission trip and submit them to the Missions Office immediately upon return. Receipts should be turned in within 2 weeks of returning from the trip.

Team Fundraising

The Missions Office must approve each fundraiser prior to any advertisement, ticket sales, or expenses incurred in support of the Team fundraiser. The Missions Office must approve all arrangements such as date, time, location, ticket sales, etc. Under no circumstance should Team participants make independent commitments and arrangements without prior approval from the Missions Office.

Please do not distribute, place on Welcome Desks, windshields, or give to Sunday School Teachers any type of flyers promoting a mission trip fundraiser. Please do not go to Sunday School Classes to raise funds for a mission trip. You may feel free to ask for prayer support in your own Sunday School Class as part of the "prayer time" in your class.

The Gathering Place may not be used to sell tickets or products to raise funds for mission trips nor any area on church property either at Main or North Campuses. The Gathering Place and Mission area can be used to collect items used on a mission trip such as shoes, medical supplies, eyeglasses, books and similar items. Only one promotion can be accommodated at a time due to limited space and only for a four-week time period. The use of the Gathering Place and Mission area must be coordinated through the Missions Office or North Campus Office Manager.

Due to safety concerns, do not schedule any fundraiser in the areas across the street from the Main Campus on Sundays and Wednesdays.

All gross receipts from the fundraiser are to be turned in to the Missions Office by the Team Leader, who will give the Missions Office a breakdown of receipts, expenses and a list of the Team Members who participated.

Financial Overages

All funds raised by the individual Team Members and the Team must be used for the specific mission trip and ministry. Maintaining an accurate accounting of all expenses is critical; therefore, the Team Leader is responsible for obtaining receipts (hand written receipts are acceptable) for ALL purchases and submitting them to the Missions Office. A final Team and individual accounting will not be available until after the Team has returned from the trip and all receipts and expenses have been calculated.

In the event that an individual raises more financial support than is required for their participation on the trip, the excess funds will be placed in the Team Fund.

There are times when the Team as a whole raises more funds than needed for the specific mission trip. If any funds were provided by the Discretionary Fund of the Missions Budget, a refund, up to the amount provided, will be transferred back to the Discretionary Fund. If there were no contributions from the Discretionary Fund or if there are excess funds remaining after the Discretionary Fund contributions are repaid, the Team may elect to 1) carry forward the balance for the next mission trip to this location, 2) provide the funds to the host for use in their ministry, or 3) other options as approved by the Missions Pastor. The Team Leader must notify the Missions Office of the Team's majority decision.



HGBC Mission Trip and Partnership Participation

I, _____, a mission volunteer to
_____ on the following dates _____,

understand that I am expected to raise 100% of the financial needs of the mission trip.

However, I understand I will only be able to participate if I meet all of the following requirements.

- A baptized believer in Jesus Christ who can clearly present the plan of salvation.
- A member of Hickory Grove Baptist Church for at least six months. *
- Have a verifiable and established record of tithing 10% of my annual income to Hickory Grove Baptist Church.
- Sunday School attendance (serving in ministries such as Greeter, GCRC Volunteer, Shuttle Bus Driver, Children’s Sunday School Teacher/Helper also counts toward meeting this requirement) of at least 50% for the last six months
- Twelve years old or older as of the departure date

The amount of the partnership contribution will be determined annually based upon the approved Church budget. If I have extenuating circumstances, they have been noted on my Application and discussed with my Team Leader, who will notify the Missions Office, as appropriate.

*Team Members may consist of individuals who are members of other like-faith churches. In that situation, a letter from the pastor of that church is needed in order to confirm their Church membership, tithing and Sunday School attendance record. These Team Members are expected to pay the total cost of the mission trip without financial assistance from Hickory Grove Baptist Church.

By signing below, I attest that I meet all of the above requirements.

Team Member Signature

Date

Team Leader Signature

Date

Note: This copy is for your records. The form to be signed is in the Application packet which can be found on the website and must be turned in to the Team Leader at the First Team Meeting.

Team Fund Agreement

I, _____, a mission volunteer to

_____ on the following dates _____

agree that funds raised for my trip over the total individual trip cost will be placed in the Team Fund. (Funds donated to individuals cannot be re-designated to other individuals.)

Team Member Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature for Team Members under 18
years of age Date

Team Leader Signature

Date

Fundraising Information

As God's children, we all have a responsibility and a part in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world. One of these parts is being a "Sender." This is the person who supports people who are called to "Go." They may support through prayer, encouragement, or they may contribute financially toward the funds needed to go.

The most effective fundraising tool, besides prayer, is the Support Letter. Listed below are practical guidelines for developing and sending support letters.

Step 1.

Create a list of 75 prospective partners.

- Business contacts
- Friends and their parents
- Parent's friends
- Former/present teachers
- People you work with
- Neighbors
- Your doctor and dentist
- Coaches
- Your Christmas card list

Letters should not be sent to Hickory Grove Baptist Church members other than members of your Sunday School Class, family members and personal friends.

Do not worry about offending anyone. People will support someone they know and trust and care about, justified by the eternal cause. You will be surprised at who gives to your outreach.

Send letters to people who are not believers. Present the Gospel clearly, making sure you give them an avenue to respond.

Step 2.

Write your own letter or copy a sample letter and personalize it.

- Make a rough and a final draft
- Keep it short and simple
- Be as personal as possible
- Be honest and direct
- Include the mission cost
- Offer to answer any questions
- All checks should be made payable to Hickory Grove Baptist Church
- Ask them to pray and give
- Set a deadline for needed funds
- Be clear, accurate and neat
- Hand sign each letter
- Include the mission dates
- Include the trip's purpose/ tasks
- Include a return envelope with stamp, your name and the Team's name
- Thank them for their support

Step 3.

Print and mail your letters.

Step 4.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to lead people to be “Senders,” partners in an eternal endeavor.

Step 5.

Keep track of all responses. Acknowledge all responses immediately and with a thank you. Begin planning ways to again thank each supporter when you return – thank you letters telling of God’s work through you, share photos, report to the Sunday School class or church, small gifts from the country, give supporters names of new national friends to pray for.

Step 6.

If there’s a long time-span between your supporter’s response and your departure date, send them a postcard one week before you leave reminding them to pray for the mission.

Step 7.

After you return, send another thank you note or call with news about the work God did through you overseas to all those you wrote to initially. Even the ones that did not financially support you. If possible, include a photo of you with some national friends.

Cash Donations

Cash donations should be placed in an envelope with the donor’s name and address clearly printed on the front along with the name of the recipient as well as the Team’s name.

