

**PRAY AMERICA
MANOS DE JESUS**

Team Manual

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First Team Meeting

During the first team meeting there are certain topics that your team leader will cover in order to discuss the beginnings of ideas, necessary purchases, any legal processes, and prayer support.

Airfare

Your team leader will need to **provide your flight itinerary to Pray America no later than 30 days from when you have booked your trip** in order to ensure time for transportation arrangements between the Guatemala City airport and Chichicastenango.

- All team members must be departing and returning together on the same flight itinerary.

Team Expectations and Fundraising Events

Every person has different expectations as to what your trip to Guatemala will hold. Fundraising can be a bonding experience for the entire team before you get into Guatemala. In the third meeting fundraising ideas can be discussed in more detail.

Trip funds

Widow house funds must be sent in before or by the 30 day deadline in order for the ministry to have enough time to interview and select the widows who receive the house, materials to be ordered and purchased, the land to be cleared, and for foundations and upright beams to be set.

Trip funds must be sent in before or by the 30 day deadline in order for the staff, meals and accommodations, and transportation to be arranged for your team's arrival.

- Your team leader will instruct the team with trip funds. The reason we include this information for you is to make you aware that your team leader has deadlines to meet.

Initial Team Member Requirements

There are certain immunizations and legal documents that every team member needs to have before they travel out of the United States.

- A current Tetanus shot is required for all participants. Check with your doctor for information on what vaccinations you will need, where and how to get them, and how much they cost. You can also visit the Center for Disease Control website at www.cdc.gov for vaccination information.
- A current Passport that is not expired is required to travel. You can contact your local postal office for information on how to obtain a passport.

Tax Deduction for Contributions

Your team may have a church or non-profit organization who is handling the funds for your team and writing the team check to Pray America for trip payments. If you do, then your financial contributors can write their checks for your trip out to the church or non-profit organization handling your team funds. This way your financial contributors can receive a tax deduction. Your team leader will help you organize contributions and tax deductions.

- Due to IRS rules and Pray America policy: If individual team members are tracking their own funds and writing their trip check to Pray America, then their contributors must write donation checks **TO THE INDIVIDUAL** team member. The team member then can use their total trip and flight costs as a tax-deduction during the tax year of travel.
- If an individual receives a check written to Pray America for a donation, then the individual needs to ask the contributor to rewrite the check to them personally.
- Please send only **ONE** check per team member for the trip balance. The ministry is not staffed to handle multiple checks per individual from each team, as there is a constant amount of teams that travel with our ministry.

Team Prayer Support

The concept of sending out a **faith letter**, and putting together a **prayer support** list of individuals who are willing to pray for both your team members and yourself can be very helpful in preparation for your trip. Your team leader may ask that you hand in your list of prayer supporters to him/her as soon as you have them. Once your team leader has everyone's list, he/she can share how many people are on the support list praying for the team.

Below are **scripture suggestions** that your team leader may share with the team throughout your trip experience. These scriptures are helpful when experiencing spiritual warfare and during your stay in Guatemala.

Philippians 4:13 - "I can do all things through him who gives me strength."

James 1:27 - "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Meeting Topics

These meeting topics include information that will be very helpful to know during your stay in Guatemala. These topics are listed in recommended order to discuss one topic per meeting. Your team leader will guide you through this list during the months previous to your arrival in Guatemala.

- 1) **First Team Meeting:** The information included in this meeting is listed in the previous section of this manual and includes airfare, team expectations and fundraising events, trip funds, initial team member requirements, tax deduction for contributions, and team prayer support.

- 2) **Spiritual Warfare:** Once someone commits to a mission trip where he/she will be serving God and working for His glory, spiritual warfare can become stronger in that individuals life. Spiritual warfare can come in many forms; examples include job issues, marriage or family challenges, financial woes, health problems, lack of self-confidence, pride, doubt and worry, etc. Since spiritual warfare is an ongoing battle we believe that prayer support is needed previous to, during, and after your mission trip. Spiritual warfare is not to be feared, just recognized and prayed against.

- 3) **Fundraising** is mentioned at the first meeting, but the third meeting is the time to fine tune the details. This is a time where your team leader may have you bring fundraising ideas to discuss in order for decisions to be made on what fundraiser will be done and details decided.
 - We strongly suggest that you do a fundraising event even if team funds are not needed. Such an event will help the team to bond. While fundraising is important, team building is the critical piece for the event.

