

Western NC Presbytery Mission Trips A General Guide for First Timers and Repeat Volunteers

WHAT DO MISSION GROUPS DO?

Mission groups usually work through a local agency providing home repair and maintenance on houses devastated by natural disaster. There could be a variety of things we could be doing, depending on the skills of the team & the needs in the community at the time we are there. Examples of things we could do include: gutting, removing damaged walls, ceilings, and floors and otherwise preparing homes for reconstruction, installing insulation and sheetrock, drywall mudding, flooring and painting.

Things to remember:

- We are not here to judge, we are here to help and provide hope.
- We are God's hands, helping our neighbor.
- Some homes had deferred maintenance prior to the flood – the homes you are working on have been chosen for a reason you may not know.
- Homeowners may be “warm and fuzzy” and some are not. Be prepared for both.
- One of the great gifts you bring is your “new ears” – listen to the homeowner's story—you may want to designate a listener in the group and rotate if you want.
- Some homeowners will be onsite, some you may never see.
- You will likely see a full range of emotions – know any anger is not personally directed at you.
- You are working on someone's house.
- If you don't know how to do something, ASK
- Don't do what you don't know how to do.
- Do the best job you can - do the work you would like done in your own house.
- Damaged items will have an emotional attachment for the home owner that you may not expect.

HAVE FUN! The gift you are bringing is joyful and humor is also healing.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

Should your friends/family need to contact you during the Mission Trip Week and cannot reach you on your cell, the Team Lead of each trip will provide you with their number.

WHERE WILL WE STAY?

Sleep Rooms

An area church will accommodate the team. Usually churches have cots or bunk beds. Volunteers should bring their own sheets, pillow & blanket(s) unless otherwise noted for specific destinations.

On-Site Showers

Each church has accommodations for lady showers & male showers. Usually shower mats are not provided, so you may want to bring your own. Bring your own towel(s) & wash rag(s).

Per Diem

Each church charges a different amount for staying in their facility. The cost for the trips to Wilmington & Lumberton is \$50 for the week. The remainder of the cost for each trip is supplemented due to a donation by Morrison Presbyterian Church. The cost of trips helps supplement the expense of water and electricity for the church and the cost of food for the volunteers. If you want to stay over on Friday night & leave on Saturday morning, there is no additional charge. However, please inform the Presbytery and/or team leader about plans to stay over.

Amenities

Most churches have a kitchen, dining area, tv & vcr. Wi-fi is usually available.

WHERE WILL WE EAT?

Most churches have a kitchen with appliances & gadgets, refrigerator, stove, microwave, coffee pot, pots, pans, crock pot, ice machine, etc. Some have dishwashers & some don't.

The church usually does not provide meals for volunteers. Several volunteers on the Mission Team will purchase all the food for the week, using the money from registration that is allocated for food. This includes water, Gatorade, paper items, tea & coffee. If you have a special soft drink or snack that you prefer, maybe bring your own.

A Mission Team member is the team leader for meals. If you have any allergies, please state it on your application. If you have special meal requests or want to help prepare a meal, let the team leader know. Usually two volunteers will prepare a meal and other team members will clean up.

Breakfast can range from cereal to eggs, meat, grits, & bread. Juice, milk, & coffee will be available.

Lunches are eaten at the work site. You will make your own sandwich after breakfast. If you want to bring a Tupperware container to put your sandwich in; otherwise Ziploc

bags will be provided, as well as a brown paper sack. Bread, lunch meat, chips, fruit, etc. will be purchased at Sam's for the group out of the funds you paid to attend the trip.

Supper on Sunday may be at the church or may be on your own. Your team lead will be contacting you closer to the trip date to let you know.

Homemade desserts that you make at home & bring with you are always welcome. Volunteer to make a cake, make cookies, etc. Contact the team lead if you know what you are bringing

WILL WE HAVE FREE TIME?

Usually groups take off Wednesday afternoons, return to the church to shower and have the rest of the day to enjoy the local area.

Medical Care

Bring your own insurance card or at least a clear photocopy of both sides of your card.

Laundry

Some churches have a washer/dryer and some do not. There are usually multiple laundromats in the town.

Typical Activities on Mission Trips

Arrive on Sunday afternoon. Get settled in. Supper on your own. Team will meet early evening for logistics & we will have devotions. (Volunteers to lead devotions are welcome!)

Monday morning: Awake early, breakfast time TBD, but typically will meet with the site coordinator around 8:30am.

Return to church in late afternoon. Shower. Prepare, eat supper, clean up kitchen. Devotions. Early to bed to do again the next day.

During the day: pace yourself. Remember to drink plenty of water or Gatorade. We don't all take a break at the same time, so when you get tired, stop & rest. We normally all break for lunch at the same time, usually around noon.

On Wednesday afternoon we stop early, eat, shower, & have the rest of the afternoon to explore the town. Check out travel sites to see what is available in the area & suggest it. We usually go out to eat, usually together, and the meal is not included in the cost for the week.

On Thursday evening, we will ensure that the facility is clean and ready for the next group of volunteers. If there are volunteers staying over on Friday night, usually there are enough leftovers for them to eat.

Arrival

Groups may arrive during the Sunday afternoon of the requested week. Whether supper will be on your own or served at the church will be announced closer to departure time. Early Sunday evening, there will be an orientation meeting & evening devotions.

If you arrive & the door is locked, call the Team Lead.

PERSONAL PACKING LIST

Ideas of what to bring, but not limited to include:

- Work boots with hard/steel toes are suggested. Athletic shoes are typically not suitable for a work site, but if that's all you have, then bring them.
- Work gloves
- Pants that you don't mind getting dirty or getting paint on
- If you have been on other Mission Trips, you are encouraged to bring t-shirts you may have received. Wearing a PDA shirt identifies you as a volunteer in the area & promotes goodwill.
- Long sleeve shirts with layers that can be added to or taken off (dependent on weather & whether you are inside or outside in sun)
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Reusable water bottle (although bottled water & Gatorade will be provided)
- Personal medications
- Sleeping bag or sheets & pillowcase for a single bed along with a blanket as the temperature in the church is unknown until we get there.
- Pillows
- Towels and wash cloths
- Bath mat
- Hand sanitizer
- Shower shoes
- Personal toiletry items (although toilet paper & paper towels provided by your cost of the trip)
 - Ladies usually bring a "shower caddy" to put their toiletries in. The showers usually have a chair outside the shower stall, so think like a college student going down the hall to get a shower.
- Anything else you may need for the week not mentioned above
- What **not** to bring: alcohol, drugs, etc.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION:

- There is an Information Sheet below to complete.
- The application for the Wilmington trip is on pages 8-10 of the Wilmington manual.
- The application for Lumberton is on pages 6-8 of the Lumberton manual.
- The Skills Assessment (on the application form) will determine the work projects that we will be assigned for the week.
- Mail a completed Information Sheet and Application (with Liability Release Form) to Presbytery of Western NC, 114 Silver Creek Road, Morganton, NC 28655 along with a check for \$50 made out to Presbytery of WNC. Presbytery will forward all applications to the on-site managers for each trip and the Presbytery will make one check payment to the host church prior to our arrival.

Information Sheet for Mission Team Leader

Name: _____

Email address: _____

Home church: _____

Best phone number to contact you prior to the trip: _____

Best phone number to contact you while on the trip: _____

Food Allergies _____

I am diabetic: Yes _____ No _____

Are you willing to help prepare a meal? Yes _____ No _____

Are you willing to lead an evening devotion? Yes _____ No _____

Do you plan to spend Friday night before returning home?

Yes _____ No _____ Not sure yet _____