Do not write a personal check for cash given to you.

Personal Checks

Checks should not be made payable to an individual. All checks should be made payable to Hickory Grove Baptist Church.

Donor Envelopes

Place the name of the Mission country and the date of the trip in the place indicated on the front of the return envelope.

Your name should appear on the back bottom right-hand corner of the envelope. This is a designated safeguard for you and helps ensure that the Missions Office will account for the contribution in the correct Team Member account.

All donations should be given to either the Team Leader or the Missions Office.

Fundraising Ideas

Fun Run

Sponsor a 10K run/ 5K walk. Participants seek sponsors, and an entry fee is charged. This provides a platform to share about your short-term outreach.

Garage or Rummage Sales

These old standards are still effective. Ask people from church and the community to donate items.

Pancake Breakfast

Team members sell tickets for breakfast at an area restaurant and serve breakfast to the community on that designated day.

Car Wash/Bake Sale

Team members can hold a car wash and bake sale at a public location and wash cars for donations as well as have baked goods for sale.

Sample Prayer Letter

Date

Mr. and Mrs. Jones
123 State Street
Charlotte, NC 28215

Dear Bob and Judy,

The Lord has placed it on my heart to be involved in the missions ministry at Hickory Grove Baptist Church. I have volunteered to participate in a mission trip leaving December 31, 2014 for 9 days to XXX.

One of the most important things I will need in preparation for and during this mission trip is prayer. I know you are both prayer warriors, and have a heart for missions as well. I would like to ask that you be in prayer for me, my team and those we will be serving.

I am excited to see what the Lord is going to do and look forward to returning and sharing the results with you. We serve an awesome God, and I thank Him for you both.

Humbly Submitted,

Mary Missions

“...the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

Sample Fundraising Letter

Date

Mr. and Mrs. Jones
123 State Street
Charlotte, NC 28215

Dear Bob and Judy,

I have exciting news! I have been given an opportunity to go on a mission trip in December with my church.

Hickory Grove Baptist Church is sending a short-term mission team out on December 31, 2014 for a 9-day mission trip to XXX.

I would like to ask you to participate with me in this ministry as a “sending” partner. Financially, I need to raise \$2,000 by December 1, 2014. Spiritually, I need dedicated prayer support through every phase of this mission, for fundraising as well as safe and effective ministry while on the field.

To partner with me financially, please send your check made payable to Hickory Grove Baptist Church in the enclosed envelope (your donation is tax deductible). Please make a notation that it is to support my trip.

Please pray for safety, effective ministry, and good health as we journey on this trip. I’ll tell you all about it when I return.

Thank you for your time, prayers and gifts.

In His Service,

Mike Missions

Prayer Covenant List

The most important thing you will do in preparation for your mission trip is have others pray for you and your team. James 5:16 states, “The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

You are responsible for raising a prayer support base of at least 10 people who will pray daily for you during your preparation and training, as well as during the mission trip.

The individuals you select must be people whose prayer life is one that you are confident is alive and active. The individuals need to be mature Christians who will take a prayer covenant with you very seriously. The prayer partners cannot be members of the Team or people who will be on a mission trip at the same time you are.

You are to contact the individuals at least three times during your training period so that they have your current prayer needs.

Please record your prayer partners below:

| Name | Mailing Address | Email Address | Phone Number |
|------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |
| 4. | | | |
| 5. | | | |
| 6. | | | |
| 7. | | | |
| 8. | | | |
| 9. | | | |
| 10. | | | |

Journaling

Journaling is an important way for you to process what you are learning about God, yourself and the world. This short-term mission trip will be forever embedded in your mind, but you will begin to forget some important events, names and feelings. If you journal, you will find yourself returning to it for many years to come.

You should begin journaling now. While on the field, try not to miss a day! It will take some discipline to journal on the field, but you will be glad that you did.

Here are a few journaling tips

- Write down impressions you have of the culture. Was it as you expected? What did you learn about the culture? Are you burdened for the needs of the people?
- Write about special places, events, foods, etc. You will not have time to capture all the details, but journal about those that make the greatest impression on you.
- Write about your relationship with God. What are you learning about Him? What are you learning about His purposes in the world? What are you learning in Scripture?
- Write about your relationship with others. How are you relating to your Team? The missionaries? The nationals? Any special national friends?
- Write down what you are learning about yourself. Have you learned something new about yourself? Are there some old flesh patterns coming out? Are you learning to respond in a Godly way to all things? Are you learning you have gifts and abilities that you did not know about previously?
- Write down your questions, thoughts about missions and your part in it. Consider and ponder your future.
- Write your praises and prayer needs to God.
- Document answers to prayers.

Release of Rights

We live in a world that is full of rights. Our particular culture is one where we take pride in our rights. The rights of individuals are constitutional; however, as we see the demanding of individual rights increase, we see more of the moral fiber of our society decrease. Our Lord Jesus Christ laid down His rights to the heavens and all His glory to become a man and to serve, not to be served. (Philippians 2:5-11; Mark 10:45).

You must lay down your rights on this mission trip and entrust them to the Lord. Take time to search your heart and willingly surrender your rights to the Lord.

I Give Up My Right To:

- A comfortable bed
- Three meals a day
- Familiar food
- Dressing fashionably
- Seeing results
- Control of schedule
- Control of others
- Making decisions
- Being successful
- Being understood
- Being right
- Pleasant circumstances

I Entrust to God:

- Control of circumstances
- My health and strength
- His divine power in my life
- My security in Him
- His purposes for my life
- My need for His Spirit's control
- My reputation
- His sovereign hand on my life
- My reputation
- My need for recognition
- The privilege of suffering for His sake
- My circumstances to His purposes in glorifying Himself.

I give God permission to do anything He wishes to me, with me, in me, or through me that would glorify Him.

Team Member Signature

Date

Note: Please sign this form and review it frequently to remind you of your commitment

Building Team Unity

Purpose

The purpose of building team unity is to look at teamwork from God’s viewpoint. Unity involves learning to function as a team, relying on each member of the team to use his or her particular skills to help the team accomplish a common goal. Unity with Christ is the foundation and starting point to unity with team members.

Memory Theme Verse

“For we are laborers together with God...” I Corinthians 3:9a

Definition of Team

Webster defines the word “team” as, “The state of being one, singleness/ the state of being made one, unification/ full agreement, harmony/ continuity of purpose, action, etc/ an arrangement of parts capable of producing a concentrated total effect.”

