

GO TEAMS

CROSSROADS COMMUNITY CHURCH

As you can tell from our mission statement of: "Know," "Grow," "Go," we take the role of missions very seriously. As we look at the New Testament, we believe Christ's final words on Earth (Matthew 28:19-20) to go throughout the world and make disciples are a command that everyone in Crossroads should follow. The "Know," "Grow," "Go," purpose statement of Crossroads comes from Colossians 1:28, "Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ" (ESV). Within the GO Ministry at Crossroads we see our mission to "Present Everyone." We want to present everyone mature in Christ. But at the same time we want to present the people of Crossroads before the entire world to share the Gospel with those who do not know Christ as their Lord and Savior.

One way in which we fulfill this goal is to send GO Teams (short-term missions teams) out from Crossroads to areas that have been identified as having a need and opportunity to share the Good News of Jesus Christ. Your GO Team may be going to another part of California, while another team may go somewhere else in the United States, and yet another may fly around the world to share and serve. We are committed to go to the ends of the Earth to share the Gospel and we are thankful and excited that you have decided to take this step of faith and GO.

I am almost certain this manual will not answer every question you might have but we have tried to provide as much information as possible to ensure you and every member of your team are set up for success. I am thankful for Grace Baptist Church in Santa Clarita, Steele Creek Church of Charlotte and other local churches that have been so gracious in sharing their short-term missions documents with Crossroads. If a question comes up, ask your team leader, or feel free to send your questions my way.

We have been praying for you and will continue to pray until the whole world hears about the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Randy Smith
GO Pastor
Crossroads Community Church

WHY YOU SHOULD GO:

We are glad that you are considering going on a short-term missions trip. There are a number of reasons why people want to go on a missions trip:

- To have an adventure
- To serve the poor
- To tell people about Jesus
- To build a house
- To be an encouragement

You probably have personal reasons for going, and God also has His reasons for wanting you on this trip. Some of these reasons you already know and some you can hardly guess. When someone decides to go on a missions trip, whether short-term or for a lifetime, it should be with an attitude of serving others, a "whatever it takes" attitude! From singing on the streets, to painting walls, to preaching, to playing games with children, it's about serving others. Every Christian has the ability to share the love of Christ by loving people unconditionally, serving them and displaying an attitude that is Christ-like.

If you are relying upon your own ability: your own skills, strengths, knowledge, and feel that you "have a lot to offer," you're probably not the right person for the trip. If you're convinced you're going to "make people's lives better" by changing the conditions they are living in, or that you're going to "show them how to do it the right way," then you should reconsider what a servant's heart looks like in the context of missions work. Missions is all about serving and showing God's love for people by meeting practical needs, gaining an audience for sharing His truth, and leaving the results (the changes in people's heart as well as their situations) up to Him.

This manual is designed to provide guidelines for the short-term missions trip, with expectations and training principles for leaders and individual team members. Having "GO" as part of our mission statement at Crossroads Community Church (CCC), we are proclaiming our commitment to not only missions but also more importantly "The Great Commission" given to us by Christ as He told us His church to "Go and make disciples." Here at Crossroads we believe every person who is a follower of Christ is called to "GO." Where we "GO" will vary person-to-person but "going" begins here in the Santa Clarita Valley and extends across the United States and to the uttermost ends of the Earth.

If you are willing to give your life away for others roll up your sleeves and get dirty for someone you do not know, then we welcome you to the challenge of serving on a GO Team Trip.

TRAINING PHILOSOPHY:

All GO Team trips sent out from CCC will have team leaders who are called and gifted to lead others during that trip. These team leaders will be recognized by the elders of Crossroads based upon their character, their gifting to set the example, their ability to disciple others, and give clear, concise directions to those in their care during the trip. Team leaders will have the ability to lead, direct, encourage, resolve conflict, solve problems, and be the "go-to" person for the whole team.

