



Costa Rica Mission Trip
July 18-25, 2015

**FROM RAY & LIDIA ZIRKEL,
MISSIONARIES SERVING WITH THE METHODIST CHURCH OF COSTA RICA**

FROM THE TEAM LEADER'S WELCOME LETTER

. . . It is our continual prayer that every team member will be strengthened in their own personal relationship with Christ through the multiple areas of ministry which they will be involved in while in Costa Rica (*work at the construction site, VBS, worship services with the local churches, and various forms of evangelism and outreach*). In addition, it is our prayer that each team member will offer support and encouragement to Costa Rican Christians and non-Christians alike, so that the Church's mission might be fulfilled as more people come to know Christ and are incorporated into the local church where they can be nurtured and disciplined.

Know that we love you and remember you often before our Lord.

In Christ's name and for His glory,

Ray and Lidia

TASKS

WORK PROJECT:

The Methodist Children's Home & Methodist Seminary in San José

The main focus for the year will be at the Methodist Children's Home located just outside the community of Coronado (20 minutes northeast of downtown San José). We began preliminary work in 2007 and completed construction of the first home in March of 2011. The first children arrived in June 2011. We immediately began work on the second home and finished it this past April. In just a few short weeks it too was filled to capacity. Today (October '14) we have 21 children living at the Methodist Children's Home. Most of the teams for 2015 will be working on our multi-purpose building which will add a much needed resource (especially during rainy season) for the Home. Additional projects will include work on the administration building and securing the perimeter wall.

MINISTRY PROJECT:

Vacation Bible School

We will host Vacation Bible Schools one time during the week. We will work directly with the churches in the greater San José area and will hold VBS and worship services with them. Plan on having about 85 children at each VBS, even though the number of children that show up can vary from anywhere between 10 and 150. The children generally range in age from 3 to 12 years old.

You will have approximately 1 and 1/2 hours for each VBS. This will include:

- singing and dancing (15 minutes),
- prayer time and a Bible lesson (15+ minutes; using skits/dramas, stories, puppets, Q&A time, etc.),
- **two** crafts (25 minutes; this is your opportunity to share one-on-one with the children, so please take advantage of every minute you have with them),

- and games that you bring (20 minutes to play various games, outside activities).

Finally, although we know that folks love to pass out as many goodies (candy, toys, etc.) as possible to the children as they leave VBS, we would like to respectfully ask that you **plan to hand out only one small item for each child at the very end of the VBS time together.** Any other treats, toys etc. that you may have to hand out should be given directly to the pastor and Sunday school teachers, as they will put them to good use throughout the remainder of the year and will distribute them to those in greatest need.

The remaining days, we will be with the children at the children's home.

SCHEDULE

DAILY SCHEDULE

Recognizing that the key word for survival in Costa Rica is "flexibility," and that the schedule can change according to various needs and factors out of one's control, a "typical" Monday-Thursday work team day will look something like the following:

6:30	Devotion & Breakfast
7:15	Load up bus
8:00	Arrive at worksite
12:00	Break for lunch
1: 00	Begin work again
2: 45	Begin clean up at work site
3: 15	Head to VBS (Entire team)
4:00	VBS
5: 45	Back to Seminary
6: 45	Dinner
7:30	Group time, Devotionals, and Free time

TEAM

CLOTHING / DRESS

Worksite

While at the worksite, remember that you'll be working in dirt, with concrete, around rebar, and with big tools.

We recommend that you wear a t-shirt or work shirt, long pants, sturdy close-toed shoes, and a hat. Work gloves and a bandana would also prove invaluable.

We do allow **long** shorts; however, **please refrain from wearing tank tops or sleeveless shirts**, or shirts with their shirrtails cut off of them, as these are not in good taste by Costa Rican standards.

For those working at the orphanage in Coronado, a light jacket and rain gear is a must as it gets quite cool at 5,000 feet elevation!

Also, teams typically leave straight from the worksite to do VBS at the churches. Team members will need to bring a fresh shirt or a change of clothes before heading to VBS.

Church

When attending church services, we recommend a nice shirt and khakis/slacks for the guys, and skirts or dresses for the girls (although pants, crop pants, and capris are also acceptable).

Free day(s)

While it's up to your team members to decide how they're most comfortable away from the worksite, we recommend sturdy shoes or strapped-sandals for any outdoor activities and a light jacket for any teams who will be traveling in the mountains. And modest dress is always appreciated.