A Biblical Look at Team Unity

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| I Corinthians 3:6-9 | God uses different people, but He gives the increase. |
| Colossians 3:12-17 | We need to work together as unto the Lord. |
| Galatians 6:2 | We are to bear each other’s burdens |
| Ephesians 6:18-19 | Continue to pray that the Team will have strength to share the Gospel. |

Building Unity Through Prayer

Develop a prayer chain to ensure that each Team Member is lifted up in prayer daily, leading up to the project and beyond.

Spend time praying for each other’s needs, both related and unrelated to the project.

Building Unity Through Team Work

Review skills needed for your ministry objective. Consider how we can put our ministry skills into action here at home. You must Live Sent at home before you can go to the field. If you are teaching English, you can get involved teaching English in your local community. If you are going to be involved in evangelism, participate in evangelistic outreach ministries at home. If you are going on a construction mission trip, find a local project to participate in before you go on your trip.

Personal Responses

1. List past situations in which you acted as part of a Team.

2. As a Christian, what teams are you automatically a member of?

3. Where will your ministry team strength come from?

4. My personal commitment to build Team unity will be demonstrated as follows:

Before the trip

During the trip

After the trip

How to Share Your Testimony

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

One of the most effective tools you have for sharing your faith is the story of how Jesus Christ gave you eternal life and how He has redeemed your life. The Apostle John wrote, “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard.” (I John 1:3), testifying about his relationship to Jesus Christ.

When the Apostle Paul stood before King Agrippa (Acts 26), he spoke simply, logically, and clearly about his life before salvation, how he met Christ, and what his life was like after conversion. Paul’s testimony takes three or four minutes to read aloud in a conversational manner.

By following the steps outlined here, you will learn how to tell others in the same manner about how you came to know Christ. The choice of the right words, the flow of your story, and knowing how to begin and how to end are all-important.

Testimonies can be prepared on many subjects and tailored to various audiences. The kind of testimony outlined here is designed to be given to a non-Christian. It will be best suited for sharing one-on-one or in a small group.

The purpose of preparing a testimony is not to memorize it and give it verbatim, but to help you put into words some of the important and interesting details of your conversion. A testimony serves primarily as a “door opener,” not a “convincing tool.” Many people are not ready to be convinced that they need Christ, but are often interested in talking about the Gospel after hearing a personal testimony.

Before, How and After

Paul’s testimony in Acts 26 is a Biblical model you can follow in writing your own personal testimony. Paul’s format in Acts 26 is provided:

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| Lead in | verses 2-3 |
| Before | verses 4-11 |
| How | verses 12-20 |
| After | verses 21-23 |
| Close | verses 24-29 |

Here are practical suggestions for developing the Before, How and After sections in your personal testimony.

Before

Many people’s actions spring out of their unsatisfied deep inner needs. What were one or two of your unsatisfied deep inner needs before you came to know Jesus Christ?

Below are some examples of inner needs

- Lack of peace
- Fear of death

- Something missing
- No meaning to life
- Desire to be in control
- Loneliness
- Lack of security
- Lack of purpose
- Lack of significance
- No real friends
- No motivation

Non-Christians are usually trying to satisfy their deep inner needs through unsatisfactory solutions. In the past, what unsatisfactory solutions did you use to attempt to meet those deep inner needs? As you develop your testimony, list positive as well as negative solutions you may have tried. Some examples include:

- Marriage/ family
- Work
- Drugs/ alcohol
- Sports/ fitness
- Money
- Education
- Hobbies/ entertainment
- Sex
- Wrong friends

How

Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ as the solution to your deep inner needs. Identify the events that led to your conversion. In some cases, this may have taken place over a period of time.

State specifically the steps you followed to become a disciple of Christ. If there is a particular passage of Scripture that applies here, you may want to use it. Usually you will simply paraphrase it.

Include the Gospel clearly and briefly. The Gospel includes

- God is Holy
- Man is sinful
- Christ is Savior
- Gospel – the Gospel requires a response

After

State how Christ filled or is filling your deep inner needs. In the **Before**, you expressed your needs and how you tried unsuccessfully to meet them. You now want to briefly show the difference that Christ has made in your life.

Conclude with a statement like, “But the greatest benefit is that I know for certain that I have eternal life.” The person you talk to will tend to comment on the last thing you say. Often it is natural to move from the testimony into a clear presentation of the Gospel.

Choose Your Testimony Format

Read the three sample testimonies in the sections that follow. Then, come back and check the box beside the format the best fits your own story. You can use the Testimony Worksheet that corresponds to this format.

Format 1: Adult Conversion

You trusted Christ as an adult. You have a distinct **Before, How and After.**

Format 2: Early Conversion, Adult Full Commitment

You made a decision for Christ as a child, but your life was characterized by spiritual immaturity – a lifestyle similar to that of a non-Christian – until you reached a point of crisis and recommitted your life to Christ. Evaluate whether your early conversion experience was genuine. If you conclude it was not genuine, then use Format 1 as your model.

Format 3: Early Conversion, Consistent Growth

You probably grew up with Christian parents and have a strong church background. You may have very little **Before.**

Write Out Your Testimony

The Testimony Worksheet (at the end of this Section) provides questions that will help you get started in writing out your testimony. Select the appropriate format and jot down thoughts for each question. This will give you a basis from which to write your sentences and paragraphs about your own experience.

As you write your first draft, refer again to the sample testimony that is most like your own story. Note how the person began the testimony and how he or she made the transitions between the main points. In addition, follow these guidelines:

Make it sound conversational. Avoid literary-sounding statements. Use informal language.

Share about what happened to you. Do not preach about what should have happened to them. Say “I” and “me,” not “you.” This helps keep the testimony warm and personal.

Avoid religious words, phrases and jargon. Do not assume the listener knows what you mean by terms such as sin, accepted Christ or even Christian.

Generalize so more people can identify with your story. Do not name specific churches, denominations or group. Avoid using dates and ages.

Include some humor and human interest. When a person smiles or laughs, it reduces tension. Humor is disarming and increases attention.

One or two pictures increase interest. Do not just say, “Bill shared the Gospel with me.” You might briefly describe the setting so a person listening can visualize it.

Explain how Christ met and is meeting your deep inner needs. Do not communicate that all your struggles and problems ended at conversion.

Sound adult, not juvenile. Reflect an adult point of view even if you were converted at an early age.

Avoid dogmatic and mystical statements that skeptics can question. Phrases such as, “I prayed and God gave me a job,” or “God said to me” should be avoided.

Simplify and reduce clutter. Mention a limited number of people and use only their first names. Combine information when you can. For example:

Poor: “Martha Smith, Nancy Van Buren, and her cousin Jane came by my office at Digital Binary Components Corporation....”

