

LIFEChurch Fort Bend

Guatemalan Mission Trip 2009

Who is Hearts in Motion?

A non-profit Christian organization of volunteers that has worked in Guatemala for over 20 years, taking surgical, clinic and construction teams, creating day care/nutrition centers for preschool children, and educating fire and rescue personnel.

What will travel entail?

Friday, July 17, is a travel day. Air travel will be approximately 2 1/2 hours from Houston IAH to Guatemala City, followed by a 3-hour bus ride to Zacapa, a region of Guatemala northeast of Guatemala City. We return to the States 9 days later on Sunday, July 26.

What do I need to go?

Travelers will need a passport and current Tetanus shot. Review your plans with your personal physician to determine whether you need additional shots for traveling to Central America. Travel expense will be \$1000 per person (see below) plus airfare, and includes meals, hotel accommodations, in-country transportation, and construction costs. HIM has stringent rules relating to our safety and their continued relationship with the Guatemalan and Zacapa governments.

Where will we stay?

Hotel de Atlantico in Rio Hondo, Zacapa, is a nice hotel with a large pool but "tepid" showers. On the last day and a half, while on R&R, we will stay in a very nice hotel in Antigua, where we can site see, shop and relax before returning to the States.

Who can go?

The trip is open to adults and youth. If a child attends under age of 14, a parent must accompany him/her on the trip. Our team in past years has been joined by other adults and youth from other areas of the U.S. Maximum group size could be between 50 and 75 people.

What will we do in Guatemala?

Plans have not been announced. Past years we have constructed playgrounds, benches and tables for schools, prepared school foundations, helped with health clinics, painted murals, remodeled

a hospital kitchen, painted and finished a rehabilitation center, and hosted vacation Bible school ("VBS"). Each morning we have prayer time before breakfast for worship, fellowship, prayer, debriefing and singing. Evenings are spent swimming, relaxing and fellowship. R&R in Antigua will provide opportunities for site seeing and shopping.

Do I need to have any special skills to be a part of the team?

No, just a willingness to work, to be flexible, and be excited about serving others. Skills which are helpful (but not required) are:

- * Persons who are fluent in speaking and understanding Spanish;
- * Physicians, nurse practitioners and physicians assistants, especially those in family or ER practice, to assist at medical clinics
- * Emergency medical personnel – EMTs, paramedics, and firefighters – may assist in training Guatemalan "Bomberos" or firefighters in emergency procedures
- * Dentists and dental hygienists may conduct routine exams, extract teeth, and perform decay prevention treatments at clinics.

Medical and dental professionals are required to provide appropriate credentials. If you are skilled in carpentry, construction or other similar fields, please let us know of your interest in utilizing your expertise in special projects.

How much will it cost and where will the money come from?

Estimated costs per person are \$1000 plus airfare which from Houston Intercontinental has been between \$600 and \$700 per person the past few years. We usually fly Continental Airlines, so a donation of air miles to cover airfare can be quite beneficial, cutting your individual costs. In preparing for the trip, travelers may also wish to bring their own funds for shopping in Antigua and for snacks not included in meals.

* Hands and Hearts Foundation (a local 501(c)(3) nonprofit) may be able to assist in providing some financial assistance to cover individual travel costs. Applications for Assistance are due by April 15; contact H&HF through its website at www.HHFTX.org. The Hands and Hearts Golf Tournament is scheduled May 4, when travelers, family and friends can volunteer to help.

* Other fund-raising activities are being formulated, and all travelers are urged to assist in these activities, even if they plan on paying their own way.

* Travelers are encouraged to seek sponsorships from corporations and individuals to assist in covering their costs. If someone raises funds through personal contacts and sponsorships, or contributes personal funds to cover his/her full costs, any excess he/she raises or contributes may be pooled to help assist in defraying the travel expenses of other travelers.

When do I have to make a commitment?