The team leaders selected by the elders to go on the GO Team trip will be trained by the GO pastor in all aspects of leading a missions trip. Training includes team selection, planning, financial support, discipling and communication to the church body. Once the team leaders are trained, they will be responsible to train and pass information on to the team. The duty of the team leader is to encourage and help the team each step of the way as they prepare for the trip.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT PHILOSOPHY:

Short-term missions trips should be planned and thought out well in advance of the departure date. Those who believe that they are called to go on the trip should pray and ask God to provide for the necessary funds for the trip. Team members may find it necessary to send support letters to family and friends to ask

for prayer and financial support. This process should be done with enough time to finish collecting all necessary funds at least one month from the team's departure date. While we understand that God is ultimately in control of funds, the brief outline below is a guide that will be used in the planning of teams. Travel insurance is not a cost effective means in purchasing tickets, chartering buses, etc., so the guidelines below will help the Team Leader and the leadership in the effective execution of the GO Teams. If a person has applied and been accepted to participate in GO Team, but cannot meet the guidelines below, the Team Leader and the GO Pastor will meet to determine if the individual in question has the means to reach their support goal before the team departs. If the person cannot meet the goals, this open position will then be sent to anyone on the waiting list with the understanding the new applicant will have to meet the same funding levels listed below.

Days Prior to Departure	Percentage of Support Prior to Departure
90 Days	75%
30 Days	100%

While we want to involve the church body in giving to short-term missions opportunities, past efforts have shown that church sponsored yard sales, car washes, bake sales, etc. to raise funds for trips are usually not effective as hoped for, and often create more confusion than missions funding. The GO ministry will help with church-wide events outside of the church at restaurants that partner with churches to help raise funds. Events locally can occur at Chick-fil-A, Stonefire, Baja-Fresh, etc. All funds raised at these events will be disbursed equally between the total number of teams and will be coordinated by the GO pastor. When speaking of raising support, the leadership of Crossroads believes that where God guides, God provides. If God wants Crossroads to send a team of 25 people to Mexico, God will provide the funds.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS APPLYING TO LEAD A CCC GO TEAM TRIP:

All short-term missions trips sent out from CCC will have team leaders who are called and gifted to lead others during the trip. These team leaders will be recognized by the CCC Elder Board based on their character, their gifting to set the example, to disciple others, and ability to give clear concise directions to those in their care during the trip. Team leaders should demonstrate the ability to lead, direct, encourage, resolve conflict, solve problems and will be the "go-to" person for the whole team. Team leaders will be expected raise support, just as will be expected of other team members. The primary purpose for the leader being expected to raise their own support is to help build a cohesive team. Team leaders should not ask members of their team to do anything they themselves have not done; therefore, in an effort to send the most cohesive team possible, leaders for CCC GO Teams will be expected to raise their own support.

For those who wish to be a short-term missions leader or have a proposal for the employment of a short-term missions team, will have to read through the CCC Team Manual. During the GO Team Leader training (usually early December), the GO Pastor will work with the individual Team Leader to develop a GO Team Proposal that will be submitted to the CCC Elder Board for final approval. The Proposal will contain: dates of trip, location, primary method of outreach to share the Gospel, primary mode of transportation, estimated total trip cost, estimated individual trip cost, and any other information/concerns the CCC Elders need to be aware of. The proposals will be submitted in December so that the leaders can begin sign-ups in January.

The team leaders selected by the elders to go on the short-term missions trip will be trained by the GO Pastor in all aspects of leading a missions trip. Along with the CCC Short-Term Missions Guide, the GO Pastor will provide the team leader with a copy of *Serving with Eyes Wide Open, Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence* by David A. Livermore. During the training session provided by the GO Pastor, the team leaders will discuss the impact of this book upon their specific trip. The GO Pastor will also train the team leader in team selection, planning, financial support, discipling and communication to the church body. Once the team leaders are trained and the team selected, the team leaders will be expected to have at least three team meetings to not only give instruction to the team but to build team cohesiveness. The GO Pastor will assist the team leader in building training sessions for the team to ensure the entire team maintains the proper Biblical focus of the trip, which is to share the Gospel of Christ.

From **six months – two months prior** to the trip, team leaders are expected to meet monthly with the GO Pastor to keep the GLT and CCC Elder Board up to date on the status of the team. During this time period the team leader will also meet monthly with the CCC bookkeeper to reconcile the funds that are coming in or funds that are needed to plan for the team.