Good: “Martha and two other friends talked with me at work one day...”

Avoid examples that do not cross cultures. For example, do not use an example of American football in a country that does not even know what it is.

Practicing Your Testimony

After you have written out your testimony, you may want to have another Christian read it and make suggestions for improvement. Ask them to point out any areas that you need to explain further and to make sure the Gospel is presented clearly. Then, when you have a final draft that you like, outline your testimony on a 3”x 5” card. Practice giving your testimony with your small group. This will be an excellent opportunity to practice and receive feedback.

Leading Into Your Testimony

When you feel comfortable giving your testimony, you may begin to wonder, “When do I share it with a non-Christian?” “How do I direct the conversation so it will lead to presenting my testimony?” You may find the following suggestions helpful:

Include some “small talk” before discussing spiritual matters. Discuss family, job, hobbies, interests, etc.

Be alert for expressed needs such as family problems or stress on the job. You can use these to show how Christ has helped you through some of the same areas.

Discuss past concerns and needs in your life. “We struggled in our marriage relationship,” or “I allowed the pressures as work to get to me.” “Then I discovered something that made a tremendous difference in my life.”

Discuss contemporary situations in the news or in your area. “I see all the time on TV that drugs are epidemic in our country. It seems that people are trying to find something that satisfies so they are turning to drugs. These same people are saying it does not work.”

Build relationships with them. It may take ten minutes or ten hours or ten days or ten months, but build relationships.

Do not condemn them for living like non-Christians; they ARE non-Christians. Your objective is to share how they can have a **better** life in Christ.

Avoid dogmatic religious statements. “Jesus is the answer to all your problems.” He is, but they do not even know who He is, much less what He can do in their lives.

Avoid arguments on moral issues. You can expect non-Christians to have conflicts with clear Biblical teaching. Remember, they do not have a valid base from which to make correct moral decisions.

The Close

When you have shared your personal testimony, you may want to conclude with a statement that causes the person to reflect on what you have just shared. What you say will depend on how this person has been responding to what you have shared. If their response seems positive, you could say something like:

“Bill, has anything like this ever happened to you?”

“Mary, do you know for certain whether you have eternal life?”

“May I share with you how I know for certain that I have eternal life?”

“May I share an illustration with you that explains how a person can know for certain that he has eternal life?”

If their response seems negative or neutral, you could say something like:

“If you are interested, I would like to share more with you.”

“Do you have any questions on what I have just shared with you?”

“Well, that is what happened to me. If you want to talk about it, I would love to, too.”

Testimony Worksheet

Format 1: Adult Conversion

| Before | Response |
|---|----------|
| What was a deep inner need in your life before you met Christ? | |
| Give some examples of how you tried to meet or fulfill that need with unsatisfactory solutions. | |

| How | Response |
|--|----------|
| Describe the circumstances that caused you to consider Christ. | |
| State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel. | |

| After | Response |
|--|----------|
| Give an example of how Christ met or is currently meeting your deep inner needs. | |
| End with a statement to the effect that you know for certain that you have eternal life. | |

Format 2: Early Conversion, Adult Full Commitment

| Before | Response |
|---|-----------------|
| What was a deep inner need you were trying to fill? | |
| Give some examples of how you tried to fill that inner need through unsatisfactory solutions. | |

| How | Response |
|--|-----------------|
| Briefly describe the situation in which you made a deeper commitment to Christ. | |
| Refer to your conversion experience. State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel. | |

| After | Response |
|---|-----------------|
| State how Christ is currently meeting your deep inner needs. | |
| End with a statement that you know for certain you have eternal life. | |

Format 3: Early Conversion, Consistent Growth

| Before | Response |
|--|-----------------|
| State the deep inner needs you see people trying to fill. | |
| Describe how you see people trying to satisfy those needs. | |

| How | Response |
|--|-----------------|
| Explain why you never experienced this problem. | |
| Refer to your conversion experience. State how you trusted Christ. Briefly include the Gospel. | |

| After | Response |
|--|-----------------|
| Illustrate how Christ met or is meeting your deep inner needs. | |
| End with a statement to the effect that you know for certain that you have eternal life. | |

Ministry Goals

“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or the church of God; just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.”

I Corinthians 10:31-33

List the Goals of the Team

List the Goals of the Individual

Prepare for Service

Purpose

To examine your daily walk as you prepare for service.

Memory Theme Verse

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

Prayer Life

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Luke 11:1-10 | Christ’s example and teaching |
| Psalms 66:18-20 | Confess sin, then pray |
| Philippians 4:6-7 | Don’t worry, pray! The peace of God will keep you |

Daily Walk

With God

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Romans 12:1 | Present yourself a holy sacrifice |
| Romans 12:2 | Don’t be conformed so you may prove the will of God |

With Others

| | |
|---------------|---|
| John 13:34-35 | Love one another |
| Romans 15:5-7 | One mouth, one mind to glorify God, work together, worship together |

Setting Spiritual Goals

Growth

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| I Peter 2:2 | Desire the Word so you may grow |
| II Peter 3:18 | Grow in grace |

Accountability

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| I John 1:5-10 | Walk in the light |
| Romans 14:12-13 | Accountable to God |

Witness

| | |
|----------------|--|
| I John 1:3 | What we saw and heard we told you |
| I Timothy 4:12 | You are not too young or inexperienced |

Personal Response

1. How should I pray?
Before the trip _____

During the trip _____

After the trip _____

2. Why should I pray? _____

3. What are my spiritual strengths? _____

4. How will my strengths and weaknesses affect my service while on this trip? _____

5. What are my goals to improve my daily walk with God? _____

6. How do I expect this ministry experience to help me grow spiritually? _____

Personal Responsibility

Purpose

To discover the Christian's personal responsibility of world evangelization.

Memory Theme Verse

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:19-20

God Reaches Out to Man

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| John 3:16 | God loves the world; He sent His Son as a demonstration of His love |
| Romans 10:12-15 | God is over all; whosoever; how shall they hear? |

Great Commission

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| Acts 1:8 | Power, be a witness, reach out |
| John 20:21 | Jesus sends us as God sent Him |

Personal Responsibility

| | |
|------------|---|
| Mark 10:45 | Even Jesus came to serve and give His life |
| John 4:35 | Urgency; don't wait to minister; do it now! |

A Missionary Pattern

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Acts 13:1-5 | Called to go; went! Church sent |
| Acts 14:26-28 | Went; witness; accountable to sending the Church |

Personal Response

1. Is every Christian a witness? _____

2. How does witnessing relate to leading someone to Christ? _____

3. Where is my Jerusalem? _____

4. Where is my Judea? _____

5. Where is my Samaria? _____

6. Where is my uttermost part of the world? _____

7. According to John 20:21, in what way does Jesus send us? _____

8. When should I begin to minister? _____

9. On this ministry trip, to whom am I accountable? _____

A Servant's Heart

Purpose

To look closely at God's definition of a servant so that I can better serve God and others.

