



Team Leader Handbook

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Team Leader Checklist

Use this list to help prepare and plan for your mission.

Pre-Planning (One Year or More Before Departure)

- Gather everyone interested in organizing an UMVIM team. They may be from one local church, several churches, a district or a conference.
- Decide what kind of mission team to organize. Will you include youth and adults? What type of mission opportunity is it: construction, medical, evangelistic, Bible School, a combination?
- Seek the endorsement of your local church and Conference UMVIM Coordinator.
- Select a team leader and co-leader.
- Make a preliminary decision about your location and type of service. Lists of International and Domestic Mission Opportunities are available on the UMVIM WJ website www.umvimwj.com or your Conference UMVIM website. Contact your Conference or the Jurisdictional UMVIM Coordinator for suggestions.
- Decide whether you will raise money to assist with the personal expenses of any team members. As a rule, volunteers pay their own expenses, but selective assistance can be useful.
- Appoint someone to lead fundraising activities. Select ways to raise money for your mission and any needed project funds, such as materials and supplies.
- Choose a coordinator to handle all travel arrangements.
- Name a publicity coordinator to publicize the mission. Decide how to inform and involve the local church(is), the district and the conference in the mission.
- Set a tentative date for the mission (to be confirmed with the host). Ask host when the best time to travel would be and plan accordingly.
- Decide how to recruit team members.
- Contact project leaders for more information about opportunities that interest you, or work with your Conference and/or Jurisdictional UMVIM Coordinator to make these contacts.
- Make final decisions about your mission (type, location, cost, etc.). If possible, send the team leader for an on-site inspection. Keep your Conference and Jurisdictional UMVIM Coordinators informed. Follow normal procedures in your conference and jurisdiction. Let your coordinators know if you will accept team members from outside your own area or have openings for additional team members.
- Establish best form of communication with host (phone, fax, and email), keeping in mind costs for host.
- Discuss with host if there is a set amount for project fees and then determine how the team will raise the funds to pay for project materials and supplies (not personal expenses of the team).

- Check on insurance coverage provided by your local church or conference. Strongly consider the medical/accident/accidental death and emergency evacuation insurance available through UMVIM West Jurisdiction (www.umvimwj.com/insurance).

For International Destinations Only

- Determine if there are visa requirements for the country where you will be serving.
- Ensure all team members have passports that will not expire within 6 months to 1 year of your travel dates.
- Check the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website regarding required/recommended inoculations and health information for your destination.
- Ask about credentials and documents for any medical team members and when these need to be sent to in-country government officials.
- Research customs regulations, especially about any supplies you will bring.
- Contact a travel agent or research travel costs and options.
- Decide how to handle team funds. If your project is an Advance Special, your local church may route funds through the General Board of Global Ministries.

Planning (9–12 Months Before Departure)

Select Mission Opportunity and Team Activities

- Contact host. Deciding could take several emails over several months. Get as much of this in writing via email as possible.
- Determine type of service and cost of supplies.
- Determine maximum number of team members the host can accommodate.
- Make team arrangements for housing, meals (prepared by host or team) and transportation.
- Arrange for team orientation by host.
- Have a clear understanding of host's expectations.
- Discuss and agree upon transmittal of project funds (means, timing, accountability).
- Inquire about cultural information.
- Confirm joint worship opportunities with host.
- Arrange for cultural sightseeing and reflection day.
- Determine need for interpreter.

For International Destinations Only

- Request a formal letter of invitation be sent to team leader. This may be needed at immigration and customs for any donated items and/or gifts the team is taking.
- Complete Covenant for Mission Partnership (*available in the Appendix*).

Make Travel Arrangements

- Confirm transportation details and reservations in writing.
- Determine non-personal luggage transportation details.
- Arrange lodging/meals while traveling to site.
- Travel agent information: _____

Gather Health and Safety Information

- Acquire first aid kit items needed (*list of kit items available in the Appendix*).
- Determine immunizations/medications needed and have team members schedule appointments with health department or travel clinic.
- Check with host about worksite safety precautions.
- Find out other health, safety, and security precautions for your destination.
- Create a list of emergency numbers, medical facilities, U.S. Embassy (for international destinations), and UMVIM, WJ office.

Develop Timeline

- Decide departure and return dates.
- Create deadlines for forms and money to be turned in (set deadline 2-3 weeks ahead of real need).
- Determine deadlines for team leader to turn in money to appropriate treasurer (church, conference), travel agent, project host, etc.
- Schedule dates for team orientation and training.
- Schedule date for UMVIM team's Commissioning Service (*see sample services in Appendix*).
- Discuss possible dates for UMVIM team reunion.

Prepare Budget

- See "Building a Budget" in the Appendix.
- Collect deposit with application.
- Obtain a receipt book.

Recruit and Select Team

- Include interpreter(s) if needed.
- Consider offering scholarships. Check with your Conference UMVIM Coordinator or UMW representation for sources of scholarships.
- Keep size of team to host's request.

- Distribute forms to team members and discuss background checks, safe sanctuary/gatherings requirement, covenant, liability release, insurance, medical information and release, emergency contact, notification of death, parental permission for minors, and any others required by Conference UMVIM Coordinator or church. (Consider making a spreadsheet to track receipt of forms, payments and donations.)
- Review Team Member applications, if used.
- Announce deadlines for turning in forms, payments and donations.

Team Leader Preparation (3–6 Months Before Departure)

Determine Travel Essentials

- Confirm travel arrangements, purchase tickets, and make deposits for rentals.
- Have evacuation plans in case of severe weather, social upheaval, medical emergency, etc.

