



Costa Rica Mission Team Team Application Packet

Our vision for our participation with *Rice and Beans Ministry* is three fold:

That the team and individuals that make up our team will...

1. Have the experience of participating with Christ in ministry with the local Costa Rican church
2. Be exposed to the realities of third world poverty, and, in light of what they experience, reflect on the Gospel and their role in justice as a disciple of Jesus
3. Receive a basic education in missiology

The ultimate goal for our team is that we will continue to allow God to open our eyes to how He is working in the world and allow Him to mold our hearts for missions both *locally* and *globally*.

To Register

Because we have limited space we will NOT be able to save spots.

You WILL NOT be considered a part of the Costa Rica Team until you have all of the following turned in:

1. Team Application Form
2. Signed Team Covenant
3. \$150.00 Deposit

WE MUST KNOW SOMETHING DEFINITIVE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER ABOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION BY JAN. 31st. WE WILL PURCHASE AIRLINE TICKETS IMMEDIATELY, AND THE AIRLINE PORTION WILL BE NON-REFUNDABLE

UNTIL WE HAVE A WEBSITE FOR THIS TRIP PLEASE E-MAIL WES IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR NEED MORE FORMS

Price & Itinerary

Rice and Beans Ministry: \$575.00

*Estimated Airfare: \$750.00**

*Trip medical insurance: \$20.00***

Total: \$1,345.00

Rice & Beans Price Includes: team training, domestic travel, room & board, construction supplies, VBS supplies, & translator fees.

Price Does NOT Include: Passport, shots, airport meals, snacks, souvenirs, phone calls from Costa Rica & overweight bag fees

Tentative Itinerary:

Sat. July 10 – Travel Day	Thurs. July 15 – Ministry Day
Sun. July 11 – Ministry Day	Fri. July 16 – Cultural Day
Mon. July 12 – Ministry Day	Sat. July 17 – Cultural Day
Tues. July 13 – Ministry Day	Sun. July 18 – Travel Day
Wed. July 14 – Ministry Day	

* Current price is based on the price given on www.continental.com on 1/21/2010.

The final price of flight and is subject to change

** This is an estimate and is subject to change

Flight Info

We are currently looking at the following itinerary on *Continental Airlines*:

July 10: Flt 2395 9:20am – Depart Jackson 10:30am – Arrive Houston	July 18: Flt 1485 6:30am – Depart San Jose, CR 11:17am – Arrive Houston
Flt 1446 11:10am – Depart Houston 1:45pm – Arrive San Jose, CR	Flt 1446 1:00pm – Depart Houston 2:14pm – Arrive Jackson

Medical Info

Deadlines: Have all immunizations by May 2nd

Shots/Immunizations Needed: Updated Tetanus, Hepatitis A & Typhoid

Whether Malaria medicines are needed is TBD

Passport Info

If you do not have a passport please apply ASAP

www.travel.state.gov/passport

If you have already turned in the following forms and deposit for the Peru Mission Team you DO NOT need to resubmit the forms and deposit. We will use those forms and deposit for the Costa Rica Mission Team.

Simply sign this sheet and turn it in.

Please use my Peru Mission application forms and deposit for the Costa Rica Mission Team

Name (print): _____

Name (sign): _____ Date: _____

Parent (sign): _____

2010 Costa Rica Team Application Form

Passport Name & Number: _____

If you don't currently have a passport simply put your full name. Please apply for your passport ASAP

Grade: 9 10 11 12 College Adult Date of Birth: ____/____/____

fill out the following info if we do not already have it on file... if in doubt, fill it out

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Student Cell: _____

Student E-mail: _____

Mother Cell: _____ Father Cell: _____

Mother E-mail: _____

Father E-mail: _____

On a separate sheet of paper please answer the following questions:

1. Describe your current Christian walk?
2. Why do you think we go to other countries for mission trips?
3. What should the everyday life of a short-term missionary look like (both at home and in Costa Rica)?

Read the article, *Making the Most of Ministry Trips*, and answer the following questions (article is included in this packet):

1. **This is your first int'l mission trip:** How does this article confirm and/or challenge what you think a mission trip should be like? (250-500 words)
2. **You're an int'l mission trip vet:** How does this article confirm and/or challenge the way we have been doing our Peru trips? (250-500 words)

2010 Costa Rica Mission Team Covenant

Name: _____

Please initial the following statements and sign at the bottom:

As a member of this team I understand that this mission team is open to believers of all maturity levels, baby faith to mature faith, who long to be the hands and feet of Jesus in Costa Rica and who are committed to a life of continued growth in Christ...