Memory Theme Verse

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

A Servant's Heart

John 13:2-20 Humbles Himself; washes feet
Philippians 2:5-8 Humble, obedient

Christ, Others, Me, in That Order

II Corinthians 4:5 Not us but Christ, then your servant; we come last

Motivation to Serve

John 15:16 I have chosen you to go forth and produce fruit
Isaiah 41:9-10 I have chosen you and will protect you
Colossians 3:23 Do all for God with all your heart

Traits of a Servant

Matthew 10:16 I send you...be wise...be harmless
Ephesians 4:17-32 A worthy walk
Matthew 25:21 Good and faithful

A Model Servant

Genesis 24:2-9 Does not run unsent
Genesis 24:4, 10 Goes where he is sent, does nothing else
Genesis 24:12-14, 26 Is prayerful and thankful
Genesis 24:17-18, 21 Is wise to win
Genesis 24:22, 34-35 Speaks not of himself, but of his master
Genesis 24:49, 66 Presents the true issue and requires a clear decision

Personal Response

- 1 How can I better exhibit a servant's attitude?

At home: _____

At church: _____

With friends: _____

- 2 Do others see Christ in me? Why or why not? _____

3 List several ways that you can be of service on this trip to....

Team Members: _____

Host/ Missionaries: _____

Nationals: _____

4 What is my purpose for going on this ministry trip? _____

5 What personal attitudes do I need to adjust in order to have a servant's heart while on this trip? _____

Packing Checklist

| Item | Carryon | Checked Luggage |
|---|---------|-----------------|
| • Address of friends and relatives | | |
| • Airline tickets | | |
| • Passport & Driver's License | | |
| • Telephone calling card | | |
| • Alarm clock | | |
| • Backpack or fanny pack | | |
| • Extra batteries for all devices | | |
| • Bible | | |
| • Books, reading material | | |
| • Sturdy walking shoes/shower flip flops | | |
| • Bottled water | | |
| • Camera | | |
| • Clothes: few, daily wear, easy to pack, comfortable, culturally-appropriate | | |
| • Hat, cap or visor | | |
| • Sunglasses | | |
| • Eyeglasses, contacts, solutions, extra pair | | |
| • Voltage converter and adapters | | |
| • Family photos to share with host | | |
| • Small flashlight | | |
| • Snacks | | |
| • Gifts: postcards, candy, caps, etc. | | |
| • Hair dryer | | |
| • Laundry detergents in packets | | |
| • Prescription medicine | | |
| • Antibacterial gel or towelettes | | |
| • Antibiotics | | |
| • Aspirin, pain, cold medicine | | |
| • Mosquito repellent | | |
| • Small mirror | | |
| • Map of the country or state | | |
| • Money: clean, small bills | | |
| • Notepad, pencil and pens | | |
| • Toilet paper | | |
| • Toiletries: liquid soap works best | | |
| • Small umbrella | | |
| • Washcloths or wipes | | |
| • Zip lock bags of various sizes | | |

Security Awareness

Most of the training received falls in the category of standard travel and sojourn safety for business travelers. More in-depth training on actual threats and hostage situations is a new dimension, one that we need to cover for awareness among our Team Leaders and Members.

While the individual risk is low, in order to equip the few who are at risk, we have to train everyone in survival techniques.

Considering that the majority of HGBC Team Members are on the field for less than two weeks, equipping you with a few essentials to avoid being placed in harmful or hostile situations, or provide enough awareness that you will take actions to mitigate the consequences if such an event should happen.

I. The Threat

- Criminal assault, hostage risks, terrorism
- Threats posed by criminals, terrorists, unfriendly governments
- Risks include economic loss, injury/impairment, detention, death
- Scope of risk: average detention for Americans – one year, survival rate – 80%

II. Areas of Preparation

Dual approach: avoid – dangerous situations, minimize – suffering and loss

- Avoidance: actions ranging from common sense precautions to active surveillance and evasion
- Mitigation: maximize survival, minimize suffering and exploitation, increase chances of securing release
- Environments: peacetime, wartime, periods of instability (ethnic, religious, economic, political)
- Classes of threats:

| PARAMETER | HOST | GOVERNMENT |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Length | 1 year | Shorter |
| Harsh treatment | More likely | More Likely |
| Survival | 80% | 100% |
| Need for building relationships | Very high | High |
| How much info shared | Less | Less |
| Likelihood of torture | Low, yet possible | Low, yet possible |
| Objectives | Concessions | Political gain |

III. Security Levels

- C+ - 11 days (contingency teams, select leadership teams)
- B+ - 3 days (field personnel)
- A+ - ½-1 day (short-term teams)

IV. First Priority – Avoidance

- Basic rules: stay alert, be unpredictable, maintain a low profile, blend into the culture to the extent possible
- Pre-travel planning – don't just research the destination, check route
- Review government travel warnings/advisories
- Understand threats specific to your area
- Go to multiple resources for information: own organizations (HG, IMB), people on the ground, travel agencies, and government resources
- Personal communications plan – develop a method for communicating w/family, work (travel plans, contingency plans)
- Family organization plans – determine who best can serve as spokesman for you, script what they should/should not say, what needs to be done until you return (maintain personal business, regular routine, activities to reduce shock value for them)
- Reduce pressure on captive – financial planning, legal planning (power of attorney, will)
- Medical planning –adequate supply of medicines, insurance (medical, extraction, life, ransom?)
 - [Note 1: AIG covers medical, extraction, \$100K life]
 - [Note 2: some medical/life insurance may have coverage exclusions for some countries, acts of war]
- Evacuation and medical support – US government takes no responsibility, may charge citizens for expenses incurred to get them out; State Dept. – “Crisis Abroad” memos

V. Packing – Minimization

- Penalties for carrying unnecessary items – weight, mobility, security, explanations
- Divide by priorities – ‘must have’ (carry-on), ‘like to have’ (checked)
- Sanitize belongings – don't elevate importance (citizenship, economic status, affiliations)
- Chameleon – blend wardrobe, accessories in with local culture (avoid western, touristy dress; avoid cultural insults/immodesty/extremes)
- Setup throwaway – collect compromising papers in one unassuming bundle, be prepared to jettison (things you don't want to share, work plans/ people you don't want to discuss)
- Leave behind things you don't need (Law enforcement badge, excess credit cards, military/other id's)