For International Destinations Only

- Obtain passports, visas, and work permits where needed.
- Collect money for airfare and purchase tickets.
- Send list of team members to travel agent or airline (with names as they appear on passports).
- Verify professional credentials for serving in host country (healthcare volunteers or other types of professionals who will need to show credentials).
- Know information about medical system in country of travel.

Team Training Preparations

- Schedule orientation and training (meetings, conference calls, mail, and video sessions). (See *Sample Mission Team Orientation.*)
- Prepare or assign devotionals for orientation and training sessions.
- Prepare training packet with mission information: (See *Topics for Team Orientation and Training.*)
 - Purpose of UMVIM
 - Project information (place, personnel, work to be done, weather, housing, food, etc.).
 - Forms team members need to complete for sponsoring church, host, conference, etc.
 - Tentative itinerary for the mission (daily schedule of travel, work, worship and recreation)
 - Accident/medical insurance information for team members, optional travel health insurance. Go to UMVIMWJ website www.umvimwj.com.

- List of team member responsibilities to the team and hosts, sign-up lists (devotions, work assignments, etc.)
- Contact information of host in case of emergency situations
- Packing lists (See *“Team Member Packing List”* in Appendix)
- Health and safety information. Be certain to stress any dangers and possible problems or concerns that might arise so that team members fully understand them prior to going. This is critical for you as team leader
- Currency information
- Cultural information
- Sightseeing/Reflection day options
- Deadlines for payments and forms
- Team assignments, job descriptions (See *“Suggested Team Member Assignments”* in Appendix)
- Plan team-building exercises for training session (See *“Icebreakers”* in the Appendix)
- Work with pastor to plan UMVIM team Commissioning Service

Preparing the Team (1–2 Months Before Departure)

Hold Team Orientation and Training Meetings

- See *“Topics for Team Orientation and Training”* and related materials agenda schedules in the Appendix.
- Create team member covenant of goals, expectations, and conduct.
- Have team members choose work assignments (or delegate assignments based on knowledge of their skills).

Collect Documents and Money from Team Members

- Collect forms from team members. Consider having a notary attend the meeting to complete forms.
- Check forms for signature, witness, and notarization as indicated.
- Collect copies of photo page for each passport if applicable.
- Collect any remaining money due from team members.

Follow-Up

- Have medical information forms checked by team health provider and precautions discussed with individual team members.
- Make copies of team members *“Health and Emergency Information Form”* and insurance Cards.
- Send a copy of the team roster to your Conference UMVIM Coordinator.

- Receive devotion sign-up list from spiritual guide.
- Register team online on the UMVIM, WJ or Conference website. www.umvimwj.com

For International Destinations Only

- Check that team members have their passports and visas or other documents.
- Check immigration and customs requirements.
- Leave a copy of team roster, including passport numbers and emergency contacts, with church office and someone who can provide support from the US if needed.
- Register team with the **Smart Travelers Enrollment Program** on the US State Department website.

Verify All Arrangements

- Confirm travel.
- Confirm all lodging.
- Determine what food options work best for team.
- Confirm that ground transportation is arranged if flying to destination.
- Confirm on-site work information (tools or supplies to bring from home, or money needed to purchase them).
- Review daily schedule.
- Request receipts for monies spent (carry a receipt book if needed).
- Obtain Advance Special number for the project so that team members can continue to support the project financially.
- Order needed supplies (medical, Bible School, etc.).

For International Destinations Only (and in limited domestic situations)

- Check that safe drinking water is available and determine if there are any associated costs.

Involve Sending/Sponsoring Congregation in the Mission

- Educate congregation(s) about the mission.
- Ask for prayerful support of the team during the mission.
- Ask for assist with some assignments (publicity, communication, maintaining records of forms, payments and donation, travel arrangements, etc.).
- Raise funds.
- Prepare to share the story after the team returns.

Finalizing Mission Plans (2–3 Weeks Before Departure)

- Make sure you have registered your team no later than 2 weeks prior to departure, either online with your Conference or the WJ Coordinator.
- Confirm plans with host contact:
 - Confirm meeting arrangements with host.
 - Confirm arrangement for project funds and payment for other expenses like lodging and food.
 - Obtain or verify phone numbers of local contacts, officials, etc. Give copies to team members.
 - Ask what amount is customary when tipping luggage handlers, waiters, etc.
- Have a Commissioning Service for the team.
- Reconfirm airline reservations
- Notify travel agent immediately if there is a cancellation.
- Check tickets for correct names, times, points of departure and arrival if flying to destination.

For International Destination

- Confirm airport pick-up with host or other in-country transportation.
- Make currency-exchange plans.

Travel to Project Location (Pre-Departure and Departure Day)

- Pack donated items on a scheduled pre-departure date.
- Meet at church or other appointed place early on departure day. Allow time to load luggage and supplies, say goodbye, take pictures, and get last-minute instructions.
- Pray God's blessing on the mission before departing.
- Carry documentation for the team members such as emergency numbers, medical, copy of insurance cards, parental permission forms, and other needed forms (*Forms available on website www.umvimwj.com*).
- Plan for team to travel together if possible.

Upon Arrival

- Wear name tags with first names only.
- Spend a few minutes with introductions and exchange of greetings.
- Take time, if the location allows, for a brief prayer/devotional with the hosts and the team.
- Check with host to see if any arrangements have changed.
- Have on-site orientation by the host.