The month prior to the departure of the short-term missions team, the team leader will meet weekly with the GO Pastor to finalize any last minute changes or challenges. It is during this time that the team leader will submit any final check requests to the CCC bookkeeper, **all fund requests MUST be submitted no later than two weeks before the actual departure.** While this requirement might seem rigid, often short-term missions teams require large amount of funds and often these funds must be paid to groups outside of CCC. Therefore this timeline allows for the timely payment of funds to all parties involved.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS APPLYING TO BE A MEMBER OF A CCC GO TEAM TRIP:

Speak to full-time missionaries today and most of them will say that their call to full-time missions was sparked and confirmed while serving on a short-term team. While this is not the goal of CCC short-term missions teams, this could be an outcome. The main goal of GO Teams at CCC is simple, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people groups and/or nations who may not have regular access to the Word of God. Often some of the bridges to the Gospel God uses in short-term missions are: vacation bible schools, food distribution, light construction, English as a second language camps, summer camps, etc. While these events and projects are important these are not the primary goal of CCC short-term missions teams.

Considering the Gospel is the focus of all GO Teams, team members should already be a follower of Jesus Christ. However, CCC has seen the power of a short-term trip in the life of person who is seeking to know more about God; therefore, those who are not already followers of Christ will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Ideally a GO Team trip that focuses upon evangelism, VBS, outreach, etc. is not the best trip to send a person who is seeking to know more about God. GO Teams that have their main outreach as construction, labor, etc. are the trips were the GLT and elders would allow an unbeliever to attend. An integral part of the GO Team member application is a recommendation from the individual's small group leader, i.e. the high school pastor, NextGen pastor, worship leader, etc., whomever can best speak of the individuals heart to serve and willingness to be a part of a team.

Those individuals seeking to be a member of a CCC GO Team should also be aware of the time requirement that will be placed upon them, specifically involving team training and raising the necessary support. All team members are expected to complete the team training sessions. Obviously there maybe times when schedules may conflict, but this training must be made up through instruction from the team leader. The final decision to determine if an individual is ready to fully participate in the GO Team will be made by the team leader and the GO Pastor.

Anyone under the age of 18 must have parental consent to go on a CCC GO Team trip. If the individual is under the age of 16, CCC strongly recommends that a parent go on the trip along with their child. While their maybe exceptions to this rule, those who are under the age of 16 and want to go on a CCC GO Team trip without their parent must be interviewed by the GLT, who will then make a recommendation to the CCC Elder Board.

At the information meeting, each potential team member will be asked to sign a preliminary financial commitment form which states the estimated cost of the trip. This form also indicates that potential short-term team members understand that they will be responsible for any amounts that they are unable to raise through support-building letters. Part of this preliminary form is the airline ticket commitment. In order to get the best possible price on plane tickets, CCC needs to purchase airline tickets well in advance. This means that non-refundable tickets are being purchased by the church before the participants have begun raising funds for the trip, which could create a financial burden if the individual later needed to withdraw. By signing this form, the individual commits to paying the price of the plane ticket, or the cancellation fee if that is permitted by the airline, if he/she withdraws or is asked to withdraw from the short-term missions trip before raising the necessary funds to cover those costs.

Individuals seeking to go on a CCC GO Team trip will also be asked to sign an Acknowledgement of Risks/Liability Release Form. This form will outline potential risks that come with traveling outside the Santa Clarita Valley into areas that have greater risks than those seen in and around CCC. For insurance reasons, this document that indicates that team members understand the risks involved in this type of ministry and voluntarily accept these risks.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR SHORT-TERM MISSIONS

When considering financial support for short-term missions trips, CCC believes GO Team trips should be planned out and thought out well in advance of the departure date. Those who believe that they are called to go on the trip should pray and ask God to provide the necessary funds for the trip. Team members may find it necessary to send support letters to family and friends to ask for prayer and financial support. This process should be done with enough time to finish collecting all necessary funds **at least one month prior to departure date**. In some instances, the church may have the money in the missions budget to assist with an approved missions trip. The decision to support members of CCC GO Teams, will reside with the GLT with close consultation with CCC Elder Board.

While we understand that God is ultimately in control of funds, the brief outline below is a guide that will be used in the planning of teams. Travel insurance is not a cost effective means in purchasing tickets, chartering buses, etc., so the guidelines below will help the Team Leader and the leadership in the effective execution of the GO Teams. If a person has applied and been accepted to participate in GO Team, but cannot meet the guidelines below, the Team Leader and the GO Pastor will meet to determine if the individual in question has the means to reach their support goal before the team departs. If the person cannot meet the goals, this open position will then be sent to anyone on the waiting list with the understanding the new applicant will have to meet the same funding levels listed below.