VI. Travel/Transportation

Seating – balance security with comfort; aircraft – avoid first class, tail, aisle seats in hijack situation; buses – avoid front, observe exit routes;

VII. Hotel/Lodging

- Avoid western hangouts – targets for anti-US sentiment, crime assuming wealth of clientele

- Hotels – change rooms on check in, push for 2nd-7th floors (fire ladder reach), change rooms if stay is extended, vary use/time of exits, vary routes, watch for loitering strangers, avoid admitting strangers into room
- Street-wise – vary walking routes, face traffic when possible, avoid proximity to roadway, observe surroundings and people, check for possible followers or people with unusual interest, travel together
- Possible threats – make eye contact with them to tell them you’re watching them, avoid getting cornered or isolated, detour around large crowds or disturbances

VIII. Car Safety

- Personal use cars – strive for non-descript (not flashy) cars, good working condition; keep fuel tank full; insure adequate emergency equipment – spare (inflated), jack, flashlight; be careful what remains in view on dash, seats (secure papers, valuables in trunk)
- Carjacking – be prepared to give up car and all contents; avoid getting/remaining in the car (may be time to run/fight); if held captive, follow survival guidance: remain apparently obedient/ calm, collect information, watch for opportunities; women are most likely victims, more likely to be held captive (caveat – South American criminals may be concerned that security timer will disable car after short distance, so that captives will be released after they are satisfied)
- Home/room invasion – follow survival guidance; set up a safe room (e.g., interior room without windows, lockable, preferably with communication, usually a bathroom); set up a rally point – where to collect if you are scattered/escape; set up a “go” kit(s) in home, possibly at rally point, that contains essentials for getting by for a short period of time.

IX. Information Security

- Computers – insure no sensitive/confidential information is on it (dual boot strategy: computer boots normally to sanitized view, but can be interrupted to gain access to sensitive information);
- Email – secure accounts and encryption do not guarantee privacy of conversations; be guarded, use code words, but need to be careful not to over-secure messages so that your evasion is obvious.
- Paperwork – minimize amounts to only what’s necessary; choose secure location; establish destruction procedures; maintain copies of passports and visas.
- Other data sources – PDA’s/cell phones/Ipods/cameras contain information open to compromise; electronic/paper calendars and appointment books detail your travels and meetings; phone numbers and recent calls identify your contacts; cameras record where you’ve been and with whom.

X. Personal Protection

- Preferred target – criminals/terrorists look for ‘soft’ targets: someone who is unarmed/defenseless, accessible, predictable, unaware, easy, and in areas where police confrontation is unlikely;
- Hard target – body language that shows individual is alert, confident, observant, and unafraid to make eye contact with potential threat; such individuals are difficult to

access (can't easily approach them without being generally noticed), and unpredictable in movement and behavior.

- General rules – stay alert, remain unpredictable particularly when threatened, maintain a low profile.

XI. Threat Detection

- Threats – pickpockets/petty theft, unfriendly government observers, terrorists/ would-be kidnappers
- Surveillance motives – target value/vulnerabilities, collect intelligence for attacks, locate associates/gather evidence, perpetrate crimes
- Counter-surveillance objectives - positively identify surveillants, elude/evade, thwart
- Surveillance detection route – pre-planned travel route for purpose of detecting or interrupting surveillance (utilize backtracks, frequent and unexpected stops, long pauses in crowded areas, surprise change in route)

XII. Surviving Capture/Arrest

- Three phases – capture, internment, resolution; each phase requires different roles; guidance for survival studied ever since Viet Nam: predictable patterns, tested behaviors to disrupt/divert patterns to captive's benefit => CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE
- Changing roles – different occasions in life require that we assume different roles – not role-playing/lying/fictional persona; we present the most useful, appropriate aspects of our personalities to meet the situation.
- Demands for information – establish unified statement of purpose – simple, short, tenable – that team establishes and rehearses before coming to field; maintain boundaries of information – home and family, health issues, basic needs, request to see government representative, hobbies and interests, testimony where appropriate.
- Organize – establish chain of command: improves communication (one spokesman), strengthens desire to resist, works well in government detention); assign specific duties
- Expectations – assume difficult living conditions, change in diet, poor sanitation
- Coping with isolation – time with Father, faith in Him and His purpose, faith in government, faith in family/friends/sending organization/fellow prisoners

| Phase | We feel... | Role | Goals |
|------------|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| Capture | Anger, fear, flight, fight | Outwardly compliant | 1) get through it 2) be the gray person 3) give captor idea he is in charge |
| Internment | Boredom, despair, anger | Assertive, cooperative, respectful | 1) build rapport 2) test boundaries 3) shrewdly resist |
| Resolution | Swings between euphoria and depression | Confident, even-tempered, courteous | 1) discourage money 2) encourage calling someone not emotionally related 3) maintain simple, tenable statements about purpose |

XIII. Minimize Exploitation

- Threats – physical harm or death – latter more likely with terrorists than governments; goal of captors is to preserve you as their prize for gaining advantages
- Sexual assault/abuse – not normal treatment, usually as target of opportunity (isolated with a guard, e.g.), sometimes as a tool (rare – mostly small, anarchic, countries); counter measures – move, call for help, make self-unattractive, vomiting/ defecation, urination, feigning illness or pregnancy

Being a Bridge Builder

As a Team Member, you are “plopped” down into a culture quite different from your own. The behaviors, values and beliefs of the people may differ greatly from those familiar to you. With time you may come to notice the common denominators between yourself and your hosts. But the differences will hit you first. Cultural differences might be pictured in the following way. There are two cliffs: on one side is the North American way of life and on the other is the way of life found in the host country. In between looms a large chasm. In order for the two cultures to meet and understand one another, a bridge must be built connecting the two sides.

Imagine your upcoming journey as an apprenticeship in bridge building. You can lay the beam, erect scaffolding and forge cables that make communication between your worlds possible. Support your host community with your initiative at bridge building and you will find their hands joining yours.

Building the bridge involves a number of things you can think through before going, as well as others you can work on while you are there. Unfortunately, some people who go on short-term mission trips never work at building the bridge. They deprive themselves of some very important personal experiences, which tragically limits their understanding and curtails their growth.

Bridge building is an exciting challenge! In fact, you will come to appreciate the world opening to you so much that you will continue to build bridges for the rest of your life.