- Send word to sending church(es) that team arrived safely.
- Review the covenant with the local coordinator and clarify any things that are not clear.

During the Mission

- Hold daily devotions and reflection times.
- Communicate information about mission on blog, website, and social media.
- Attend worship with local community.
- Encourage health and safety practices of team members.
- Provide time for relationship-building and journaling.
- Keep records and receipts of expenses.

Concluding the Mission

- Consider having a farewell meal and/or a worship/communion service.
- Invite the host to assess and celebrate the mission.
- Debrief team to return home – Reverse Culture Shock.
- Have the team assess the mission (*Evaluation forms* can be found in the Team Members Forms Packet. Return forms to the Mission site with a copy to your Annual Conference UMVIM Coordinator.)

After Your Return (2–3 Weeks After Returning)

- Send letters of appreciation to team and to host(s); include some photographs.
- Have team reunion meeting to evaluate the mission. Include time for sharing journals, photos, and videos.
- Complete plans for your presentation to your congregation(s), district, etc.
- Assemble items you will need for keeping records of your mission.
- Share the story of your mission through local newspapers, church publications, TV, radio websites.
- Send Finalized Report and Team Leader Evaluation to Jurisdictional and Conference UMVIM Coordinators. (*Evaluation Forms* are found in the Team Leader Forms Packet. Return to your Annual Conference UMVIM Coordinator.)
- Suggest readings and resources for dealing with reactions to the culture and problems of developing/underdeveloped countries for your Annual Conference UMVIM Coordinator.



UMVIM WJ Team Leader Application

Name _____ Church of membership _____

Address _____ Phone _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Name and location of UMVIM Project for which you are applying to be a team leader:

Dates you would like to lead a team _____

TRAINING / EXPERIENCE:

- Team Leader training: Date _____ Place _____
- Source and Date of Safe Sanctuaries Certification: _____

2. List teams of which you have been team leader, include the date, site, country, or USA state:

3. If you have not been a Volunteers In Mission team leader, please list Volunteers In Mission teams in which you have participated as a team member, include date, site, country, or USA state:

4. Other UMVIM activities or information:

The information in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I authorize any references or churches listed in this application to give to UMVIM any information that they may have regarding my character and fitness for Volunteers in Mission work. I release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations and I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf. Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by United Methodist Volunteers in Mission policies.

Applicant's signature _____ Date _____

The outreach committee of the church and/or the church pastor has approved this applicant as an UMVIM team leader.

Chair of outreach committee _____ Pastor's signature _____ Date _____

Thank you for applying to be a Volunteer in Mission Team Leader. Please have the reference forms filled out by your pastor, your mission chairperson and 1 other person. Please send this form to the Annual Conference UMVIM Coordinator.



Reference Form for UMVIM Team Leaders

(Name of applicant)

This person has applied to be a team leader for United Methodist Volunteers in Mission and has given your name as a reference. Please state frankly your opinion of the applicant's all-around fitness for Christian service as a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Team Leader by answering the following questions and summary.

1. Please give any information you regarding the applicant's background (family, education, experiences) that you feel might bear upon his/her suitability for this service.
2. Does the applicant show good judgment and possess the ability to make decisions and follow through on them?
3. To what extent does the applicant demonstrate leadership? Give examples.
4. What type of influence does the applicant exert? Does the applicant respond well to authority? Comment on the applicant's ability to cooperate and work with others.

Comment on the applicant's sensitivity to the needs, feelings and attitudes of others.

5. What is the applicant's attitude toward other cultural groups, races, and nationalities?
6. How does this person respond under pressure? Would you feel comfortable in another country with this person as team leader?
7. Have you had any reason whatsoever to lack confidence in this applicant?

SUMMARY: Please state frankly your opinion of the applicant's all-around fitness for Christian service as a United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Team Leader, adding significant information and impressions not brought out by the preceding questions.

Reference Form for UMVIM Team Leaders (continued)

Name _____

Address _____

Phones _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Association with applicant (Pastor, co-worker, etc.)

Please email or mail this form to the Annual Conference UMVIM Coordinator.



UMVIM Team Member Application

The mission trip team leader will not share this information except as required and related to the mission trip (e.g. to treat a medical condition).

LOCATION of PROJECT: _____

PROJECT DATES: _____ EXPECTED COST: \$_____

Name: _____ Home Phone: _____

Mailing Address: _____ Work Phone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Age: _____ Email address: _____

Occupation: _____ Hobbies/interests: _____

Languages (Proficiency Level):

Construction/Healthcare Specialties:

Missions experience & location:

Name of Church: _____ Pastor: _____

Church Address: _____ Pastor's Phone: _____

Type and Date of Safe Sanctuaries Certification: _____

1. Why do you wish to participate? (Please use separate page if needed.)
2. Have you traveled to a developing country? _____ Which countries? _____

3. Please indicate your state of physical and emotional health (the project and trip will include rigorous activity and the hours may be long). Is there anything the team leader(s) should know regarding your health (allergies, diet, etc.)?