Days Prior to Departure	Percentage of Support Prior to Departure
90 Days	75%
30 Days	100%

While we want to involve the church body in these missions opportunities, past efforts have shown that church-sponsored bake sales, car washes, rummage sales, etc. to raise funds take away from the main focus of the short-term missions trip. Moreover, the people of CCC have already given through their regular monthly giving, as well as potentially receiving support letters from those going on the trip. By conducting such sales the people of CCC are being asked to fund short-term missions at three different occasions. While team-members are free to raise money via these methods on their own, we will generally not permit these activities to take place at the church, nor should the church's name or resources be used to advertise any fundraising activity of this nature without prior approval of the GO Pastor. Prayer, faith, and trust in God to provide are the best indicators if God has truly called an individual to a particular trip. CCC firmly believes, where God guides, God provides.

In order to benefit from the best possible prices for air travel, Crossroads Community Church will need to advance funds to purchase plane tickets for all of the GO Team members as early as three to four months before the date of departure. These tickets are non-refundable, and the purchase of 90 or more plane tickets represents a significant financial commitment on behalf of the church. We expect that the financial support raised by the team members will cover these costs. However, circumstances may arise in which a team member would need to withdraw from the trip before departure, and before raising enough support to cover the price of the ticket already purchased in his or her name. This is why we are asking all the GO Team members to make a commitment to reimburse the church for the price of the plane ticket if he or she withdraws from the trip, or is asked to withdraw, before raising the necessary funds.

While funds will be designated for a specific individual on a GO Team, the funds received go to the funding of the trip for everyone on team. In the event a person has to withdraw from a CCC GO Team, the funds received will remain as part of the funding for the other members of the team. Funds will not be reimbursed to individual donors.

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS TEAM PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER CHURCHES

Often churches will partner with one another to give their people an opportunity to go on a short-term missions trip. Not only does this help reduce the workload and cost, often these partnerships help build a bond between these churches; however, the primary goal of CCC short-term missions trips cannot be overlooked. As can be seen above, in order to make sure that sharing the Gospel is the primary goal of CCC short-term missions teams, a great deal of time and money will be spent preparing team leaders and members before departing CCC, for this reason CCC will only partner with local, like-minded churches.

Moreover, if there is substantial distance between the church that wishes to partner with CCC on a GO Team trip, it is strongly recommended that the partnering church establish their own team leader and policies. If there are 3 or more individuals from a like-minded church, CCC will expect that the partnering church will assign their own leader and establish similar policies as seen in this document. Groups coming from partnering churches will be responsible for their own insurance coverage, liability forms, emergency contact information, etc. This recommendation helps prevent confusion but also helps in the leadership and management of the team, as well as covers the partnering church in case of an emergency or liability issue. If a GO Team Leader wishes to partner with another church, then the GO Pastor must be notified and final approval and/or instructions will be given by the CCC Elder Board.

THE BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT

Short-term Missions...A Biblical Concept?

You won't find the words "short-term missions" in Scripture. In fact, you won't even find the word "missions," the word simply isn't there. However, the concept of "missions," even "short-term missions," are seen all throughout Scripture. For this very the reason we have provided four of the many examples of short-term missions in the Bible.

An Investigative Trip – Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 13 & 14)

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel" (Numbers 13:1-2, ESV).

Moses obeyed God's instruction and sent twelve men on an investigative trip for 40 days. The Bible says that all of these men returned having seen the richness of the land, yet only two saw past the challenge of giants to envision a land filled with the knowledge and the presence of God and His people.

This is a clear example of God sending people out for a specific purpose over a limited period of time – a "short-term missions." All of these men experienced a short-term missions trip, but only two saw how God was working. This is still happening today. God often reveals His desires for a culture/land to people who have been on short-term investigative assignments. This is one of the things that make short-term missions so exciting!

As exciting as it is to see God reveal parts of His plan for a particular nation or people group, it is just as disappointing to see a God-given vision stomped out by teammates, family, church members, or even church leaders. As a church body, we should prayerfully consider the vision and ideas that "short-termers" bring back. These short-term missions experiences can be God's means of inviting a church into a long-term involvement in an area of the world where the knowledge and presence of Him is just developing.

An Evangelistic Trip – Jonah (Book of Jonah)

"Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, 'Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me'" (Jonah 1:1-2, ESV).

