

# **Guiding Document for Global Mission Committee Mission Trips**

The Chapel of the Cross, Chapel Hill, NC

Revised August 2014

“As the Father sent me, so I send you”  
-John 20.21

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## Introduction

### *What is a Mission Trip?*

The guiding principles for mission trips, both voluntary and exploratory, coordinated by the Global Mission Committee come from the document, *Companions in Transformation: The Episcopal Church's World Mission in a New Century*. According to The Standing Commission on World Mission, Christian mission is the activity of “sending and being sent in Christ.”

God's people are companions in mission. We are companions of other dioceses and parishes throughout the world. We are companions with La Esperanza de Jesus in Honduras, with St. Peter and St. Paul and the Kwasa Center in South Africa, and with the Anglican Church of Botswana. Together, we form a community in Christ, sharing in Christ the bread of life.

Jesus said, “I came not to be served but to serve.” As mission companions, we must enter servanthood; that is, we must listen to our mission companions and seek to meet Christ in all situations, regardless of pre-conceived ideas about our companions' situations.

As mission companions we must be a “sacramental sign of God's mission to reconcile all people with one another and with God in Christ.” The gospel transcends all cultural, linguistic, and geographic boundaries, thereby bonding us with our companions. As missionaries, we must not lose sight of the mission trip's most important goal: to focus on people, relationships, and the community. It is in these bonds that lasting impacts are made and where God truly lives.

### **A summary:**

<b>What a mission trip is</b>	<b>What a mission trip is <u>not</u></b>
We as missionaries are guests in our hosts' country, and we must accept and embrace our differences while attempted to lose pre-conceived notions about our companions' situations	Transporting our ideas/agendas to another country
Although charity is important, we as missionaries must focus on the people and the relationships that we make with them	Just giving money
A team experience	No unilateral or independent activities. Missioners should not act alone. Not only are we trying to focus on forming strong relationships with our companions in the host country, but also with fellow missioners

### *What is The Chapel of the Cross Global Missions Committee?*

The Global Missions Committee is charged by the vestry both to encourage and to represent the parish in work outside the United States. The Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori, has challenged the Episcopal Church to become companions with others around the world, to love and care for one another. Both challenges are based on Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan, his response to the question, “Who is

our neighbor?” The Committee’s mission is “to engage in the global mission initiatives of the Episcopal Church, to build partnerships across geographic and cultural boundaries, and thus to share the presence and the work of Christ in the world.”

## **Planning a Mission Trip**

### *Choosing a Mission Trip Team*

All individuals interested in participating on a mission trip must complete an application specific to the mission trip (see Appendix). Applicants will be asked what pertinent skills they might possess, including (but not limited to) carpentry, linguistics, health and medicine, and ministry. These, along with other factors, such as diversity in gender and age, may be considered in creating a mission team. Applicants should also be able to describe why they want to go on the mission trip and what experiences they hope to have from participation.

### *Financing a Mission Trip*

Individuals participating on a mission trip will be expected to contribute their own funding for the trip (travel expenses, in-country lodging/dietary expenses). Scholarships from the Global Missions Committee may be available to supplement costs, depending on the needs of the particular mission project, the individual missionaries, and the availability of funds.

### *Safety Concerns for Mission Trips*

In developing a trip the mission planning committee should contact the Episcopal Diocese, or agencies it sponsors, in the country in which they plan to travel for information and guidance regarding health, evacuation, and life insurance, etc. Although travel insurance is an individual’s responsibility, it is strongly recommended that any missionary going on a mission trip have medical insurance that will provide for medical evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Additional resources for safety when traveling to other countries include:

1. Health safety information by country (including vaccination information): [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
2. General safety information by country: [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov)

Each missionary is expected to leave a copy of their passport, their medical insurance card(s), and emergency contact information with the mission team leader and the Chapel of the Cross.

Although it is up to the mission planning committee to decide whether or not all travel arrangements will be made through a travel agency, it is imperative that no one travel alone to a mission trip site. Furthermore, while in the companion country, it is expected that all missionaries will travel as a group.