Deadline to commit and first deposits (\$500) are due May 1. A traveler's second payment of \$500 is due by June 1. It is understood that deposits and/or payments may be covered in whole or in part by sponsorships or scholarships. Shortly after making your initial deposit and commitment on May 1, you will be notified as to how flights will be arranged. We hope to make group reservations, but you should also be prepared to pay for your airfare (\$600 to \$700), or to have notified Hands and Hearts Foundation if you are seeking sponsorship for your air travel costs as well.

What can we do to support the trip if we cannot attend?

* Donations: We are collecting hand towels; children's, women's and adult vitamins; toiletries (toothbrushes, toothpaste, and travel-size soap, shampoo, combs, and hair brushes); sunglasses and reading glasses; and white twin-size sheet sets for the Zacapa Hospital. We will also collect new or gently used children's clothing and shoes (all sizes and ages, but especially sports shoes and sandals). Please review the Guidelines for In-Kind Donations for clarification. We welcome monetary donations, matching grants, etc. Deadline for in-kind donations is July 1.

* Sponsorships and Volunteering: You can help in the administrative areas for the trip, volunteer to help with the golf tournament, sort donations and help with fundraising. We also need financial sponsorship to help with construction and travel costs.

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In preparing for the VBS experience, we will have workshops to pre-plan the curriculum. We welcome the assistance of experienced VBS leaders, and will appreciate Spanish-language music books and CDs of Christian children's music.

For more information, HIM Application forms and Travel Release forms contact: Marcia McGinnis, HIM's Houston-area Mission Team Coordinator (281.684.9741) or marciamcg@lifechurchfortbend.org; or Jan St. Martin, HIM Medical Director at jsmrnhim@aol.com. Hearts in Motion's website is at www.HeartsInMotion.org, and email to them may be sent to heartsinmotion1@aol.com. Hands and Hearts Foundation may be contacted through their website at www.HHFTX.org.

Guidelines for In-Kind Donations

Please keep the following in mind when considering the types of in-kind donations you would like to collect and contribute to the team.

- Everything will be carried in excess luggage – so size and weight should be considered. Small items are preferred; too large items may be donated elsewhere. Since travelers' baggage is limited by size and weight, anything that does not meet the guidelines cannot be taken.
- Everything should be in good condition – "gently used" or new. No broken, stained, soiled or torn items, please.
- Often items will be given to people who are of very modest means, living in huts with dirt floors and without laundry facilities, so clothing will be washed by hand in an area stream or public wash house. Avoid donating clothing that requires dry cleaning or special care.
- The weather is quite warm year round, so please no cool-weather clothing such as sweaters, sweatshirts, coats, or heavy clothing.

Items we collect for donating to people in Guatemala at medical clinics, schools and churches include the following:

- Hand towels
- Children's, prenatal, women's and adult vitamins
- Toiletries (toothbrushes, toothpaste, and travel-size soap, shampoo, combs, and hair brushes)

- Sunglasses and reading glasses. Strong and mixed eyeglass prescriptions may not be as useful as reading glasses.
- White twin-size sheet sets for the Zacapa Hospital
- Babies and Children's clothing; no previously used underwear or socks; and no sweatshirts, sweaters, coats or cool-weather clothing. Denim, however, is welcome because it is very popular.
- Children's shoes -- all sizes, but especially sports shoes and sandals; no hiking boots, snow boots, work boots, etc. Shoes should have their laces and shoe pairs should be tied or pinned together.
- Baby products – powder formulas, diaper ointments, baby powder, etc.
- Toys, especially fast-food giveaway toys (no large or heavy items). Small Spanish-language books are okay.
- Marde Gras beads.
- Spanish-language Bibles, preferably travel size.
- School supplies (please keep weight and size in mind)

Other items that are needed in Guatemala when these collected items are sorted for distribution are Ziploc bags of all sizes, small baggies, Sharpie permanent markers, large trash bags, and labels.

If you would like to **Sponsor** or coordinate a collection at your school, health club, or business of any of these items, please do so! We can provide you with a poster template as a Word document you may modify to fit your needs. All donations are tax-deductible. If a donor would like a receipt for his/her donation for tax purposes, please let us know and a receipt form can be provided. For more information, contact Marcia McGinnis at marciamcg@lifechurchfortbend.org.