_____ I confess that I am a Christian: I trust Jesus for salvation, have committed to following Him and seek to be transformed by Him

_____ I have read and understand the vision and goal of this Costa Rica Team (on the front of the application packet)

_____ I commit to going through the assigned team daily scriptures, journaling & prayer (starting May 2nd)

_____ I will be prepared for and present at team meetings, or will promptly communicate with leadership if I have a legitimate conflict (Meeting dates: Mar 7th, May 2rd & 9th)

_____ I will participate in the two scheduled local mission opportunities if able (dates & times TBA)

_____ I will participate in fund raising activities when I'm available and will cover the costs that I do not raise

_____ I understand and will abide by the refund policy

_____ I will demonstrate a positive attitude towards the members of the mission team and its leaders

Participant Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

2009/2010 CUMC MEDICAL INFORMATION FORM

NOTE: This form seeks authorization to make medical related decisions for your child when attending activities and events sponsored in whole or in part by Christ United Methodist Church during the 2009-2010 ministry year. Unless specified below, this authorization, when signed by any parent or guardian, will remain in full force and effect for any CUMC activity or event until expressly revoked in writing and delivered to the Office of Youth Ministry at CUMC.

Name of Child: _____

Child's Date of Birth: _____

The above child is covered under hospitalization insurance with _____

(name of company) pursuant to

Policy No. _____ in the name of

Child has insurance card.

Family Doctor is: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Reaction to drugs: _____

Allergies: _____

Physical defects or limitations: _____

Blood type (if known): _____

Other medical information which might be necessary to the proper care of this child: _____

Any medicine which the child is presently taking: _____

Parents Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

I, the undersigned, being the Father/Mother of _____, a minor child, do hereby authorize the CUMC Youth Ministry to make provision for any medical care which may be deemed necessary by a licensed physician for said child and to make decisions or give any other consents which may be necessary for the health and welfare of said child at any time.

Parent Signature

Date

THIS FORM DOES NOT NEED TO BE NOTARIZED

Making the Most of Ministry Trips

By Andy Crouch | His mission in life is to connect people, worthwhile projects and resources. He is the creator of Christianity Today's Christian Vision Project and author of *Culture Making*. | October 08, 2009

If you've been in any major airport in the last few years, you've seen them. If you're a youth worker, there's a good chance you've been one of them.

Clad in matching T-shirts, clutching passports and backpacks, this pale, ragtag army goes forth from the United States to locations all over the globe, but especially in the Caribbean and Latin America—the nearby (and pleasantly tropical) nations that receive the bulk of the 1.5 million Americans who go on international "short-term missions" annually. They are often on their first trip overseas. They've written letters, washed cars and worked overtime to raise the money to go. Their home church has prayed for them. Their family members have fussed over their sunscreen and medications. They sincerely are hoping to make a difference for Jesus in the world.

Advertisement

Not all short-term mission teams are comprised of students; this is a phenomenon that cuts across generations. However, for many youth workers, fielding a short-term mission team has become part of the job description, not to mention making sure your church's short-term mission offerings don't fall too far behind the exotic destinations offered by the church down the road.

In 2006, I started to pay close attention to the burgeoning phenomenon of short-term mission trips. I spent that year interviewing leaders of Christian churches around the world—almost exclusively from outside the West. In nearly every interview, without prompting, I would be asked, "What exactly do you Americans think you are doing on these short-term mission trips?" I would stutter, and (in good journalist fashion) throw the question back to them. "Well, what do you think of them?" Then I would get an earful: stories of Americans who came to their country with a strange mixture of ignorance and arrogance; questions about T-shirt slogans, such as 'Bringing Jesus to Honduras' (a T-shirt that prompted a Honduran leader to ask, "Do Americans think Jesus isn't in Honduras until they get here?"); and lots of bemused stories of the relentless American desire to paint something, whether it needs painting or not—and whether the visiting Americans have painting skills.

Perhaps the most pointed observation came from Nairobi pastor Oscar Muriu. "You know," he told me in an interview for *Leadership Journal*, "after you leave, we repaint the walls that you have painted."

He was smiling, but he was serious. Strangely, after all those conversations, I've come to the conclusion that although short-term mission trips clearly are not the thing we Americans do best, they could be one of the best things we do.

The Best We Can Do

While "short-term" is true enough, "mission" is really not the best word for these journeys. For one thing, "short-term missions" is an oxymoron roughly akin to "jumbo shrimp."

The one true mission that animates the Christian story is God's mission (sometimes called by its Latin name, *missio Dei*), a history-sweeping, self-emptying endeavor to reconcile creation and Creator, about which there is nothing short-term. Even our small mission efforts should reflect God's mission in depth of commitment—as Eugene Peterson described as, "a long obedience in the same direction."

In an age of easy travel, missions may never again be as permanent and irrevocable as in the days when missionaries shipped all their worldly goods to their destination ahead of them—packed in a coffin. Any real investment in crossing cultures for the sake of the gospel will require much more time than the typical "short-term mission trip" allows.

A rule of thumb I picked up from cultural intelligence specialist David Livermore: If you aren't even trying to become fluent in the language of the people you are on mission among, you probably shouldn't call yourself a missionary.

Short-term trips (STMs) are contemporary versions of an ancient Christian practice called pilgrimage. (Perhaps we should call them STPs.) A pilgrim goes on a journey to meet God in a faraway place, hoping to return as a different person from the one who left. In medieval times, Europe particularly was crisscrossed with pilgrimage routes, with the destination usually being a notable church or site of a saint's relics.