 - If there are extra funds raised, the team can decide on how to allot the funds. Extra funds can be given to the ministry for several different projects such as feeding children, building children's homes, disaster relief, etc.

- 4) **Cultural Considerations:** Cultural tolerance and understanding is an important aspect to a successful serving experience for your team. We have asked your team leader to share the following information with you in this meeting. This information will help with culture shock, culture tolerance, and preparation for their trip.
 - A 30 year civil war that ended in the mid 1990's has left Chichicastenango and surrounding areas in a state of devastation. Many of the indigenous people, especially the men, were the targets of the militia. Those not killed in their fields and homes were "taken prisoner" and never seen again. As a result there are approximately 70,000 widows left in the area of Chichicastenango, Guatemala.

 - In 2003 Pray America/Manos de Jesus arrived in Chichi to help the local community, build relationships and trust, and introduce Jesus to an area in great need. Because we are

a ministry that is representing Jesus to the local community of Chichi, we ask that if your team has any programs, presentations, or prayer meetings that are separate from debrief and devotions that you first have them approved by Pray America staff in order to uphold a welcoming and respectful environment for all people.

- Although locals live in a great amount of poverty they generally earn a living through farming or weaving goods to be sold in the market.
- The market in Chichi is the largest open air market in Central America and occurs on Thursday and Sunday each week. If your team chooses to go on the optional lake trip to Lake Atitlan there is a smaller market that you will be able to shop in. An average income earned for locals is about 80 quezales a day, which is about 10 dollars/day. **The currency exchange rate is about eight quezales to one dollar.** Items are inexpensive, but your money is very valuable to the local economy. However, haggling for an item is definitely a part of the market experience. If you find an item you want to purchase decide what you would be willing to pay for it and try to haggle for that price.
- Women and children are not considered equals as they are in the United States. They are treated as unimportant and disposable. Many children work from a very young age selling in the market.
- In Chichi alcoholism is a large problem. Many of the men are alcoholics and it is easily visible as you walk or drive through town. The hope of the ministry is to bring Christ to the people in Chichi to change the practice of abuse into a practice where men are caring for and loving their families, and respecting women and children like God does.
- Chichicastenango is the center of Mayan idol worship in Guatemala, although the country is listed as a Catholic nation. Catholicism is mixed with Mayan traditions, beliefs, and practices.

We understand that absorbing a new culture full of a great amount of poverty can be difficult, and every individual reacts differently. Please remember that your actions, words, and attitudes are all representations of the ministry and a christian witness while you are in Guatemala. Many spanish or quiche speaking locals understand english even if they don't speak it. During your trip if you have any questions our staff is there to help through culture shock and to help you better understand the culture in Chichicastenango.

5) **Trip Expectations:** Every team member will have different expectations for your trip in Guatemala. Some individuals may not have any, but it can be very helpful to discuss expectations because a mission trip is usually a way that God grows us. Our staff may also ask the expectations question again once you are in Guatemala as a way to bond with the team, and because expectations can change as your mission experience unfolds.

Sometimes it can be hard to calculate expectations and a helpful place to start is to be reminded that you **are in Guatemala to serve, not to be served**. The following serving order is a helpful tool for you to remember during your trip in Guatemala.

Serving Order:

- 1) Widows and locals
- 2) Pray America Staff (which includes individuals from the local community)
- 3) Other team members
- 4) Yourself

As a team there are other expectations aside from emotional and spiritual expectations. These expectations include logistics, donations that your team has brought with, reflection time, and safety of the group.

Logistics: All your transportation, meals, and accommodations have been arranged by the ministry previous to your arrival in Guatemala. It is important to Pray America that you enjoy your experience in Guatemala. The average trip consists of a team spending seven nights in Guatemala, building houses for widows, helping at the feeding programs, going to church and market on Sunday, doing the optional lake trip, and debriefing in the evenings with our Team Coordinator(s).

- Pray America enjoys and welcomes the diversity of all dominations that teams bring to Guatemala. For the safety and/or comfort of all people on ministry staff and the team **we require that any programs, presentations, or prayer meetings that are separate from debrief and devotions are approved first by Pray America staff**. With the vast diversity of denominations that the ministry does host we want to provide a respectful and welcoming environment to all people. Thank you for your understanding in this area of our ministry.