Bridge Building Involves Examining Your Stereotypes

All of us maintain certain stereotypes about other people. Some are based on elements of truth. Others grow out of myths or false perceptions. It is unfair to judge or evaluate a person based on stereotypes about the group to which he or she belongs. God created individuals who are uniquely different and should be treated as such.

Building the bridge begins with examining stereotypes: the ones you may hold and the ones the nationals may hold about you. Think them through and list a few stereotypes you might have about your host country.

Negative Stereotypes

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Positive Stereotypes

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

When you arrive in the host country, you will be viewed in a certain way just because you are a North American. Doesn't seem fair, does it? But is there an element of truth in these views? Think about the stereotypes that follow, then answer the questions in the spaces provided below.

Stereotypes Others Have of North Americans

Negative Stereotypes

- Aggressive
- Harshly pragmatic
- Tense
- Discontent
- Lonely
- Corrupt
- Wealthy and materialistic
- Dominating
- Loud and obnoxious
- Overbearing
- Competitive
- Selfish/ self-centered
- Attitude of national superiority
- Preoccupied with efficiency

Positive Stereotypes

- Educated
- Reliable
- Strong individuals
- Better living standards
- Free of superstition
- Confident
- Organized

Questions for Reflection

1. As you look through this list, what is your reaction? How do you feel? _____

2. Which of these apply to you? Would others see these in you? _____

3. Do you feel that you hold some of the stereotypes listed, towards the people in your host country? Which ones do you think may be valid? Why? _____

4. How might these stereotypes hinder the bridge-building process? _____

You cannot change the fact that you are a North American. You will be perceived stereotypically from time to time. This is not all bad. Stereotypes can have some merit and facilitate understanding. But as you know from experience, not every individual embodies all of the characteristics of a particular stereotype. To be a bridge builder, you need to understand the reasons behind stereotypes. We bomb the bridge when we judge people without attempting to understand or allow them a change to explain themselves.

Bridge Building Involves Remembering Your Roles

There are three roles that you will play that contribute to your ability as a bridge builder.

1. **The role of being a guest of the culture.** Think of being a guest in someone's home. How would you behave, react, interact, etc.? Or conversely, what expectations would you have of a guest in your home? What might please and/ or irritate you?
2. **The role of being a student of the culture.** Think of yourself as a person who is there to study and learn. How does a student get an "A" in school? What behaviors contribute to their success?
3. **The role of being a servant within the culture.** Think of being a person who serves everyone he or she encounter in the country. How does a servant approach those whom he or she serves? How does a servant handle differences in others?

Bridge Building Applications

Follow these applications to be a good bridge builder.

Accepting

Accept the fact that you will not completely understand the people in just one trip. This is just a beginning, so do not become too frustrated with yourself.

Awareness

Be aware that at times you may feel your prejudices. You may become frustrated with the way things are or the way people behave. Do not deny the feelings; own them. Only then can you begin to understand the reasons behind them. Why are you frustrated? Being aware will help you grow in understanding the differences.

Listening

Listen more than you talk. You are there to learn, not to instruct. The right to instruct is earned by demonstrating respect.

Giving

Give of yourself. Take the initiative in group settings to reach out to the nationals. People can tend to shy away from contact with nationals, especially if they are not fluent in the language. Go ahead! Take a risk and try to speak the language. People will really appreciate the effort. And do not worry; they will forgive you when you mess up.

Enjoying

Enjoy the people, their culture and their language. If you do not take yourself too seriously you can have more fun. Help create an environment where they can enjoy you, your culture and your language just as you aim to enjoy theirs.

Dos, Don'ts and Taboos

Eating

When you are in another country, eating becomes more than just a way to receive nourishment. It becomes a language all its own, and no words can match it for saying "glad to meet you...thank you for letting me be here with you."

Mealtime is no time for a "thanks-but-no-thanks" response. Acceptance of what is on your plate is extremely important to the acceptance of your host, the country and the situation in which you find yourself.

Often, what is offered constitutes your host country's proudest culinary achievements. Try to think how you would feel if a visitor in our country refused a bite of your homemade pie or a nice steak!

We often become squeamish not because of what we are eating, but the unfamiliarity with what it is. As a "hint" you might want to cut the item into small pieces. This helps minimize the texture. You can also try swallowing quickly.

Take it Off or Leave it On?

What you do or do not wear can be worse than bad taste. Shoes are among the biggest offenders. Remember to keep in the front of your mind if it appears that shoes need to be removed when entering a person's home or even some buildings. If you are unsure, ask your host. They will appreciate your attention to their feelings. Each culture has various reasons for why shoes are offensive. Be alert and be sensitive.

Always and forever let your dress be modest, even if you are a little uncomfortable. Tight fitting clothing, or too little clothing speaks loudly to the very people you are trying to win to the Lord.

Remember your objective for the trip! Comfort is not necessarily part of the deal. Refer to your Release of Rights.

Conversation

There are many things that are sensitive to people in another country. Speaking negatively about their religion and their beliefs will immediately become offensive to those people. Remember to show interest in how they think and believe.

When you are talking about your job, your church, your family, etc., leave off a lot of "I did" or "I know." This will be as offensive to some cultures as it is to your friends at home.

International Misunderstandings

Remember that only Americans can really understand Americans. Be careful in using slang terms that do not really convey the meaning you are trying to get across.

Idioms in our language can be a huge stumbling block to our foreign friends. Avoid using idioms in any form. Try to put yourself in the place of someone from another country, and see what would come to mind as these phrases are used:

- I need it like yesterday
- Let's put on the dog and pony show
- Do you read me?
- It just won't fly
- Run of the mill
- Ball park figure
- Shotgun approach
- General rule of thumb
- The buck stops here
- Down the tubes
- As nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs
- Flat as a pancake
- Old as Methuselah
- Flying by the seat of your pants
- Coming up roses
- Don't make waves
- Keep a low profile
- Raining cats and dogs

Best Behavior

What we would consider mildly bad manners at home may be seen as cardinal sins to another culture. Examples of those habits include

- Gum chewing, especially during conversation
- Talking with hands in pockets
- Legs propped up on furniture
- Backslapping

Gift Giving

Different gifts mean different things from culture to culture. Try to rely on the information given to you about your specific country. A good rule to go by in any situation is to keep it simple. Also, when giving the gift be sure to say to the host, "This is just a small way of saying thank you for having me/ us here in your country/ ministry." This simple comment can relieve the pressure of your host to give a gift in return.

