



How to Plan a Mission Trip for Your Church

Hey! Wait! This is for YOU! Yes, you....experienced pastor, NMI president, Work & Witness or Missions Coordinator. Even if you have led multiple mission trips.....or even just one.....and especially if you've never led a trip or you are thinking about leading a trip.

It's even for you.....the one who has no idea of what I am talking about.

There are tons of information available about how to lead a mission team. There is even a book out there you can purchase, and hopefully read, about how NOT to lead a team. It's called *When Helping Hurts* by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett. The authors use the Bible and the Great Commission (you remember that? Matthew 28:16-20?) to state that *"the church's mission should be to help the poor and the desolate. Corbett and Fikkert state that the definition of poverty will change depending on who is defining it, with the poor defining it through the psychological and social scope while more wealthy churches emphasize the lack of material things or a geographical location. The authors emphasize that this can cause a harmful cycle where North American churches provide material resources and evangelism to the poor, which reinforces the poor people's sense of inferiority and lack of self-esteem, which in turn increases the original problem"* (Dees, J.J. (15 December 2012). "A Tale of Two Cultures: Charity, Problem Solving, and the Future of Social Entrepreneurship". *Journal of Business Ethics*. 111 (3): 328. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1412-5.)

So.....what can you do to plan a successful mission trip for your church? Well, if you are a member of the Church of the Nazarene there are some guidelines that the Global Church World Mission Department would like for you to follow. And, it doesn't hurt to ask an experienced Mission Team director/leader for assistance. That person will have lots of tips and suggestions that will help to make your mission trip successful.

David Cooper, Work & Witness and Partnership Coordinator for the Church of the Nazarene, gives this perspective from the Global Ministry Center:

The ministries of W&W and Partnerships work together, since many partnerships begin with a short-term mission trip.

The Church of the Nazarene has an international structure that works very similarly worldwide. We believe everything we do within this structure is to support the work in our local churches. The global church is divided into 6 regions, each region is made up of fields, each field is comprised of districts, and each district has a group of churches. Our hope is, for each level of leadership, there is a strategy in place for making Christlike disciples. Any local church or district who believes they have a project that is in need of assistance by way of a W&W team, can fill out a request. We have thousands of churches around the world. How can a team know if they are going to a project that fits their desire to help and is a higher priority than another project? That is where we rely on the district and field leadership to help identify the greatest needs and to prioritize the needs for their field or district.

Once the project information is passed on to the district, it receives their approval. It then goes to the field (except in the USA/Canada Region) for review and approval and then to the region. Once the region approves the project, it goes live to the W&W International website. This process ensures each need has been well thought out and approved through the various levels of leadership and fits within the strategy for the church. All of the 800+ projects on the W&W website have gone through this process before they are posted. These steps are available to any church and district in the world, so our goal is to present the greatest and most strategic needs for teams to consider. If a team finds a project through the Work & Witness website, those team members can have the assurance of it being a strategically important project.

For teams going through the international W&W website, we also help teams with the purchase of a good, proven medical travel insurance for a minor cost. If something were to happen to the team, our missionaries and site coordinators are there to take care of the medical or security need and to communicate with the

international office. If it is a major sickness or accident, the global structure is working to get the medical attention that is needed and to get the person home safely. This is a huge benefit that is not available if a team does not go through the church structure.

We also look at every approved project on the W&W website as ten percent approved toward missions giving. This is a plus within the Church of the Nazarene to celebrate our missions giving from each local church beyond the World Evangelism Fund. Millions of dollars are given through the ministry of Work & Witness so people can experience missions first-hand. We want to recognize that for our churches and districts.

Many partnerships grow from W&W trips since it gives people a chance to know the church in another part of the world and to keep the relationship growing. Partnerships work very similarly but can look different, depending on the objectives and purpose for each partnership. Projects for partnerships would go through a similar process.

If they are Nazarenes and working on a Nazarene property, there is some liability for the church. That is why we want to know about them ahead of time, so we would already have insurance in place. My understanding is, if they are not working on a Nazarene property, the owner of the property would have the liability and not the church. Our Nazarene sites would be liable even if the Global Church was not aware, but it is the Nazarene site's responsibility to point people to the W&W system. In this litigious, "sue happy" society we live in, it is important to remind people of the importance of insurance coverage beyond a broken arm or amoebas. There are more ramifications in the US than in other countries.

It is very possible to plan a trip without using the resources of the Global Church of the Nazarene. I do not recommend doing so. Even if you know where you want to go or if you know the missionary personally or if you/your church has a personal interest in a particular location, try using the church process first. Using the process the Global Church has initiated protects you, it protects the missionaries, and it protects the field you are visiting.

It is possible to choose a particular field and project even if it isn't listed on the Global Work & Witness site and it is possible to make an already scheduled trip official. That would be up to the receiving site and district. David Cooper would be happy to help you work through the steps to becoming an approved site. If it is here in the US, it needs the district superintendent or someone they would appoint to approve it as strategic for the district. It would then go to the Regional W&W Coordinator for approval. Once that is done, the team can register and be covered by the insurance policy the General Church carries. If it is an international project, start with the missionary and ask them to have the Field Director list it as an approved site.

How to Lead a Work & Witness Mission Team

- 1) Meet with your NMI Council and Pastor. Determine that you want to plan and lead a mission team.
- 2) Decide what type of mission team you want to do – a) Work & Witness or b) Jesus Film Ministry
- 3) Once you have decided which type of team, start the preliminary process of deciding where to go.