Finally, all missionaries must agree to respect the cultural, political, religious, and racial/ethnic differences of the companion country. Recall what it means to be a missionary—we are first and foremost companions, but also servants and the living sacrament. We should appreciate our

differences and we should strive to overcome pre-conceived notions of the societies we are visiting so as to best serve our neighbors in Christ.

### *Missioner Expectations*

Individuals participating in mission trips are under the auspices of the Chapel of the Cross and its Global Mission Committee and are not traveling independently as private individuals. Participants are expected to conduct themselves in ways that support the objectives of the mission team and the Global Mission Committee.

Mission participants are expected to accept and submit to the leadership role of the mission team leader and agree to adhere to his or her decisions regarding the mission trip.

Participants are expected to attend mission team meetings before and during the mission trip.

Participants are expected keep the team leader informed of their whereabouts at all times.

Participants should not individually give gifts to nationals in the host country. Although well intentioned, gift giving can have consequences that vary from culture to culture. Gifts can create hurt feelings among team members not presenting gifts and jealousy among persons not receiving gifts. Gifts also raise expectations of future gifts from subsequent mission teams. The team as whole may present gifts with the approval of the mission team leader and the hosting authority in a manner mutually agreed upon.

### *Missioner Responsibilities*

**Monetary.** All missionaries are expected to support themselves financially for the entire cost of the mission trip unless funds are raised or a scholarship is received.

**Time.** All missionaries are expected to attend the scheduled team meetings prior to embarking on the mission trip.

**Participant Agreement.** All missionaries are expected to thoroughly read, sign, and abide by the participant agreement.

## Appendix

### Mission Trip Participant Agreement

The Chapel of the Cross  
Chapel Hill, NC

#### Expectations of the Participant:

As a participant in a mission trip I agree to:

1. Abide by the code outlined in the “Mission Trip Guiding Document” of the Chapel of the Cross Global Mission Committee.
2. Attend the orientation and mission trip preparation meetings.
3. Respect the cultural, political, religious, and racial differences of the host culture and other mission trip participants.

**Finances:** I agree to be responsible for and pay all bills for any medical, optical, dental, pharmaceutical, or similar services or needs required while inside or outside the United States in connection with the mission trip. I further agree to be responsible for and pay all debts I incur as a mission trip participant.

**Insurance:** I understand that I am responsible for my own accident, travel, missed flight, health, medical evacuation, and life insurance.

**Additional Expenses:** In the event that it is necessary to alter the originally scheduled trip agenda for reasons beyond the control of the Chapel of the Cross, participants will be responsible for their own expenses. Additionally, if it becomes necessary to terminate the mission trip prematurely for reasons beyond the control of the Chapel of the Cross, participants will be responsible for any additional travel expenses or other costs.

**Withdrawal by Participant:** I acknowledge that if documentation of a family death or emergency is provided, the Chapel of the Cross will make every reasonable effort to refund monies to the participant that have not been obligated. The closer the date of withdrawal is to the departure date, however, the less likely that a refund is possible.

**Cancellation by the Chapel of the Cross:** I understand that mission trips may be subject to cancellation because of natural disasters, political instability, acts of terrorism, inadequate participation, or other causes. In the event of cancellation by the Chapel of the Cross, the parish will make a reasonable effort to refund monies paid by participants.

**Health and Safety:** I understand that there are health and safety risks inside and outside the United States which are beyond the control of the Chapel of the Cross, and I agree that the parish will not be held responsible or liable for any risks or injuries or damages associated with my travel inside or outside the U.S. in connection with the mission trip. I further understand that neither the Chapel of the Cross or its volunteers are responsible for loss, damage, or theft of participants' personal property. I certify that no oral or other written promise, agreement, or representation concerning safety or liability has been made to me. I certify that I am medically able to participate in the mission trip and the travel and activities associated with it. I further certify that I do not have any medical condition that would endanger my health or the health of others associated with the mission trip. If I am injured or become ill, I agree that the Chapel of the Cross or its agents may release information to other persons who may need this information to assist me or to assist others participating in the mission trip.