There is no doubt that the book of Jonah records one of the world's greatest revivals led by one of the world's worst evangelists. In spite of Jonah's bad attitude, God sent him out for a specific task, to preach about His coming judgment on Nineveh. Instead of obeying, Jonah ran from God, and ended up in the stomach of a whale! When Jonah finally repented of his own sin, he went to Nineveh, and delivered God's message to the people, there was an unprecedented revival. From the king to the common people everyone in the city believed the word of God through Jonah and repented.

In this example we see that God does call people to specific short-term tasks, such as evangelism, in cross-cultural settings. Does God have a specific task for you? Ironically Jonah spent more time running from God than it took to simply obey and deliver the message that God had for the people of Nineveh. This is still happening! We may spend years debating God's invitation for us to participate in a short-term missions opportunity that may only last 15 days.

A Training Trip – The 12 Disciples (Matthew 10:1-42)

"These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them... And proclaim as you go, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand'" (Matthew 10:5-7).

THE BENEFITS FOR THE BODY OF CHRIST

The benefits to the Body of Christ vary from person-to-person from GO Team to another. The definitions for goers, senders and hosts below help not only define specific roles and benefits, but also show how sending a GO Team out is a church-wide effort.

Goers: The individuals who are going on a trip or cross-cultural experience, to be servants to a particular group.

Senders: Individuals or church/churches who send the “goers;” are prayer partners, financial supporters and vital participants in the missions process. A sender can also be a missions agency.

Hosts: The people group or organization that has invited short-term missionaries to come and serve. They receive the direct benefits of the mission’s encouragement and labor. The host is often a ministry established in a culture foreign to the participants in the missions project.

Benefits for the Goer:

- Discipling from a global perspective
- First hand exposure to God’s love for the world
- The opportunity to exercise spiritual gifts, possibly for the first time
- Discovering the missionaries are very much like them
- Taking risks and trusting God in new areas (finances, travel, and ministry opportunities)
- Confronting the question, “Is career missions for me?”
- Becoming strong givers to world missions causes
- Becoming the most effective senders of others to missions work
- Becoming dissatisfied with a complacent life

Benefits for the Sender:

(For Supporters)

- Making an impact in places they may never go and on people they may never see
- Involvement in the discipleship process of the goer
- Developing spiritually in their giving and praying
- Learning about Kingdom activity in new parts of the world
- Participating as much in ministry as the “goers”
- Facing the issue of personal involvement in missions
- Filling a strategic place in the Great Commission
- Experiencing God working through their prayers in feedback from the goer

For the Local Church:

- Vision-casting for cross-cultural opportunities
- Taking body-ownership of Christ’s command to “make disciples of all nations” when members participate
- Gaining church members trained for unique ministries
- Experiencing an increase in giving to world missions
- Creating and strengthening relationships with international and local ministries
- Gaining active, involved believers who think outside their own needs

COMING HOME

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of any mission trip whether that be short-term or long-term is reentry, also known as coming home. Most people who have been on a missions trip to a third world nation or a location that is lacking the creature comforts seen in the United States come back with a new outlook on life. In many ways coming back home and re-adjusting to culture God has placed you in can be more of a culture shock than the trip itself. The role of the team leader doesn't end once everyone arrives safely back home, but continues as the team members adjust to seeing life through the "new lens" God gave them while serving on a CCC GO Team. All team leaders will be expected to conduct a team follow-up meeting approximately one-month after the team has returned. Recognizing the life change that takes place, the GO Pastor will also be available to answer any questions that may arise during this period of re-acclimation. CCC also understands that individuals may come back energized for an existing ministry or have an idea for a new potential ministry. For this reason CCC has a new ministry proposal that can be obtained from the GO Pastor. While new ministry is always important to a growing church, the leadership of CCC wants to be good stewards with the time and assets already invested, so each new ministry proposal must go before the GO Leadership Team for recommendation and then forwarded to the CCC Elder Board for final approval and implementation. With this being we do understand that new ministry proposals are just one of the many different responses that may occur in coming home from a missions trip. For this reason CCC wants to take a few moments to share insights from the *Short-term Missions Workbook, From Missions Tourists to Global Citizens* by Tim Dearborn. This workbook will be used by the team leaders during the team building sessions but the insights from this chapter are so important, they should be considered before ever going on a missions trip.

