

# AUCE Mission Trip Guide



[www.AUCE-UCC.org](http://www.AUCE-UCC.org)

## So you've decided to go on a mission trip...

This guide is for those who wish to enliven their church's ministry and serve others in the name of Jesus by traveling to a place where people are in need. There are so many decisions to be made and details to consider: where to go, what ages to include, how to travel, how to raise money, what to bring — the list seems endless. The tips, lists, and resources included here will help to get you started.

This Guide does not profess to be a comprehensive resource, but rather a checklist for thinking through and gathering the necessary nuts and bolts for leading a successful, meaningful, and safe mission trip.

Given the opportunities provided by web technology, it is our intent that this guide be a work in progress. It will be updated and added to, so that its availability on the AUCE website will provide you with the most current version available.



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## Getting Started

### What to read first.

- *Mission Trips That Matter: Embodied Faith for the Sake of the World* by Don C. Richter (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2008)
- Download the free UCC resource, “Understanding Our Mission: 2022 Youth Service Project Curriculum” from [UCCResources.com](http://UCCResources.com).
- Visit [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) and search “mission trip” for more information about resources and mission trip opportunities through the United Church of Christ.
- Visit [www.globalministries.org](http://www.globalministries.org) and search “mission trip” for more information about international mission trip opportunities.

### Create a tentative plan.

- Set goals.
- How will you incorporate worship, scripture, and prayer throughout your entire process?
- With a calendar in hand, create a timeline.
- What safety issues do you need to consider? (Visit <https://www.sneucc.org/youth-ministry-resources>)
- Continue through this checklist, making notes, and adapting it to your specific situation.
- Gather your leadership and bring them on board to brainstorm and volunteer for specific tasks.

## Why?

### Use the resources listed in “Getting Started” above to ground yourself, the participants, the leadership/volunteers, and your congregation in the purpose of your project.

- What is mission? What is our mission?
- Why do we need to travel to do mission when there is so much to be done right here?
- What theological/biblical concepts will ground us in our mission purpose?
- What opportunities can we create to learn about the root causes of poverty?
- How will we create a healthy partnership with those we will serve?

## Who, What, Where, When

### Who is going to be involved and how many?

- Age(s) of participants
- Adult leaders needed
- Who can provide medical support?
- How will the congregation support this project?
- How will the congregation be kept informed of the work of this project?

### Where will we go?

- What places/people need our help?
- How far should we set our sights?
- What kind of travel arrangements will be needed? What kind of insurance coverage will you need (travel, medical, etc.)? (Visit <https://www.insuranceboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Mission-Trips-1.pdf> and <https://www.insuranceboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Mission-Trips-Spring-Winter-2020.pdf>)
- What sort of connections do we want to make with the host community?

**When will be the right time to go?**

- Choose possible dates based on your proposed timeline.
- Check for schedule conflicts within your church and community.
- Consider seasonal travel and weather conditions.

## **Fund-raising and Communication**

**What kind and how much fund-raising is needed?**

- Who are the fund-raisers?
- Who are the potential benefactors?
- What kind of guidelines/expectations are needed?
- What are reasonable options for fund-raising activities?

**How will the congregation support this trip?**

- Financially
- With prayer
- What communications will they receive about the trip & fund-raising and how often?
- How will the congregation be informed about the trip as it is happening?

## **On-site Considerations**

**Housing**

- On-site? Off-site?
- Lodging accommodations/needs (<https://access-equity-belonging.extension.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Inclusion-Practices-Gender-and-Orientation-Final-2-20-2020.pdf>)
- What will be provided? What will you need to bring?

**Local Transportation**

- What and when?
- Drivers
- Vans? Cars? Bus? Other?

**Meals/Food**

- Who will prepare meals? The group? Outside help?
- Food shopping: What will be made available? What will need to be brought/bought?
- Who will be responsible for clean-up?

**Local connections**

- Project contact persons
- Other local contact persons
- Recreational/educational opportunities
- Worship/churches

## Orientation

### Preparations for the participants and leaders for the trip:

- Community building and group covenant
- Theological grounding and “first, do no harm”
- Learn about the people, places, culture, and context of the place to be visited
- Logistics, roles, responsibilities, goals, expectations
- Permissions (parental, medical, insurance)
- Emergency and safety procedures
- Schedule

## Reflection

### Make time at the end of each day for worship and reflection. Include thoughts such as:

- Where did you see Jesus today?
- How is God still speaking through what you did today?
- How did Jesus use your hands today?
- Devotional/worship
- How and what will we share from this trip after returning home and with whom?

## Follow-Up

### Evaluation

- From participants
- From leaders
- From recipients

### Continuing Communication and Connection

- With the community visited
- With the participants and leaders
- With the congregation

## What would you add to this list?

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