Donations: Your team may choose to bring items to donate to the ministry, to the widow and her family, and to other possible people in need. This is optional, but in the case that you have raised more money than what your team needs you are welcome to bring additional donations with you. The Trip Coordinator can offer donation suggestions if needed. Remember with airline baggage fees you may have additional add-on fees to cover.

Debriefing Time: In the evenings the Team Coordinators will lead a debriefing session. Debriefing is critical to making the trip experience one of the heart. These meetings are when team members will process their present experience in Guatemala. The debrief meetings are an expected part of each team trip and the Team Coordinator(s) will be leading this each evening.

- **Conflicted Feelings** are a part of the experience when what one sees and does on the trip enters the heart and not just the head. All feelings are okay, safe to share, and a part of how God is working in your heart and life.

- **Dealing with Guilt** may be a struggle. You and your team may be dealing with seeing God’s kingdom through American glasses. Due to where you have lived, what you have and the culture of your own country, you may feel conflict between what you see and what you feel. This is a normal reaction and a topic our Team Coordinator(s) may encourage you to discuss during debrief.

- Many teams do **devotions** and your team leader might build in a devotion time for your team.

Safety: During your stay in Guatemala you are always in the care of the ministry. It is a high priority of the ministry to take especially good care of each team that travels with Pray America to Guatemala. The mission house rules are included at the end of this manual and are to keep you safe during your trip.

- Pray America’s Team Coordinator(s) will be nearby for any needs or concerns that you may have.

6) **What to Pack:** Depending on what time of the year you are traveling to Guatemala depends on what clothing you should pack. The dry season is hot and is typically from January through April. Pack clothing appropriate for hot weather if you are traveling to Guatemala during the dry season. The rainy season is cooler and is typically from May through December. Pack clothing appropriate for any type of weather, but especially for rain and cooler temperatures if traveling to Guatemala during the rainy season.

- Bring hand sanitizer to keep from getting sick.
- Bring sunscreen even if they don’t usually burn. Since you will be at elevations between 7,000 to 10,000 feet above sea level it is very easy to get sun burned. We recommend a sunscreen with an spf of at least 30.

Packing List

- _____ Bible
- _____ Journal/notebook and pen/pencil
- _____ Work and painting clothing
- _____ Work gloves
- _____ Casual clothing
- _____ Leisure clothing for wear around the house
- _____ Good walking shoes for outdoor work
- _____ Sandals or comfortable shoes
- _____ Hand sanitizer (small travel size)
- _____ Travel-size toilet paper

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- _____ Sunscreen/hat (even if you don't wear it at home!)
- _____ Travel medication (Ibuprofen, Pepto tablets, Immodium AD, etc.)
- _____ Personal items (inhaler, etc.)
- _____ Backpack
- _____ Rain poncho
- _____ Bug spray
- _____ Flashlight
- _____ Snack items for yourself (granola bars, crackers and cheese, etc.)

Additional Donations (optional):

- _____ Financial donations for the feeding programs
(\$15 feeds a child twice a week each month)
- _____ Extra donations for the widow(s) you are building a house(s) for
- _____ School supplies and coloring books for children
- _____ Gently used or new Soccer balls
- _____ Clothing and shoes for children
- _____ Toys (example: match box cars, small stuffed animals, etc.)

Mission House Rules

Our Team Coordinator(s) will go over this list of rules with the team the day you arrive at the mission house in Guatemala. These rules are for your safety and for logistics to run smoothly.

1. BATHROOM: Toilet paper goes in the waste basket near the toilet. Please do not flush any toilet paper because the plumbing can't handle it. If you accidentally put toilet paper in the toilet please flush twice.

2. DIRTY WATER: It's important you don't drink the local water in order to not get sick.

- Two of the most common problems with water are **brushing your teeth and taking a shower**. Try to keep from getting shower water in your mouth. If you accidentally put your tooth brush under the water wash it with hand sanitizer and then rinse with pure water from a water bottle.

3. DRINKS: We supply bottled water and soft drinks for teams, but we try to conserve as much as possible when it comes to drinks.