"Returning home can be harder than going to a new place. When we leave, it is with a great sense of adventure. We anticipate newness, change and challenges. We often go with a team that we've come to appreciate and on which we'll rely. While we're serving, we experience a sense of community and closeness that is hard to find back home. Plus, we feel a special purposefulness, like our lives are really counting for something. Our lives at home, on the other hand, often feel consumed by busyness and activities that lack deep significance. Through our short-term service, our horizons have expanded, our confidence has deepened and our faith in God has grown" (Dearborn, 91).

Dearborn goes on to elaborate that people usually come back with three responses: feeling forgotten by people, a lack of time for personal reflection, and gripped by cultural grief. These emotions are not unusual, so the information below will hopefully show you that you are not alone and that CCC is committed to walking this new journey with you. Consider the following scenarios given by Tim Dearborn:

"People forget we were gone." Life here has gone on just as usual. In fact, many people hardly seem to have noticed that we were gone. "I haven't seen you for a while," they may say. "Have you been on a trip or something?" When we tell them where we've been, all they say is, "Oh, that must have been great. Did you have a good time?" The conversation is quickly redirected to the status of the local sports team or the latest movie. You've just had one of the most life-changing experiences of your life, and all people seem to ask is, "How was it?" What are you supposed to say? "Fine?"

Added to people's seeming disinterest in your trip is the frustration that you will inevitably feel over certain aspects of life in the West. Everything seems so fast, so busy, so glitzy, so expensive, so lonely, so extravagant.

We don't have time to reflect. Often we have to return immediately to school or work without much opportunity to reflect on what we saw, experienced, felt and learned. Amidst the press of responsibilities, our short-term service soon becomes precisely what we vowed it wouldn't – a distant memory.

We're gripped by culture grief. Culture shock is a normal part of entering into a new culture. The dislocation of entering into an unfamiliar world can produce a shock that even had physical manifestations. We lose our bearings, become disoriented and are unsure how to move forward. With time, we adjust and learn how to live effectively in the new context, becoming personally enriched through the process.

Many people experience a similar shock when they return home, usually called "reverse culture shock." What we thought would be familiar now seems strange. We've changed, and our perspectives have changed. It's like entering a new world again. If we've gone long enough, what once was home may have changed too. We're not sure how we fit in. The same shock of adjustment takes over.

“However, culture shock doesn’t adequately describe the challenges of reentry. It’s more a form of culture grief. We feel saddened and dismayed by what we encounter at home. Our lives seemed more meaningful when we were on our short-term missions trip. We seemed more in touch with the important issues of life, more surrounded by a caring community. Now we enter into Western culture’s loneliness, busyness and materialism. Not only are we unsure how to navigate this, we’re not even sure we want to” (Dearborn, 92-93).

Understand the challenges, the thoughts, the joy, the doubts that may occur once you return from a CCC GO Team is not unusual and are to be expected. God is sovereign and He had you go on this trip for a reason, the job of the Team Leader and CCC is to prayerfully seek after God to determine what those reasons maybe. Please know you are not alone and God will use this journey to better equip you to serve Him.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEAM LEADERS

The Role of the Team Leader

Below are some of the roles that Team Leaders play on a missions team. Please understand that CCC doesn't necessarily expect any one person to fill all of these roles at once. We naturally divide responsibilities between the Team Leader and the Assistant Team Leader, and you will likely also have some mature team members whose gifts will be useful in one of these ways. But it's up to the Team Leader to see that all of these roles are filled by someone, and you may find yourself wearing several of these hats at once.

Shepherd

It will be important to see yourself as a shepherd of your team members. You will be leading them into some of the most significant spiritual experiences of their lives, and they will need pastoring as they move through the process. This will include getting to know them prior to departure in order to better impact their lives during the trip. It will also include organizing devotions for the team during the trip, as well as spending face-to-face time with each team member and listening to their joys and fears along the way. Be ready to play a pastoral role in the lives of your team members.

Administrator

There is an incredible amount of administration in putting together a ministry like this one. Paperwork is crucially important and possibly a tad intimidating, and the success of your ministry may well depend to some extent upon the quality of your administration. The GO Pastor, will help remind you and assist you in these requirements; but understand while at times these tasks might seem tedious or mundane, they are crucially important to the overall safety and success of your team.

Communicator

Until departure, one of your key duties will be to keep the GO Pastor informed of the progress of your team. Once on the field, you will be the key communication link between the team and your host missions or national leaders. You'll need to speak for the team to your hosts, and to the team on behalf of your hosts. You'll also need to see that we get news back here at CCC about how things are going. Good communication is an extremely important key to an effective missions trip.