**Accommodations:** I understand that mission trip participants are expected to adapt to differences in physical accommodations during hotel and home stays that may be perceived as inconvenient or uncomfortable by U.S. standards. I further understand that changes in accommodations may be necessary in the interest of the mission trip. I acknowledge that the Chapel of the Cross or its agents may make alternative accommodations as circumstances dictate.

**Laws:** I understand that I will be subject to the laws of the host country as well as applicable U.S. law.

**Release, hold harmless agreement, indemnification, and assumption of risk:** I have applied to participate in an international mission trip under the sponsorship of the Chapel of the Cross in the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. I understand that this mission trip will expose me to risks associated with domestic and foreign travel and that my participation in activities may entail risk and hazard. I fully accept the possibility of risks and I assume all such risks associated with this mission trip. I agree to release and discharge the Chapel of the Cross and any co-sponsors, employees, volunteers, and agents from any liability, claims, or demands whatsoever that may be asserted in connection with a) any emergency, accident, illness, injury, or other consequences or events arising from my participation in the mission trip, b) any cause, event or occurrence beyond the control of the Chapel of the Cross or any co-sponsors, including, but not limited to, natural disasters, wars, disturbances, and the negligence of parties not subject to the Chapel of the Cross or any co-sponsors' control, c) dissatisfaction with the host or guest placement for reasons of personal incompatibility, and d) any other events or occurrences not under the direct control of the Chapel of the Cross or any co-sponsors. I understand that the parish and any co-sponsors contract with or use commercial transportation, whose performance and services cannot be controlled by the parish or any co-sponsors. Therefore, I agree that the Chapel of the Cross and any co-sponsors are not liable for any action or failure to act of such commercial entities including, but not limited to, lost baggage, travel delays, injury, or accident. The Chapel of the Cross and any co-sponsors reserve the right to alter travel or other arrangements if the parish or co-sponsors believe such change or alteration to be in the perceived best interest of participants. I understand and agree that the Chapel of the Cross and any co-sponsors are not responsible for additional costs of missed flights, for illness, or any other reasons. I agree that this release, hold harmless agreement, indemnification and assumption of risk shall be binding on me, my heirs, my assigns, my family (including minors traveling with me), my executors, administrators, and my personal representatives. No representation of the mission trip, except those explicitly set forth in this participant agreement, may be relied on by participants.

I have read and agree to the conditions of this mission trip as stated above and therefore now execute it voluntarily and with full knowledge of its significance. I further agree to the release of personal and medical information supplied by me to hosting organizations, hosts, and domestic and overseas partners.

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Signature,

Date

The Chapel of the Cross

**Volunteer Application Form for 2015 Mission Trip to Honduras**

Name (Exactly as it appears on passport):

\_\_\_\_\_

(Last) (First) (Middle)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Home) \_\_\_\_\_

(Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you speak Spanish? (Spanish proficiency is helpful, but not necessary.) \_\_\_\_\_

If so, please indicate your skill level: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you had any medical training? If so, what type? (e.g., CPR, EMS, Heimlich maneuver, medical degree) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What special talents or skills do you think you will bring to the mission?

Have you previously traveled outside the United States? If yes, please indicate where. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever participated in any kind of mission work in or outside the United States? If so, please describe. \_\_\_\_\_

Why do you want to participate in this mission trip? What are your personal learning or service goals?

Do you have any dietary restrictions? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any serious allergies? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any chronic health problems or other health concerns? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered "Yes" to any of the above, please explain below:

Are you currently taking any medication regularly? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

If "Yes," will the medication have any effect on your ability to participate?

Have you ever been convicted of a state or federal misdemeanor or felony, excluding minor traffic offenses? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If "Yes," please explain:

Are you a member of Chapel of the Cross? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

I certify that the information provided above is complete and accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)