



Valley Presbyterian Church

Short-Term Mission Trip

June 29 - July 6, 2019

Cost: \$800 + Airfare

"You are to be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 1:8

Bahamas Mission Trip

Informational Packet

Passport Requirement

When traveling to and from the Bahamas, you must have a valid passport. If you do not have a valid passport, please apply to the proper government agency in your home country immediately. The passport must not have an expiration date less than six months from your departure date. When entering the country, use caution in how you respond to questions of the purpose for your visit to the Bahamas. Never write or say you are coming to work. You may say you are here to be part of a mission team.

Items to Bring

You can buy almost anything here, however things are expensive.

Bring modest clothing suitable for work projects (keep in mind weather can get very hot and humid), church meetings, etc. You may also want to bring a modest swim suit (women: one-piece style swim suit or a dark t-shirt covered two-piece swim suit, men: no speedo style swim trunks), jacket or sweater for cool days and nights, and rain jacket and umbrella for rainy seasons.

You may want to bring an Ipad/Ipad/Mp3 player, personal computer, toiletries, camera, batteries, flashlight, insect spray, sunscreen, sunglasses, bath/beach towels & wash cloths.

You will want to bring your own sheets, pillows, blankets, and towels. More detailed packing list attached.

Medications

There are drug stores on the island which make acquiring medications fairly easy. However, if you are on a prescription medication, bring an extra amount to cover your time in Nassau. There is no need of any vaccinations for immigration purposes, although it is strongly recommended to have been vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B and Tetanus before you come. Make sure that your tetanus vaccination is up-to-date.

Alcohol and Tobacco

Please consider that many families struggle with alcohol abuse in the Bahamas and that we do not want our conduct to cause children or adults to stumble by our actions. Our primary ministry is to the children of the Bahamas. Guests and visitors are asked not to consume alcohol and tobacco in public or on school or church property.

Currency

You may use either U.S. or Bahamian currency in the Bahamas. The U.S. dollar is on par with the Bahamian dollar. You can access funds from your home bank account with an ATM card. This is the best and safest way to acquire cash. Bahamian banks will not cash a personal check unless you have a Bahamian bank account, so you should plan to have funds sent directly to your home account.

Bahamas Electricity

120 volts/60 cycle alternating current - the U.S. standard. You will need a transformer to use European appliances. Electricity is not always reliable. Outages are common. You might want to bring flashlights and batteries with you.

Transportation

Even though you will be on a small island, transportation can be a big problem. We do not suggest that you bring a bicycle. There is a low cost public bus transportation system during daylight hours. Transportation arrangements and costs for your group will be handled on an individual basis.

Keeping in Touch

We are set up with wireless internet access on-site which is available for personal use as directed by your group's leaders. You may bring your own personal computer to access the internet. We do not have a computer for guest use. The display or access of any sexually explicit image or document is strictly forbidden.

We also have a US Vonage telephone number which can be used free of charge at your group leader's discretion. All long distance, international phone calls must be made on Vonage lines. Rates to countries other than the US are considerably more. Please show Christian consideration for fellow guests by not spending excessive time on the line when others are waiting to use the telephone.

You will be able to send and receive faxes at cost.

You may wish to bring along American stamps, as we often have opportunity to send mail with travelers to the US. Bahamian airmail postal stamps range from 65 - 70 cents.

Bahamas Geography & Population

The Bahamas is made up of over 700 islands. Only 40 of these are inhabited. Nassau, the Capital, is located on the island of New Providence, and has a population of about 250,000, which represents 65% of the total Bahamian population. The population is made up of 85 percent Blacks, 12 percent Whites, and 3 percent Asians and Hispanics.

The Bahamas, once a British-controlled nation, has been independent since 1973. The primary source of income is tourism. The islands begin 100 miles off the eastern coast of Florida and stretch southeast for 500 miles. More information about the Bahamas is available at [http:\](http://www.bahamas.net.bs)

www.bahamas.net.bs

Bahamas Climate

Bahamas weather is mild year round, with only a 12-degree average difference between the warmest and coolest months. Winter average temperatures of range 70-80 deg F (21-26 deg C) with sunshine nearly every day. Summer temperatures rise to about 80-90 deg F (26-32 deg C). The yearly humidity average is 75-80%. Summer heat index makes it feel much HOTTER!

Music

This is another area today where there exists a wide range of convictions. What is tasteful and edifying to one may be distasteful to another. Please be considerate of others. Discretion should be used in the type of music as well as the sound level.

Equipment/ Property

Any equipment or property of the CLPC such as tools, DVD players, computers, sound equipment, furniture, sports equipment, bedding, linens, etc. is not to be removed, borrowed or loaned at any time. The ministry director may grant permission for special cases. Please report any damage to the director.

Accident Reports

If an accident occurs while you visit, an accident report form must be filled out by a staff member. Any vehicle accident must be reported to the police. Do not move the vehicle from the location where the accident occurred and call the police to get a police accident report. Do not discuss guilt or innocence with the driver of the other vehicle, just relay the facts of the accident to the police and they will make a determination of fault.

Social Activities

Fellowship and group activities are encouraged for all staff. Remember our conduct must be above reproach at all times. In order to avoid the appearance of suggestive activity, unmarried guys and gals should never be alone with each other in their quarters. Overnights where both guys and gals sleep in the same home/Sunday School room will not be permitted. There should be no less than two persons of the same sex at any one time in opposite sex living accommodations during visitation. Curfews are established by your group leaders.