UMVIM Team Member Application (continued)

4. Please circle all applicable skills below and explain in detail where appropriate:

- Building/carpentry/masonry skills: Fair Good Excellent Professional
Other: _____
- Health Care: Physician Nurse Dentist First Aid training CPR training
- Other: _____
- Teaching Health Care (be specific) _____
- Other: _____
- Working with Youth: Recreation Storytelling Art Singing Crafts Other

- Preaching Devotionals Leading in prayer

- Photography (explain)

- Keeping and publishing a team trip journal (explain)

- Giving post-trip talks and slide presentations (elaborate)

- Other skills and abilities that will contribute to the team experience:

I understand that team members must be cheerful, cooperative, flexible, and patient. I agree to cooperate with the team leader(s) concerning our life together, including daily assignments, food, lodging, and transportation and any other activities involving the team as a whole. I agree to stay with the team from the beginning to end of the trip (except as excused by the team leader), to abstain from the use of alcohol and tobacco while on the mission trip, and generally to behave in a Christian manner.

Applicant's Signature

Date

To Be Completed by the Applicant's Pastor:

I believe that the above applicant is a dedicated Christian, a team player, and a friendly, flexible person who will make a valuable contribution to this mission team. I am / am not personally acquainted with the applicant and recommend her/him for volunteer mission service. You may contact me for additional information if needed.

Pastor's Signature

Date

Building a Budget

Domestic

Administrative/Orientation Expenses	_____
Insurance & Processing Fees	_____
Transportation Expenses (rentals and gas)	_____
Lodging	_____
Food	_____
Project Cost (materials & supplies)	_____
Team First Aid Kit	_____
Tips	_____
Cultural Sightseeing	_____
Gifts (if appropriate)	_____
Team Reunion Expenses	_____
Miscellaneous/Emergency Fund (add 5-10%)	_____
Grand Total	_____

International

Administrative/Orientation Expenses	_____
Insurance & Processing Fees	_____
Travel to/from airport	_____
Airline tickets	_____
In-country transportation	_____
Lodging	_____
Food	_____
Project Cost (materials & supplies)	_____
Cultural Sightseeing	_____
Gifts (if appropriate)	_____
Tourist Card/Departure Tax/Visa	_____
Team Reunion Expenses	_____
Miscellaneous/Emergency Fund (add 5-10%)	_____
Grand Total	_____

Sample Mission Team Orientation Meeting

All-Day Option

9:00 Opening devotion

9:30 Team building exercises (*Sample ice-breakers can be found in the Appendix*)

9:45 Overview of day

10:00 Team Talk

- Role of team members and make assignments (*Sample Team Member Assignments in the Appendix*)
- Construction and/or medical plans: in-depth review of type of service to be done
- Bible School: in-depth review of daily plans: theme, snacks, closing

10:30 BREAK

11:00 Cultural information about destination

- Awareness exercises (*Essential Keys to Intercultural Communication available in the Appendix*)
- Background of destination country/site

12:00 LUNCH

1:00 Team Covenant

- Code of Behavior
- Dress Code
- Evangelism on the mission
- Giving Gifts

2:00 Reviews

- Review travel information and departure – indicate where and when
- Review daily schedule
- Review budget
- Review Commissioning Service – indicate where and when

2:30 Break and Sign-Ups (post sign-up sheets)

- Daily devotions
- Items for first aid kit
- Snacks for team

3:00 Final Items

- Pre-departure packing—indicate where and when
- Music for team
- Collect forms

3:15 Answer any unanswered questions your team members might have

3:45 Closing Prayer (*A Prayer for Those Who Have Too Much in the Appendix*) and/or
Communion

4:00 Departure

Sample Mission Team Orientation Retreat

Weekend Option

Friday Evening:

SUPPER followed by opening devotion

Team building exercises (*Sample ice-breakers can be found in the Appendix*)

Overview of weekend and collect forms

Theology of Mission (*Mission is... in the Appendix*)

Team Talk

- Role of team members and make assignments (*Sample Team Member Assignments in the Appendix*)
- Construction and/or medical plans: in-depth review of type of service to be done
- Bible School: in-depth review of daily plans: theme, snacks, closing
- Spiritual formation study (*Preparing for the Journey available on www.umvim.org*)

Saturday

BREAKFAST followed by devotion

Cultural information about destination

- Awareness exercises (*Essential Keys to Intercultural Communication in the Appendix*)
- Background of destination country/site
- Language lesson (for international destinations)

Team Covenant

- Code of behavior
- Dress code
- Evangelism on the mission
- Giving gifts

LUNCH followed by review of:

- Travel information and departure – indicate where and when
- Daily schedule
- Budget
- Commissioning service—indicate where and when

Sign-Ups (post sign-up sheets)

- Daily devotions
- Items for first aid kit
- Snacks for team

Final Items

- Pre-departure packing—indicate where and when
- Music for team

Answer unanswered questions

Closing Prayer (*A Prayer for Those Who Have Too Much in the Appendix*) or Communion

Departure

Topics for Team Orientation and Training

Who We Are

UMVIM history and purpose
Mission theology
Evangelism during the mission
Team member assignments
Team member covenant

Where We're Going and What We'll Do

Presentation of mission and type of service
Lodging and meals

Spiritual Formation

A Mission Journey: A Handbook for Volunteers
Devotions
Journal
Worship
Commissioning Service

Travel Plans

Travel itinerary
Schedule during mission
Travel document information (international teams)
Check and copy passport (international teams)
Customs/immigration information (international teams)
Tourist card/departure tax/visa information (international teams)

Cultural Exchange

Local culture and customs
Cultural dos and don't
Currency
Photography etiquette
Gift-giving guidelines
Culture shock and reverse culture shock
Country and language information (international teams)

What to take

Packing list (personal items and team supplies)

Clothing/shoes

Luggage requirements (air travel)

Forms

Online team registration

Team forms for trip as needed

Smart Travelers Enrollment Program registration (international teams)

Costs/Budget Review

Project funds

Fundraising

Donations

Other costs

Payments

Health and Safety Precautions

Water and sanitation

Work limitations and safety

Vaccinations and prescriptions

Team health and safety

Emergency contacts, including embassy for international teams

Other Topics

T-shirt options

Discuss ways to involve the local church

Discuss/schedule reunion date

Sample Team Member Assignments

These assignments give team members additional responsibility during the mission, as well as taking some of the pressure off the team leader. If possible, consider offering scholarships as “payment” for accepting one of these roles.