Pilgrims had no illusions that they were going to "change the world" by their pilgrimage, but they hoped that being exposed to the world, and to the stories of the saints who had been faithful in it, would change them. They were much more than tourists, traveling simply for the fun of it (though medieval pilgrimages were often, appropriately, convivial and joyful affairs). Pilgrims travel for transformation, and that's a good thing.

Similarly, short-term teams travel together in community, where we actually depend on one another to make it through unfamiliar and challenging experiences. In a pervasive culture of individualism, that, too, is a good thing. When and where else will a typical 17-year-old embrace a life of prayer and work for a week or more, sharing cooking and cleaning, tears and laughter, in such close quarters? In a non-stop world of distraction and diversion, STMs force students (not to mention youth workers) to focus and pay attention.

Just as European pilgrimages served to reinforce pilgrims' connections to the saints who had been radically faithful to God in their place and time, modern STMs can take us to places of spiritual abundance. I have yet to visit a church in another part of the world

where I don't experience incredible, awe-inspiring discipleship. The local Christians may take their spiritual gifts for granted, but much of what I've experienced around the world would be categorically miraculous if it happened in my local congregation in Pennsylvania.

STMs whose destinations are places of material need also provide an indispensable reality check for affluent Americans. At their best, these trips can recalibrate our sense of what we need and awaken our compassion for people who have none of the comforts we take for granted. Even the manual labor we do on STM trips is not all bad: If the hardest work the kids in your youth group have done in the last year was handling video game controllers, sore muscles and a sunburned neck after a day of painting may bring about a reality check.

For all these reasons, if STMs didn't exist, I think we would need to invent them. Without STMs, our ministry to students easily could end up sealed in a bubble of individualistic consumer culture; and they would experience neither the astonishing abundance of the body of Christ around the world, nor the piercing pain of the least and the lost.

As vivid as the needs are that we see in places of material poverty, our need for these trips is greater than anything we'll see there.

After all, thanks to ubiquitous Western media, the friends we visit already know an awful lot about us and our affluent lifestyles. We are the ones who know very little about them.

When Pilgrimage Becomes Tourism

Unfortunately, STMs often fall short of these ideals; and when they do, these trips can undermine not just our own ministries, but the body of Christ in the places we visit. Without a commitment to transformation and learning, pilgrimage becomes tourism—as in the short-term team I heard about from one Caribbean leader who canceled the last three days of their Vacation Bible School program in order to spend more time on his island's lovely beaches. Tourism is no good for us spiritually, but it's worse for our hosts. They are demoted from saints to be celebrated, emulated and encouraged, to mere providers of lodging, meals and opportunities for us to feel good about ourselves.

If pilgrimage easily can become tourism, our call to sharing in the joys and sorrows of brothers and sisters around the world can devolve into mere voyeurism. Voyeurs, by definition, keep their distance. They lurk behind some form of protection that conceals their identity while ogling other people at their most vulnerable.

When we drive through neighborhoods where most people have no option but to walk; when we venture forth from the privacy of our guest quarters to places where people have no option but to live out the ugly consequences of poverty in public; when we bring gifts for local children that are cheap for us but more precious than anything their parents can afford to give them—as good or as guilty as any of these activities make us feel, they do nothing to establish real, trusting relationships with the people we think we are "serving." One of the most devastating moments in the student-produced documentary *Missio Docs: Mexico* is when a teenage STMer is asked what he enjoyed most about his trip, and he cites meeting Mexican kids his age. When asked to name a single Mexican he met, he comes up blank. The silence is deafening and damning—not of a well-intentioned, naïve 13-year-old, but of the leaders who failed to create an environment where real relationships could develop.

The Thing We Do Best

When you start to awaken to the huge investment and uneven returns from STMs, it's natural to ask if it wouldn't be better instead to raise money and send the cash to our partners overseas. Yet, not a single global church leader I've spoken to wanted to see that happen. They see the real potential of STMs: not the chance to get a wall painted, a latrine built or hold a Vacation Bible School but the chance to develop lasting relationships with other Christians.

In fact, so highly do most of our hosts value relationship, they simply cannot imagine that we would spend so much money and expend the effort that goes into an STM for anything other than building a deep, lasting friendship and partnership in the gospel. So, what exactly do we Americans think we are doing on these STM trips? Suppose we were able to tell our hosts and the people we serve honestly that we're pilgrims, not tourists; that our intent is to share their joys and sorrows, not to be voyeurs of their suffering; that we want to build relationship, not buildings.

Suppose we could tell them about our hope to help our students escape the clutches of our materialistic culture, with our hosts' help. Suppose our short visits were part of lasting partnerships between their churches and ours, with both parts of the body of Christ sharing our gifts and our needs.

Actually, if all that were true, I bet they'd never ask the question; and STMs really would be one of the best things that we do.