Work & Witness Teams

- 1) Go online to www.nazarene.org/workandwitness/
- 2) On the Work & Witness website you will find some options. Click first on "Find a Project."
- 3) This will take you to the NazServe website where you will "Search Opportunities."

There will be several pages of projects listed, so narrow down your search by going to the right side of the page.



- a) Perhaps you are a small group and you want to join an already scheduled team. If so, click on “**Work & Witness Scheduled trips.**”
 - a. Type in a time range you are interested in taking a trip and click **Enter** or **Search**. Projects that are already scheduled for that time range will pop up in the “**Service Opportunities**” column along with the dates of the trip and if the trip is closed (meaning no more people accepted) or Open for Volunteers.
 - b. If you find a team you might be interested in joining then click on **Open for Volunteers** and it will take you to a page telling you about the trip and who the trip coordinator is, so that you may contact him/her for more information.
 - c. This type of trip is good for an individual or a few people to join as it already has a team leader and is in the process of being planned. You will not be responsible for providing much, if any, of the project cost for this trip.
 - b) Perhaps you want to plan a trip that only your church group will take. In that case, you will want to look at the right side of the page and you see several things to consider. Take some time to browse and look at what is in each category. Do you want to do a project that is a Regional Priority? Do you want a project where youth teams are welcome? Do you want one that is primarily construction or one that may incorporate medical or evangelism?
 - c) You may be interested in any type of project but want a specific area of the world. Click on that region and search out the projects listed.
 - d) As you search through the projects read those that are of interest. See where it is and what the basic description of the project is. If something is of interest, click on that particular project. It will let you see more details and give you a Project Coordinator’s name and allow you to contact that person for more information.
 - e) Print off the information and return it to your NMI Council and Pastor to share projects and pray about which one to choose.
- 4) Choosing a project
- a. Once you have prayerfully chosen a project or two, contact the field coordinator to discuss dates, project, recommended team size, and costs. The dates must be approved by the field coordinator before the trip can be officially planned.
 - b. Each project also includes a “project cost.” This is the amount of money your church/team will need to provide for the materials you will be using in your project. Many projects have an enormous “project cost” but also list an amount per team. That is because the project may take several teams to complete what is being done. There are times the project coordinator can approve a smaller per team cost, but that has to be discussed with the project coordinator prior to finalizing the dates for your team. (*Your denominational budgets must be paid for your church to be approved*).
 - c. Once you, as team leader, agree on the project and your dates, just sit back and wait for official approval. Start advertising your trip to your church. Start fund raising. Generate interest for potential team members and begin to build your team.
- 5) Visit with travel agents to find the best itinerary and flight costs for your team. Different travel agents work with different airlines but be aware that, once a travel agent has started checking with an airline, that same airline will not give another travel agent information for your team. There are only a certain number of group tickets an airline has per flight. There are specific travel agencies that work just with mission teams. They can usually get you the best deal. While you may decide to have each team member book their own flights, it may get rather difficult to get everyone where you want them to be at the same time. Costs may also vary for each team member if they book

independently. You want your team to all arrive at approximately the same time so that your missionary host is not constantly going back and forth to the airport.

- 6) Team Registration
 - a. Go back to www.nazarene.org/workandwitness/
 - b. Click "**Lead a Team**". That will take you to a page that gives you step by step instructions as to your next few steps in the process.
- 7) Applications for Team Members, Medical Release and other forms
 - a. On the "**Lead a Team**" page, you can scroll down to find a wealth of other information and links you will need. They offer a good **Application Form** for potential team members. I would highly suggest using this. It gives you information you will need. Having potential team members fill this out suggests a level of commitment.
 - b. **Medical Release** and **Health Questionnaire** forms are important for you to have as the team leader.
 - c. **Unaccompanied Minor Forms** are required if you are taking a teen 17 years or younger with you, even if one parent is also going on the trip. The other parent needs to sign that it is acceptable to take the child out of the country, unless for some reason the second parent does not have any legal custody.
 - d. The **Trip Expenditure** form is to be used when you return from your mission trip. Only those funds used for travel, room and board, and costs related to the trip (not your project funds) are to be placed on this form. Sightseeing costs are not eligible. This allows your church/district to receive 10% Giving Credit for this portion of your trip.
- 8) Insurance
 - a. Insurance for your team is extremely important! I can't say enough about that. In fact, the Global Church will not allow you to travel on your trip without insurance. Not only does it cover health and medical for the team member, it covers liability for the church while you are on the project. It is very inexpensive and well worth the cost. You pay for each team member from the day you leave your home to the day you return. Include this in your per person team cost. You will find the appropriate forms for both International and USA trips – International if you are going out of the country; USA if your mission location is within the borders of the United States.

How to lead a Jesus Film Ministry Trip

A Ministry Trip is self-led by your local church, small group, class or business. It is comprised of 7-10 people who join together to fund and deliver equipment directly to a JESUS Film team of nationals who are committed to reaching their country for Christ. Trips include working hand-in-hand with a JESUS Film team on the field and may include helping with a JESUS Film showing, equipment set up, handing out invitations, praying during the show, outreach, VBS, compassionate ministries, etc. Activities and needs vary by country.



A Jesus Film Ministry trip also includes a project cost but is sometimes more manageable for a church. Project Cost is \$4,000 — this supports the JF equipment program, which may include a solar-powered backpack or mini-solar sets for you to deliver to the field. How can you learn more about a JESUS Film Ministry Trip? Call Rusty at 913.663.5700 ext. 325 or e-mail JFMinistry@JFHP.org or go to www.JFHP.org/MinistryTrips. Remember to always use Jesus Film Harvest Partners and not one of the other Jesus Film groups.