Bible School Coordinator manages and assigns duties.

Co-Leader shares administrative responsibilities with the team leader and acts on the team leader’s behalf when necessary. This role is good preparation for becoming a future team leader.

Construction Coordinator coordinates the construction phase, in conjunction with the on-site construction coordinator, and gives daily briefings to the team on work assignments and safety concerns. The coordinator also compiles tools needed and arranges to secure them when appropriate, such as with a disaster response team.

Drivers may be needed to transport team and luggage to airport or site in United States. For international teams, they can work with the team leader to coordinate in-country vehicle rentals and drivers.

Fundraising Coordinator promotes trip fundraising in the local church and oversees the gathering of donated items needed for the mission.

Interpreters(s) are responsible for translation during the mission.

Journal Keeper is responsible for the team journal, which may be written by one person or passed around so each member writes. The journal keeper then makes copies available to team members at the team reunion.

Luggage Supervisor coordinates packing and listing of contents of team supplies and provides a method to identify team luggage (colored tape or tags).

Meal Coordinators plan, purchase food, and schedule preparation of meals for team during orientation, trips and reunion as needed. This job may not be needed, depending on the host’s responsibilities.

Photographer is the “official” photographer/videographer for the team and will provide copies for team members. Be cautious of taking expensive cameras.

Presentations/Displays Coordinator creates the resources for telling the story when the team returns.

Researcher studies history, geography, and culture where the project is and provides handouts or presentation at orientation/meeting.

Spiritual Guide plans and/or schedules devotions during orientation/meetings, during the mission and team reunion, and is sensitive to the spiritual needs of the team and seeks opportunities to promote spiritual growth.

Team Medic or First-Aid Coordinator secures first aid kit for team and is responsible for transporting and overseeing its use. Ideally, this person might be a doctor, nurse, EMT or person trained in first aid.

T-Shirt Acquirer creates the design and obtains team t-shirts and other items needed.

Travel Coordinator negotiates to secure needed and appropriate transportation for team, and might include van transport to airport, bus contract or airline tickets. This person can be responsible for processing and securing travel documents (passports, tourist cards, visas, etc.) and tickets during mission.

Treasurer collects and keeps funds to handle expenditures and gives financial report after returning from the mission. An additional person can receive payments/contributions and receipt all funds prior to departure.

Sample Icebreakers

Memories

Participants realize the impact of early parental messages on their lives. Members shake hands with each other while announcing a “memory.” Have them introduce themselves to each other with a present-tense statement of a parental message that they received as a child. For example: “Hello, I’m Jill, and I don’t keep my bedroom clean enough.” Jill’s partner would say, “Hello, I’m Jodi and I drive too fast.”

Questions

Ask members to write on 4 x 5 cards the answers to several questions related to themselves. Ask silly and serious questions such as: What kind of food do you like to “pig-out” on? What were you “famous” for in high school? What is your favorite book in the Bible and why? Then have the group sit in two rows and face each other. Have them interview each other and after a two-minute period, one row shifts positions to be sitting in front of a new person. Repeat until all have “interviewed” each other.

Guess What?

Members walk around and talk with each other while displaying small signs on their backs. On each card, write the name of an animal, a plant, a household product, a city, or some other specific member of a large class of names or items. Tape one label on each member’s back without letting him/her see what it says. Members are to find out what type of sign they are wearing. Instruct them to ask yes-no questions of each other until the answer has been figured out. When the answer is known, remove the label and put it on the front shoulder area. Continue until everyone has succeeded.

“Mission Is” Activity

This activity is helpful in getting your team to think through the implications of Christian mission, and it helps them get to know one another. The activity is also helpful for the team leader. Pay attention to what each team member thinks about mission.

For this activity, pick out six points around the room, and tape up a sign at each point. On each sign should be written one of the following statements, in large print:

Mission is: Clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and setting at liberty those who are oppressed.

Mission is: Seeing and naming the injustice of the world and working to change the conditions that perpetuate poverty and oppression.

Mission is: Reaching out to the hurting in loving compassion, offering what you have in service to others.

Mission is: Engaging in dialogue with persons of faith wherever they may be and joining together in making the world a better place for all of God's children.

Mission is: Joining with Christians around the world in global partnership and mutual cooperation to do the work of God.

Mission is: Going into the entire world to take the Gospel, baptizing in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Instruct your team that when the activity begins, they are to walk around the room, read all the statements, pick the **one** statement that best sums up their understanding of their theology of mission, and stand next to that statement.

Members of your team will inevitably want to stand between two signs, or to choose more than one. Allow them to stand where they feel best describes what mission means to them.

Once all your team members have chosen a sign, have at least one person from each group read the sign aloud and explain why she or he decided to stand by that sign. End the discussion by talking about different understandings of mission. We all understand mission differently, and to serve most effectively we need to see how others understand mission, too. All these understandings of mission are faithful.