MONEY

TEAM GIFT-GIVING

On the last day of work, or after VBS, the mission teams usually bring thank you gifts for the construction workers, kitchen helpers, pastors, and VBS helpers (\$10 or less/gift). The type of gift you bring is totally up to you. The Costa Ricans always enjoy receiving something unique from your church, city or state. A team t-shirt is more than an adequate example! We usually have three or four men from the church working at the site.

*****Special note: Beyond these team gifts which, again, can be shared on the last day of work or after VBS (not during worship services), any other sharing of gifts/money, etc. with other members of the community/church is strongly discouraged, and we ask that you refrain from doing so.*** If you, or another other individuals from your team, would like to contribute to the local congregation, offerings are collected in each church worship service. If you perceive another particular need, Ray and Lidia can assist you in directing funds in an appropriate manner.

OTHER TIDBITS

Cash is Best

All money that you bring into Costa Rica should be in the form of **cash**, US\$. Traveler's checks are not widely accepted and credit card fees down here can put a significant dent in your pocket. You can use an American debit card to withdraw cash at almost every ATM in Costa Rica, if you don't feel safe bringing large amounts of cash with your team.

THE COVENANT

While in Costa Rica, you and your team members are guests of the Methodist Church. Everywhere you go (hotels, worksites, churches, beach resorts, restaurants, any other free day locations, etc.) and whatever you do, will be a direct reflection on the Methodist Church and its ministry.

For this reason, we ask that you please respect the Methodist Church of Costa Rica's standards and practices while in the country. By not doing so, you send "mixed messages" to those with whom you have direct and/or indirect contact. We recognize that there are multiple forms of ministry and opportunities to serve in missions; therefore, if one of your team members feels he/she is unable to commit to the covenant, we would suggest that you encourage him/her to consider another place of service at this time.

LOCAL/EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

Iglesia Evangelica Metodista, Centro Juan Wesley; De Burger King, 100 metros este, 150 sur; San Juan de Tibas; San José, Costa Rica. Phone: 506-2-236-2171.

FIRST-CENTENARY SPECIFIC INFORMATION

FAQ

This is primarily a construction trip and I am not even that skilled with a hammer. Can I make a meaningful contribution?

There are all sorts of tasks to be done. Prior construction knowledge is NOT required. What construction knowledge you need will be provided through OJT (on-the-job) training. There are some non-construction tasks, too. This is about serving God. God loves each of us and uses each of us.

I don't speak Spanish.

Speaking Spanish isn't necessary. We'll have fluent speakers with us as well as some Spanish "understanders" on the trip. The people around us work with people like us all the time and are pretty good at "universal sign language". In stores and other public places there is usually an English speaking person.

How many people are going?

The group will be between 10 and 20 people.

What kind of people will be going?

All of God's people. Every generation, marital status, social status, and political view will be present. Vine service, early service, and late service worshipers.

Can I invite a friend from another church?

We welcome anyone who is willing to covenant with us in service to God and the Costa Rican Methodist church.

How much does the trip cost?

The cost is approximately \$1,500.00. There are five deadlines for payments—2/28, 3/31, 4/30, 5/31, and 6/30.

Is the trip cost all-inclusive?

No. You will need to pay an exit tax of \$29 when leaving Costa Rica plus your meals on travel days. In addition, you will need to pay the costs of our free day. Evening walks for ice cream and side trips to bakeries are extra. Most people will also take extra money for souvenirs. Aside from souvenirs, a modest budget amount is \$175.

What if I'd really like to serve God in this way, but don't have the financial resources?

Everyone is asked to contribute at least \$500. The team will have several fund raisers you will need to participate in to help finance the trip. There is also a little scholarship money available to us to "fill in the gaps", if needed.

Do I have to fund raise?

No. Those who participate in the fund raising activities will receive a discount. The amount of the discount will be computed prior to the due date of the last payment and is dependent upon how much is raised and how much financial assistance is needed to support those unable to commit to fully funding their costs on their own.

What if I have paid and it turns out I can't go?

The majority of the cost is paid significantly in advance and cannot be fully refunded. Some costs are not incurred until closer to our departure date and can be refunded. We do buy trip insurance, so in the case of a covered event, the trip insurance will cover the payments you have made to that point. Please let us know as soon as possible if you have a suspicion that you may not be able to go and we will work with you.

Where exactly are we going?