Team-Builder

We suggest each team to hold a team meeting once a month, at minimum the team meets three times before departing on the mission. Later in this manual I'll give you ideas for good ways to use that time. We also ask you to de-brief your team before leaving to go to the field, and finally to organize another team gathering within one month of your return to Santa Clarita. All of these gatherings will be valuable times to build and to express a sense of love and unity on your team.

Confronter

In the training period, you will need to hold your team members accountable for training requirements and may need to lovingly exhort someone who is falling behind or seems to be failing to take the training seriously. Once on the field, you will need to be very sensitive to your team and may need to help them adjust attitudes. It's hard to predict how people will react when faced with cross-cultural stress, and some of your team may react negatively and become a burden on the ministry. You may need to graciously confront someone whose behavior hinders the team unity or effectiveness. In an extreme case, you may even need to decide that someone on your team needs to return home early. Such a decision would if

possible need to be discussed with the GO Pastor before it is carried out. Again, let's pray that this never becomes necessary.

Missionary

It's important not to lose sight of the fact that this trip is your opportunity to be used by the Lord to make an impact for His name in another culture. Don't let all the duties of your role deprive you of the joy of seeing God touch lives through you!

There are other roles that you will play, depending upon your own gifts and your own way of leading a group. I'm confident that you will find it to be a good experience. There are few things that I've done in missions that are as rewarding as leading a missions team, and I pray that you will soon say the same thing.

Welcome aboard! It's going to be a great summer.

IDEAS FOR INDIVIDUAL TEAM MEETINGS

As mentioned earlier, you will be planning at least three gatherings of your team prior to departure. Your first goal for these meetings should be the building of a sense of love and unity among your team members. The better you all come to know and love one another here, the more likely you will be to function well as a team over there. Secondly, you can use these gatherings to learn about the culture where you will be serving and to prepare for the specific ministries in which you will be involved.

Here is a list of ideas that have been used in the past to make the most of these gatherings. This is not an exhaustive list, but is meant simply to give you a place to start and to spark your own creativity.

Icebreakers:

- List of questions each one answers and shares with the group
- Team members interview one another and share results with the group
- Share your most embarrassing moment
- Share your likes and dislikes: food, entertainment, hobbies, etc.
- What is it about this trip that makes you excited/scared/concerned?
- What made you apply for this trip?
- What are your two main pet peeves? (Important to ask sooner or later!)

Take your team out to a restaurant, preferably one that serves food from the country where you will serve.

Invite someone who comes from your host country to talk about what life is like there.

Have team members research the country and share results with the group:

- History of the country
- History of the people group where you will serve
- Interesting aspects of the culture
- History of Christianity in the country

Invite someone who has served as a missionary in this country to come share their experiences, and especially to teach the team about cultural do's and don'ts.

Plan for specific ministries your team will be involved in: VBS, music, etc.

Invite a native speaker of the language to come teach you some basic phrases.

Have a team member study the major religion of the country and share the results. Invite an experienced person to teach you how best to share the gospel in that context.

Do here what you will be doing there. Visit an orphanage, go door-to-door, work with handicapped people, sing at a retirement home, etc.

Visit an ethnic church here in our area that is similar to the churches where you will be serving.

Divide your team into prayer partners, two people contacting each other between meetings to pray together.

SUMMARY OF NEEDED FORMS

You will be amazed at the number and variety of forms that your team members will be filling out and returning to you over the next several months. First and foremost is the GO Team missions application. Each team member will have to submit this form and the required reference form as a first step to show his/her commitment to this GO Team opportunity. It's important for you to understand the purpose of this paperwork, so a short summary of the reason for each document is provided below, and samples appear on the following pages.

It should be noted these documents are not optional and if by some chance someone is going on the GO Team opportunity outside of Crossroads from another church, these documents will still be required by the assigned due date. As mentioned above, if we have three or more people from another church going on a Crossroads GO Team, then that particular church needs to assign their team leader and then becomes responsible for insurance, travel, etc.

Preliminary Financial Commitment

At the Information Meeting, each team member will be asked to sign this form stating the estimated cost of the trip and indicating that they understand that they will be responsible for any amounts that they are unable to raise through support-building letters. This is simply to make sure from the start that everyone understands his or her commitment.