Essential Keys to Intercultural Communication

We have empathy for the feelings, values, needs, and insights of others.

Our communication is positive and pleasant, an evidence of our good will and sincerity.

Humility helps us learn from others and from our own experience.

When feasible, we use the language and manner of expression of the other people.

We show we care, inoffensively. We pay the price of research and reap the reward.

Our praise is appropriate and sincere. We use caution if criticism is necessary.

When possible, we suspend judgment until all the facts are in—especially during conflict.

Our demonstration of trust is exemplified by keeping our word.

We hold the confidence of those with whom we communicate.

We draw upon our personal experiences and the feedback of others to continually improve our intercultural communication, knowing that we will always have new things to learn.

A Prayer for Those Who Have Too Much

To my brothers and sisters in developing countries.

While I was deciding which oat bran cereal to eat this morning,
You were searching the ground for leftover grains from the passing wheat truck.

While I was jogging at the health center,
You were working in the wealthy landowner's fields under a scorching sun.

While I was choosing between diet and regular soda,
Your parched lips were yearning for a touch of water.

While I complained about the poor service in the gourmet restaurant,
You were gratefully receiving a bowl of rice.

While I poured my "fresh and better" detergent in the washing machine,
You stood in the river with your bundle of clothes.

While I watched the evening news on my wide screen television set,
You were being terrorized and taunted by a dictatorship government.

While I read the newspaper, and drank my cup of steaming coffee,
You walked the dusty, hot miles to the tiny, crowded schoolroom to try to learn how to read.

While I scanned the ads for a bargain on an extra piece of clothing,
You woke up and put on the same shirt and pants you have worn for many months.

While I built a 4-bedroom house for the three of us,
Your family of 10 found shelter in a one-room hut.

While I went to church last Sunday and felt more than slightly bored,
you looked out upon the Earth and those around you; and felt gratitude to God for being alive for one more day.

My brothers and sisters forgive me for my arrogance and indifference. Forgive me for my greed of always wanting new, bigger and better things. Forgive me for not doing my part to change the unjust systems that keep you suffering and impoverished. I offer you my promise to become more aware of your situation and to change my lifestyle as I work for transformation of our world.

Sr. Joyce, author, more recently of Dear Heart, Come Home wrote the above after her visits to Guatemala and Liberia.

Act of Dedication for Commissioning Service

“An Order for Commissioning to Short-term Christian Service” is offered in the *United Methodist Book of Worship*, pages 592-593. An alternate act of dedication is offered here.

MINISTER: Hear these words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.

The United Methodist Church, in its endeavor to carry out the Great Commission, has declared, “The supreme aim of missions is to make the Lord Jesus Christ known to all people in all lands as their divine Savior, to persuade them to become His disciples, and to gather these disciples into Christian churches; to enlist them in the building of the kingdom of God; to cooperate with these churches; to promote world Christian fellowship; and to bring to bear on all life the spirit and principles of Christ.”

Members and friends of _____ Church, the Great Commission given by our Lord is still in effect today, and the call is great upon each one of us to answer in our own way. Before us today stand those, who are ready for a specific assignment as volunteers in mission who wish to dedicate themselves to their task. Now we as a congregation are to commission them and send them forth in the name of Christ and the Church

_____ name(s), we rejoice that you have resolved in your heart(s) to devote time, talents, and energy to this mission of _____. Your labors will take you to the people of _____. They will also be in mission to you as they likewise share their faith. Through word and deed, you are to testify to the infinite love of God. Such a task confers a great privilege. It also places upon you a solemn responsibility. What you have done alone with God in offering yourself for this mission we now ask you to do publicly in the presence of this congregation.

Do you sincerely believe that you have been led by the Spirit of God to engage in this ministry of _____?

MISSIONER(s): I do so believe.

MINISTER: Will you earnestly seek to carry forward this ministry in a Christ-like manner, in cooperation with your fellow team members and leader, and in full respect of the national church officials and local hosts?

MISSIONER(s): I will, the Lord being my helper.

(The missioner(s) will then kneel for prayer.)

MINISTER AND CONGREGATION: Almighty God, whose love for the whole family of humankind has been made known to us through your Son, send thy blessing upon these your servants soon to go forth on this mission assignment. Grant that they be guided and strengthened for their task; that they be open to new truths and insights from their hosts, and that they be given good health and traveling mercies; to the end that your name be glorified in all the earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sample Personal Checklist

This is a suggestive checklist for individuals on your team; however, this can vary according to destination. Urge your team to 'pack smart' by utilizing zip-top plastic bags or packing cubes.

- Cash
- Copy emergency contact information
- Insurance card
- Medical documents, including copies of prescriptions
- Special medications (asthma, insulin, any prescription medicines)
- Band-Aids, aspirin, etc. (personal first aid supplies)
- Spare contact lenses or eyeglasses; cleaning solution, etc. for contact lenses
- Spare batteries (for hearing aids, camera, flashlight, alarm clock, razor, etc.)
- Water bottle
- Work clothes, work shoes, work gloves, hat, bandanas and/or sweat bands
- Quick dry underwear and socks
- Appropriate clothing and shoes for church
- Appropriate clothing and shoes for work and play
- Flip-flops for shower, where appropriate
- Rain poncho and folding umbrella
- Swimsuit (modest, and if appropriate for location and weather)
- Coat hangers, clothespins and clothesline (optional)
- Powdered or liquid laundry detergent
- Toiletries (unscented for tropical international destinations):
 - Towel, washcloth, soap (antibacterial), shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, comb, brush, razor, shave cream, toilet paper, and pre-moistened wipes packed in zip-top plastic bags.
- Suntan lotion and sunglasses
- Insect repellent
- Sleeping bag or bedroll and inflatable pillow (if needed)
- Bible and devotional materials; team songbook (if available)
- Notebook, pen and pencil
- Flashlight
- Small pocket knife or scissors
- Camera (only one or two persons per team, not every team member)
- Snack foods (trail mix, granola bars, peanut butter, etc.)