- We supply **bottled water** for your use while you are here. We have two water coolers in the kitchen where you can refill your bottle. We request you refill your bottle as

opposed to grabbing a new one each time you empty it. Please drink as much water as possible to discourage altitude sickness and heat exhaustion.

- There is a refrigerator located in the dining room at the mission house which is stocked with a variety of **soft drinks**. Each team member is allowed **one soft drink per day**. If you require more than that there are several stores and tiendas (stores) within walking distance that sell soft drinks.

3. LAUNDRY: Each group is allowed **one day** in the middle of your stay to do laundry. Please work together so that you minimize the number of loads. Sometimes if it is very rainy we can possibly have more time for laundry.

4. CLEANING: After meals please help clean dishes and remaining food off the table, and help the kitchen staff wash and dry the dishes. Your team leader can help organize a system that works for you as a team. We do a twice dry system. This is where we have each dish dried twice to make sure they all get completely dry in order to keep people from getting sick from the water.

5. COMPUTER USE: The ministry used to provide a computer for team use, but we no longer do. We strongly encourage teams not to use a computer during their stay so that you can be focused on your experience here in Guatemala.

- If an emergency occurs and a computer is needed please let someone with the ministry staff know and we will try to help you in such a situation.
- If computer use is necessary please use during the hours of 8:30pm to 7:30am.

6. DRESS CODE: We ask teams to follow a general dress code that is respectful of the culture in Guatemala. Appropriate attire is a shirt that covers your shoulders and shorts that are knee length or longer. No tank tops or short shorts please.

7. BE ON TIME & FLEXIBLE: We ask teams to be on time as it helps for logistics to run smoothly, but at the same time to please be flexible. Guatemalan culture is different than American culture with time constraints, and schedules change often and without notice at times. We appreciate your patience in this area.

8. LEAVING THE MISSION HOUSE: If you want to leave the mission house to walk around Chichi or Monte Flor, let your team leader know where you are going, when you are leaving, and when you expect to be back, especially if you go out after dark. Please go out in teams rather than alone. Pray America is responsible for your safety so we need to know where everyone is if plans change.

9. NOISE CURFEW: The ministry's noise curfew is 10:00pm. We know that people run on different time schedules. You don't have to go to sleep at this time, but we ask that you are respectful to everyone else in the house with concern to noise.

10. EXCHANGING MONEY: Any money you need to exchange give to your team leader who will give it to the Team Coordinator(s) to exchange at the bank. We like to **exchange everyone's money all at the same time and only once during the week** so please coordinate with your team leader.

11. MARKET: On market day you will have the opportunity to shop and experience market. Items are inexpensive, yet your money is very valuable to the local economy. However, haggling for an item is definitely a part of the market experience. If you find an item that you want to purchase decide what you would be willing to pay for it and try to haggle for that price.

- Please do not buy any of the masks, idol like items, or any animal carvings as many times they have a curse placed on them.
- There are many foods that are fun to buy in the market and we encourage you to buy fruits or vegetables that look interesting to you. However, before you eat any market food bring it back to the mission house and have the kitchen staff clean it so you don't get sick from bacteria on the food.

12. BUILDING SITES: When building houses we want you to enjoy the full experience. We strongly encourage each team member to interact with the family that you are building the house for, however, remember to keep working on the house in order to finish it in a timely manner.

- In the past we have let team members use the chainsaws, but we no longer allow this for safety and liability reasons.
- Make sure to wear plenty of sunscreen and drink lots of water at the building sites or while working outdoors.

13. RELAYING INFORMATION: Any information that needs to be given to the team the Team Coordinator(s) give to the team leader and he/she will relay the information to the team. If any team members have questions or concerns please go to your team leader with them and the team leader will go the the Team Coordinator(s). We do this to keep the channels of communication orderly and so everyone has correct information.

14. ITEMS FOR SALE: The ministry has T-shirts, coffee, and shoes for sale that you can purchase while you are in Guatemala. T-shirts come in a variety of sizes, colors, and designs and cost \$10.00 or Q80 per shirt; coffee is sold in one pound bags and is \$5.00 per bag or Q40; the shoes are made by hand at the ministry shoe factory and cost \$15 or Q120 for one pair of shoes. The Team Coordinator(s) will assist you in purchasing any of these items during your trip.