The baseline financial commitment of each GO Teamer equals the estimated cost of the trip, minus a percentage that will be covered by the missions budget. Because of vaccination needs that differ from person to person, we have decided to individualize that part of the financial commitment. We include on the form the vaccinations that are recommended by the Centers for Disease Control for your region of the world, and we will often also pass on recommendations that come from our hosts. We encourage missionaries to check with their doctor and their medical insurance, decide which vaccinations they will need, and if they wish, to add the out-of-pocket costs of those vaccinations to their target amount; therefore, it is not unreasonable that each of your team members will have a different support-raising target.

Airline Ticket Commitment

In order to get the best possible price on plane tickets, we need to purchase them well in advance of the trip, for example if a trip is scheduled in June the tickets will be purchased probably as early as March. This means that non-refundable tickets are being purchased by the church before the participants have begun raising funds for the trip, which could create a financial burden if they later need to withdraw. By signing this form, the missionary commits to paying the price of the plane ticket, or the cancellation fee if that is permitted by the airline, if he or she withdraws or is asked to withdraw from the ministry before raising the necessary funds to cover those costs. This form will be signed at the Information Meeting, and will allow us to make ticket purchases as soon as possible.

Acknowledgement of Risks/Liability Release Form

Every time people participate in a church-sponsored trip, we ask them to sign a liability release form. The one we use for the GO Team ministry is more detailed, since the potential risks of international travel and third-world living is more significant than they are for a trip to Hume Lake. For insurance reasons, we need a document that indicates that team members understand the risks involved in this type of ministry and voluntarily accept those risks. If the missionary is a minor, the form requires a parent's signature.

Authorization for Medical Care

This form will allow you or others on your team to authorize medical care deemed necessary for one of your missionaries. You will have these forms with you on the trip. There is a separate form if the missionary is a minor, naturally requiring a parents' signature.

Authorization to Leave the Country and Emergency Medical Care

If you have minors on your team, this form allows their parents to give permission for their child to leave the country with you, and also grants you permission to seek emergency medical care if needed. You will have these forms with you, and can thus prove if necessary that you have parental permission to travel with the child. While it appears that this document overlaps with the Authorization for Medical Care, both are useful, and the difference will be explained at the Team Leaders meeting.

Apart from these forms that your team members will fill out, we also have some documents that will make your administrative tasks easier, including a checklist, a financial log and a timeline for your team's preparation. We will go over these documents and their use with you at the Team Leaders meeting.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Bulletin and Verbal Announcements:

It is not uncommon for a team leader or team members to want to use the bulletin or the announcement time during church to pass information to the team or the people of Crossroads. While this might be ideal, the problem is often there are more announcement requests than time or space. Therefore, all requests for announcements need to be submitted to the GO Pastor first and if the announcement can be worked in, the GO Pastor will inform you. All requests for announcements must be submitted **AT LEAST 2 WEEKS** before the announcement is needed. Also realize that not all announcements will be printed in the Crossroads Connection, but all will appear online. There is limited time for verbal announcements, so most announcements will be bulletin announcements. As team leaders you should use your team contact list as the primary means of communication to your team members.

Check Requests:

You may find that you will need a church check for some costs for your GO Team Trip. This could include deposits to a Missions Organization, a travel agency for airline tickets, or reimbursement for items your team will be purchasing before leaving for your trip. All fund requests must be approved by the GO Pastor and **2 weeks should be given to process the request. So if you need money to pay for an item, you must plan at least 2 weeks prior to your required purchase.**

Budget Reconciliations:

As the your team gets closer to departing and begins receiving support and funds on a weekly basis, it will become important for you as a team leader to be aware of funds coming in and going out for the GO Team. In order to best facilitate this process and reduce the number of surprises, each team leader should schedule a monthly budget reconciliation time with the church accountant. This process should not take more than an hour but this hour will spare hours of work if the team falls short in funding the team or spending funds that does not exist. Any questions should be addressed to the GO Pastor.

Transportation to and from the Airport:

You as the team leader are responsible for securing your team's transportation to the airport and for arranging the details. For a large team caravanning to LAX on a Friday afternoon may not be the best mode of travel. Moreover, departing from a central location such as the church parking lot can help make a goodbye a little easier. Therefore, leaders might want to rent a van, etc. to get the team to airport. This can be coordinated with the GO Pastor, to help make sure the team arrives, departs safely and start and end the trip on a high note.