For International Destinations Only

- Passport
- Visa or tourist permit (if applicable)
- Immunization record (yellow card)
- Mosquito netting (if needed)
- Water bottle with purification filter (if needed)
- Foreign language dictionary in appropriate language

Sample Mission Team Checklist

In addition to personal items, some of these may be helpful to the entire team.

- Binder with copy of all team member forms, insurance cards and passports for international team
- Binoculars
- Calculator
- Compass
- Cooking utensils
- Digital voice recorder
- Double-zipper plastic baggies in various sizes
- Duct tape
- Engineering references
- Eye protection
- First aid kit
- Frisbees, deflated balls (basketball, soccer, football) and pump with pin
- Games
- Garbage bags
- Gatorade powder
- Items to donate to project or the host church
- Matches
- Metric conversion chart
- Mosquito coils (if needed)
- Plumb bob
- Rubber bands
- Shortwave radio (disaster area)
- Super glue
- Trash bags
- Video recording device
- Walkie-talkies
- Others (list):

Suggested First Aid Kit for Mission Teams

Discuss with your host the level of medical facilities available and adjust this list accordingly.

- Extra Strength Tylenol (100 tablets)
- Buffered aspirin (100 tablets)
- Oral Thermometer (glass) (2)
- Alcohol (1 bottle)
- Cotton balls (100)
- Band Aids - medium size (1 box)
- Butterfly bandages (1 box)
- Q-tips (1 large package)
- Sterile dressings, individually wrapped
- 4 x 4 gauze (10)
- 2 x 3 non-stick (Tefla) (10)
- 5 x 9 thicker pads (10)
- 3" stretch gauze wrap (Kling) (4)
- Eye pads (6)
- 1" paper tape (2 rolls)
- 2" cloth (regular adhesive) tape (1 roll)
- Antibiotic ointment (1 tube)
- Non-sterile exam gloves (1 box)
- Instant ice pack (1)
- 3" Ace bandage (2)
- Finger splint (2)
- Wrist splint (1)
- Calamine lotion (1 small bottle)
- Toothache / oral pain medicine (1)
- Imodium A-D caplets (2 packages)
- Pepto-Bismol tablets (2 packages)
- Laxative (1 package)
- Myoflex or Begay (1 tube)
- Snake bite kit (1)
- Cough drops (1 package) and Cough syrup (1 small bottle)
- Benadryl (1 package)
- Vaseline (1 jar)
- Eye drops (1 small bottle)
- Temporary tooth glue (to glue cap on tooth) (1)
- Hibiclens (1 bottle)
- 1% Hydrocortisone cream (1 large tube)
- Hydrogen peroxide (1 bottle)
- Hand wipes (20)
- Motion sickness medication (1)
- Tweezers (1)
- Scissors (1)
- Nitroglycerine, sub lingual (1 package)

Only if a medical professional is part of your team.

- Sutures, assorted (1) (Superglue works as a temporary closure)
- Single use syringes (4)
- Blood pressure cuff and Stethoscope

Sample Covenant for Mission Partnership

Team Leader

I prayerfully accept the role of team leader and will, with God's help, present myself as an ambassador for Christ to my team and our hosts.

I agree to hold training session(s) with all team members on cultural sensitivity, team building, spiritual growth, and other components that will ensure the team will be in partnership as co-workers with the host volunteers/community.

I agree to communicate frequently and promptly with our host contact in order to complete mutually agreed upon preparations for our team prior to departure.

I agree to be a good steward of funds collected and disbursed to the project.

I agree for our team to participate in an on-site orientation with our host leader and/or others soon after arrival.

I agree to ensure that an evaluation will be held with the host/leaders prior to returning home and conduct follow-up written evaluations for the conference and jurisdictional UMVIM coordinators.

I agree to remain non-partisan in differences of opinion occurring in the church that hosts our work.

I agree to work with the leadership of the host coordinator or designee.

Host Coordinator

I prayerfully accept the role of host leader and will, with God's help, present myself as an ambassador for Christ to my people and our guests.

I agree to provide orientation to our local volunteer hosts on cultural sensitivity, spiritual growth, division of responsibilities, and other components that will ensure our local volunteers (host community) will be in partnership as co-workers with the mission team.

I agree to communicate frequently and promptly with the team leader to complete mutually agreed- upon preparations for the mission team prior to its arrival.

I agree to be a good steward of funds collected for the project.

I agree to provide on-site orientation for the volunteer team soon after its arrival.

I agree to ensure that an evaluation will be held with the team leader and our local leaders prior to the departure of the team.

Team Leader

Host Coordinator

IRS Publication 526

Travel

Generally, you can claim a charitable contribution deduction for travel expenses necessarily incurred while you are away from home performing services for a charitable organization only if there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation, or vacation in the travel. This applies whether you pay the expenses directly or indirectly. You are paying the expenses indirectly if you make a payment to the charitable organization and the organization pays for your travel expenses.