Most mission agencies discourage dating relationships within the first year commitment. A few reasons why are:

- Romance ruins team life. The relationship is exclusive, leaving you cut off from the normal rhythm of team dynamics. Everyone suffers.
- A romantic relationship diverts you from your work. The work you will be doing while in the Bahamas is difficult and will require all of your energy.

Dress and Appearance Standards

In these days of fading standards, the testimony of MTW and CLPC includes modesty in dress as well as conduct both where you are housed and away from the site. Because of the wide range of personal convictions and our desire to uphold Scriptural principles, we ask those working or staying to maintain a conservative standard in their personal dress code. You are an example to students and outsiders of the character of the CLPC ministry. T-shirts and other clothing with questionable or explicit messages should be avoided.

All clothing is to be modest and non-revealing (please, no tight fitting clothes, low-cut necklines or backs). Shorts and cut-offs should be mid length for both guys and gals—reaching at least to your fingertips when your hands are down at your sides.

Swimwear should be modest. Ladies, we ask that you wear a one piece style swimsuit or a dark t-shirt over your two piece swimsuit and wear a cover up when not participating in a water activity. Guys, we ask that you not wear a Speedo style swimsuit and to wear a shirt when not involved with a water activity.

As a general guideline for dressing to attend a Bahamian church, you should take into consideration that most Bahamians dress up to attend church. Ladies should consider a modest length dress or skirt/top combination that covers their shoulders (most churches are air conditioned and can get quite cool anyway), and gentlemen should wear a collared shirt with slacks (refrain from wearing shorts and jeans). When in doubt, you may always contact the church you plan to attend to see what their style of dress is. There are some churches on the island that have a more relaxed dress code. Although most churches would welcome you no matter what you are wearing, it is respectful to those you are worshipping with to dress in a way that does not stand out, bring attention to yourself, or distract from the service.

Appropriate footwear should be worn for the activity you are involved in. The ground is hard and rocky in places. Foam sandals or flip flops may not protect your feet. Closed-toed shoes **MUST** be worn when working projects.

Keeping the Areas You Use Clean

During your stay we ask that you help us keep the areas you use clean. We can't do it without your help. This includes the bed rooms, Sunday school rooms, grounds, bathrooms, bus or van, and dining hall/kitchen. Cleaning check lists for the daily chores will be posted, and we will also provide group leaders with end of stay cleaning check lists toward the end of your group's stay.

When planning your daily ministry schedule, please incorporate kitchen clean-up/dishwashing duty into your schedule.

Background Checks

A current background check must be conducted on all team members over the age of 18 and submitted before arrival on all individuals that will work with youth during their mission trip. Forms should be on letterhead from a reputable background check company and be dated within one year of the arrival date. Teams should be made up of one adult for every four youth under the age of 18. All team members should be twelve years or older and deemed mature for overseas ministry by their team leader.

Getting Through Bahamas Customs and Immigration

This information is provided to let you know how you should handle coming through Bahamas Customs and Immigration at the airport.

You will receive an "Immigration Arrival/Departure Card" during your plane ride to the island. Here is the information you will need to fill out the form:

Purpose: **other**

Intended address: **#4 Sea Grape Avenue, New Providence**

Phone Number: **(242) 698-6862**

Visiting: **Nassau**

After you get off the plane, you will enter immigration hall and wait in line to speak with an immigration officer (family units may stay together).

When interviewed by the immigration officer, it is very important that you **do not say** that you are here to **work** or even do mission **work**. You can say the purpose of your visit is "to serve the Bahamian people as part of a mission team" or "here on a mission trip", etc.

After immigration, you will proceed downstairs to collect your bags and walk through customs. Customs for visitors is pretty quick and easy especially if customs hall is busy. You can likely exit customs hall through the visitor's line where they will probably only ask you if you have anything to claim (ie tobacco, alcohol, etc). All visitors are allowed to bring in \$100/ person worth of non-personal items (personal items would include clothing and toiletries), so if you do not look like you have over packed, you will likely not be searched or questioned about the contents of your bags. If you are asked to show the contents of your bags, you should cooperate with the customs officer.

Once cleared by customs, proceed through the exit doors, and we will greet you on the other side.

-John and Karen Stodghill

Travel Packing List

- Passport (NOT passcards), and a photocopy of your passport kept in separate location
- Ticket/Travel information and confirmation numbers
- Medical insurance card
- Background check form (for all over the age of 18 who will work with children)

LINENS

- Twin bed sheets/pillow/pillowcase
- Light blanket (optional, beach towel can be used on cool nights)
- Bath towel/hand towel/wash cloth
- Beach towel

PERSONAL CARE

- Medications/vitamins
- Toiletry items (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, shampoo, etc)
- Sunscreen
- Bug spray/insect repellent
- Reusable Water bottle

MISC

- Bible and journal
- Paper, pens and pencils
- Alarm clock
- Spending money
- ATM/Credit cards
- Back pack

CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR/ACCESSORIES

- Undergarments (Remember it is a hot climate; you may need to change often.)
- Sleepwear
- T-shirts
- Modest shorts (to finger tips when standing with hands to your side)
- Modest shirts (girls: no midriffs or spaghetti straps)
- Swim suits: girls- one piece/tankini OR dark t-shirt to cover two piece suit, guys- no speedos
- Jeans/pants
- Plastic bag for wet clothes
- Clothes for Church: Girls-skirt and top or dress (no bare shoulders), Boys- collared shirts/long pants
- Athletic shoes
- Flip-flops
- Leisure shoes
- Shower sandals
- Water shoes
- Sunglasses