Gestures – A Risky Language

Hand gestures and body language are risky forms of communications in a foreign country. Expression on the face and movements of the hands mean something totally different from one culture to the next. It will take practice on your part, but it is best to avoid them completely.

Listed below are some differences in meaning of the same gesture:

- When you raise your eyebrows in Tonga, you are saying "yes" or "I agree." In Peru you have just said "money" or "pay me."

- The classic American “okay” sign – the thumb and forefinger forming a circle – is placed over the nose in Columbia to signify that the person in question is homosexual.
- In Britain a nose tap means secrecy or confidentiality, but in Italy it is a friendly warning.
- In Greece, Italy and Spain a cheek stroke means “attractive.” In Yugoslavia it means success, but in other cultures it means “ill” or “thin.”
- In Germany using the gesture of a head screw means “you’re crazy.” It is often used by drivers on the autobahn to comment on the driving skills of other travelers. This gesture can get you arrested! This same gesture in Argentina would have no consequences.

The point to be made is that gestures are dangerous ways to communicate what you want to say.

A Lot of Work?

Yes is the answer! This seems to be a lot to remember and to learn. However, the benefits of being culturally aware can make the difference in how your ministry is received in that country. It also leaves a lasting impression of our church and mission program.

Coping With Culture Shock

Culture Shock: A Definition

A psychological disorientation that stems from unfamiliar cues and unmet expectations in a new culture.

Who is a Potential Candidate for Culture Shock?

You are! Culture shock happens to everyone. It is only a problem if it is not anticipated and recognized. Many untraveled people are skeptical about it, and they assume it is like a homesick kid at camp. They are wrong. It is not reserved for the weak or incapable, and if you think it is, your potential for major culture shock is great! Culture shock has little to do with intelligence.

What to Expect

It is like taking an exam 24 hours a day, or like a low voltage buzz that irritates and builds stress throughout the day.

How to Deal with It

Learn what culture shock is, learn about yourself, learn about your host culture and learn about your home culture. The more you know, the less jolted by the shock you will be.

Know Culture Shock

There are four phases. These phases are not sequential and are often repeated.

- **Phase 1 – the Romantic, Tourist Phase**
Everything is quaint; the euphoria of your new experience blurs the cultural differences.

- **Phase 2 – You’ve Lost That Loving Feeling Phase**
The new culture no longer fascinates you. Curiosity gives way to frustration. Feelings of irritation, anger and helplessness join with fatigue to produce the classic symptoms of culture shock.

- **Phase 3 – Recovery Phase**
Local ideas and practices do not seem strange any longer. Self-confidence returns, and negative feelings subside.

- **Phase 4 – Acceptance Phase**
Differences are understood and expected. Humor returns, and you relax.

Know Your Host Culture

Go to our local library and research your country. Rent a travel video. Interview a national visiting your city. Interview a missionary who has served in that country. The more you know of their culture before entering it, the lighter the shock.

Know Yourself

Remember, there is only one of you in this world, and God has designed you this way on purpose. Do not try to make the people you meet in the new culture like you. Realize that

people approach problem-solving differently. Think about what type of problem solver you are. Are you an idealistic thinker who focuses on vision and outcome? Are you an observer or a participator? Basically, do what you can to understand yourself and remember the people in your new culture will be different. Always keep in mind, “different is not bad, it is just different.”

Know Your Own Culture

Learn why you do the things the way you do in your own culture and be ready to explain them, but avoid comparison! Your culture is just your culture. And your new country has a culture of its own.

Remember Your Role

You are a learner of the culture. It is your job to acculturate, not to change them. Spend a lot of time asking questions and learning. An attitude of learner not only helps you become informed and adjust, but communicates servant hood to your host culture.

Communicating Through an Interpreter

The following are some key considerations to ensure that your message gets communicated effectively.

- Speak to the audience, not the interpreter.
- Speak loud enough to be clearly heard by your interpreter.
- Speak slowly.
- Think your ideas through ahead of time so you can say it in short, simple sentences.
- Avoid using slang words or phrases; your interpreter may not be familiar with such words.
- Stop after every sentence to allow your interpreter to translate.
- If you are talking about technical subjects and you wonder if they know what you mean, test their understanding by asking them a question or two about what you said.
- If your interpreter gets stuck and does not know the word for something you are trying to say, it is often best to move on in the conversation so as not to embarrass your interpreter. If it is an important point, come back to it later.
- You may assist your communications with sign language, similar to playing charades.

What is Reentry?

Reentry is similar to culture shock. Sometimes it is called reverse culture shock. In reentry you may feel out of balance. You are not the same as when you left, so there are some adjustments. It is normal for people to go through some type of reentry after an overseas experience.

Most people feel some excitement upon returning. It is exciting to see friends, family and familiar places and food. You cannot wait to share all of your experiences. Once you are home and settled, you may find yourself struggling.

Three stages of coping are explained below. You may find yourself coping one way at one time, or you may find yourself going through them all before you feel adjusted.

1. **Isolated/ Alienated**

After a while you may begin to feel like a “fish out of water.” You may find yourself withdrawing from others and spending more time alone reading books, writing letters, being reflective and not socializing with friends and family as usual. You may find yourself feeling a strong guilt over your home culture’s affluence and materialism. You be unaware of other alternatives to impact your home culture or church.

Suggestion: You need someone who has been through reentry stress to help in understanding the transition process and exploring options. Contact your Team Leader or the Global Missions Office.

2. **Rebel/ Angry**

this is where you may find yourself angry at your culture, your friends, your family and your church. No one understands you. Everyone is different from before and even their lifestyle or values are bad. You may find yourself mocking them. They appear foolish in what they do and what they value.

Suggestion: You need to seek support form someone who has been through reentry stress but who also can help you understand how to soften your spirit and heart. Again, the Global Missions Office and Team Leader are good resources. A former missionary would understand as well and would be a very beneficial resource.

3. **Integrate/ Proactive**

This is the optimal way of coping and ultimately what you need to achieve in order to be readjusted. You relate with the home culture in a way that does not compromise or negate your new values or the lessons learned from the short-term mission experience. You continue to learn while creating a unique lifestyle, incorporating the old and the new.

Suggestion: Seek like-minded people to foster your integration. Then go and share your secrets with those who are still struggling.

More Practical Suggestions

Find other returnees with whom you can share and have fellowship. Discuss the needs of the world and pray for them. Learn to think globally.

Give yourself time to readjust. Be patient with yourself and with others.

Recognize and accept which transition stage you are going through and remember the reverse culture shock or reentry stress is a normal part of the process of returning home.

Have a good sense of humor.