The deduction for travel expenses will not be denied simply because you enjoy providing services to the charitable organization. Even if you enjoy the trip, you can take a charitable contribution deduction for your travel expenses if you are on duty in a genuine and substantial sense throughout the trip. However, if you have only nominal duties, or if for significant parts of the trip you do not have any duties, you cannot deduct your travel expenses.

Deductible Travel Expenses

These include

- Air, rail, and bus transportation,
- Out-of-pocket expenses for your car,
- Taxi fares or other costs of transportation between the airport or station and your hotel,
- Lodging costs
- Cost of meals.

Because these travel expenses are not business-related, they are not subject to the same limits as business related expenses.

Mission Trips as a Tax Deduction

You should consult with your personal tax accountant. The following are best practices based on the information available, but not guaranteed as IRS requirements and allowances to be considered a tax deduction:

- Payments for mission trip expenses and/or contributions for material/supply needs for a mission trip should be made payable to a church or non-profit 501(c) 3 organization.
- Donations for an individual, other than self, should be made payable to a church or non-profit 501(c) 3 organization.
- Receipts indicating general expenses (food, toiletries, medications, etc.) needed in association with a mission trip should be kept.
- Any monies paid for mission trip expenses not paid to a church or non-profit 501(c) 3 organization should have a letter indicating participation.

Team Member Evaluation - Sample 1

HELPFUL RESPONSES FOR THE NEXT MISSION TEAM

(Please return this evaluation to the team leader or, if you prefer, to your jurisdictional or conference UMVIM Coordinator.)

1. List at least two of the experiences you appreciated most about the mission.

2. Share at least two significant impressions you had while on the mission team.

3. Rate according to your experience, the following (1 = not good, 5 = very good).

Effectiveness of team orientation	1	2	3	4	5
Relationship with the local people	1	2	3	4	5
Worship with the people	1	2	3	4	5
Team worship and sharing	1	2	3	4	5
Schedule	1	2	3	4	5
Food	1	2	3	4	5
Personal growth in your faith	1	2	3	4	5
Team leader	1	2	3	4	5

4. List any suggestions that might be helpful to future teams participating in such a mission.

5. Describe some of your present feelings:

Location of mission experience: _____

Dates of mission: _____

Signature (optional): _____

Team Member Evaluation - Sample 2

The following questions are suggested to guide you in evaluating your experience on the mission trip. Your response will be used to plan future experiences, to learn what you considered most important, and to find out where we need to work harder. Please add anything you feel was not adequately covered in these questions. Return this form to your team leader or, if you prefer, return it to your jurisdictional or conference UMVIM Coordinator.

Conference _____

Departure date ____/____/____
MM DD YY

Local Church _____

Return date ____/____/____
MM DD YY

Country _____

Location _____

Project name _____

Team leader _____ Cell phone _____ Home phone _____

Address _____

E-mail _____

How did you learn about the team and how were you motivated to join?

What type of orientation / training did you receive in the US? By whom?

What were your personal and team objectives in coming?

Did you achieve your goals? Why or why not?

Did your goals change during your stay? Explain:

Were your expectations or impressions prior to arrival on site reinforced? Changed? How?

Did your work situation measure up to your expectations? _____ If not, why not?

How would you improve your work situation?

Did you find your living arrangements satisfactory?

Did you find the food generally good, adequate, or poor?

What on-site orientation did you receive? In what way would you improve it?

Was there good coordination with the local personnel? If not, where did it break down?

Did you have a team spirit and a feeling of community while on the trip? If not, why not?

If given the opportunity, would you participate in such an experience again?

Additional Comments:

A History of United Methodist Volunteers in Mission

The United Methodist Volunteers in Mission movement arose through the local church, as United Methodists felt called to express their faith through hands-on mission. The UMVIM motto, "Christian Love in Action," is taken from 1 John 3:18, in which Christians are asked to love "not in word or speech, but in truth and action." UMVIM has worked closely with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), providing teams to assist in recovery from natural disasters and violent conflicts. Volunteers have served the world over, sometimes even in countries without Methodist churches.

1972 - Group of individuals from the Southeastern Jurisdiction formed a steering committee to organize what has become known as United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM).

1976 - UMVIM became an agency of the Southeastern Jurisdiction Administrative Council.

1980 - General Conference officially sanctioned UMVIM and directed the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) to "affirm Volunteers in Mission as an authentic form of personal missionary involvement and devise appropriate structure to interpret and implement opportunities for mission volunteers in the global community" (1302.14 Book of Discipline 2012).

1988 - General Conference suggested that every annual conference name a Volunteer in Mission Coordinator to work cooperatively with the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and the jurisdictional UMVIM offices.

1996 - General Conference established the Mission Volunteers Program Area (of which UMVIM is a part) within GBGM, with instructions to enable the participation of Methodists from throughout the world in global mission volunteer programs so that affirming, empowering, and trusting relationships would be established.

2000 - General Conference adopted a resolution recommending that every jurisdiction include in its budget a line item to cover the salary, professional expenses, and office expenses for a Jurisdictional UMVIM Coordinator (2012 Book of Resolution, #3109).

2004 - General Conference ruled that "The charge conference shall receive reports annually on all local church organized UMVIM teams, and the total number of local church participants in any UMVIM team and shall forward the combined report to the annual conference and the general church through the regular annual local church statistical report" (247.12 Book of Discipline 2012). General Conference also ruled that each annual conference may set aside a Sunday to be declared Volunteers in Mission Awareness Day.