We will fly to San Jose and be taken to the Methodist Seminary offices – Wesley House – in San José (Tibas). The children's home is located in Coronado. Neither of these locations is in an area known to be at-risk for malaria.

What will our accommodations be like?

There are several sleeping rooms of various sizes with bunk/twin beds. We will share uni-sex bathrooms. There is a full kitchen and common areas for our use.

I see we will work Monday through Thursday. What about the other days?

We will leave church on Saturday and fly to San Jose. We will be taken to our lodging and settle in. Sunday we attend a local church, eat lunch, and then may visit the work site and/or an open air market. Monday through Thursdays are work days. Friday is our free day where we travel Costa Rica a bit. Saturday we load up and fly home. Some nights we will go to the store or an ice cream parlor or such on foot. Each day we will have group devotions.

INFORMATION

1ST-CENTENARY

Forms for the trip - <http://www.firstcentenary.com/mission-trips>

US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

General info on travel to Costa Rica - http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1093.html

Passports - http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

HAMILTON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Immunizations

Costa Rica (San Jose area) recommendations - Overseas Travel Department – 423-209-8340

Typhoid (lasts 2 years as vaccine, 5 years in pill form)

Hepatitis A (series of two shots)

General recommendations

Tetanus (lasts 10 years)

HOGAR METODISTA

Methodist Children's Home – <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Methodist-Childrens-Home-of-Costa-Rica/260096430686699>

PACKING TIPS

THINGS TO TAKE

Bible	Bandana	Bug spray with DEET
Jacket	Work gloves	Hygiene items including soap & shampoo
Rain coat (it <i>will</i> rain daily)	Water bottle	Prescription medication
Small umbrella	Camera, extra batteries and memory cards	Aspirin/Tylenol/Aleve/Advil
Long sleeve shirts	Sunscreen (think Equator)	Ink pen to carry on airplane
Shower shoes	Chapstick	
Hat		

MISCELLANEOUS

The only supplies that will need to be taken in our personal luggage are VBS supplies

Group laundry will be done daily

No sheets, towels or electrical converters needed

For cash money – no bills larger than \$20, tens and fives are best.

We should have wireless internet access

DEADLINES

3/31

- Deposit (\$500)
- Financial commitment
- Protect My Ministry Disclosure and Authorization
- Methodist Church of Costa Rica Covenant
- Copy of front page of passport
- Delta Skymiles number (if applicable) _____
- Schedule special immunizations
- Contact your physician for additional immunizations and completion of physician's release

4/30

- Third deposit (\$400)
- UMVIM online forms
- UMVIM Notification of Death
- UMVIM Medical Release
- UMVIM Physician's Release
- UNVIM Parental Consent Form (minors only)

5/31

- Fourth deposit (\$300)

6/30

- Final payment (TBD/ \$300)

TEAM ORGANIZER

Tina Harris – tinaharris@catt.com, 706.937.5508 (H), 423.653.4533 (C)

LANGUAGE

We will generally be accompanied by Spanish speaking college interns who are spending the summer in Costa Rica. Hopefully, we will have at least one Spanish speaking team member.

WORDS AND PHRASES (COMPILED BY DEBRA DICKERSON)

GENERAL WORDS AND PHRASES

Hi / Hello	Hola
Good morning.	Buenos días.
Good afternoon.	Buenas tardes.
Good evening. / Good night.	Buenas noches.
Yes / No	Si / No
OK	De acuerdo
Please	Por favor
May I?	¿Me permite?
Thank you (very much).	(Muchas) gracias.
You're welcome.	Con mucho gusto.
Excuse me.	Con permiso.
Pardon me.	¿Perdón?
I'm sorry.	Disculpe.
My name is _____	Me llamo _____
What's your name?	¿Cómo se llama (usted)?
Pleased to meet you.	Mucho gusto.
How are you?	¿Cómo está (usted)?
I'm very well, thank you.	Muy bien, gracias.
And you?	Y usted?
I don't speak Spanish.	No hablo español.
I speak a little Spanish.	Hablo un poco de español.
I'm learning.	Estoy aprendiendo.
Could you speak more slowly please?	Mas despacio, por favor.
Do you speak English?	¿Habla (usted) inglés?
I don't understand (you).	No entiendo.
I understand (you).	Entiendo.
How do you say _____?	¿Cómo se dice _____?
I don't know.	No sé.
Where is _____?	¿Dónde está _____?

SHOPPING

How much is it?	¿Cuánto cuesta?
receipt	el recibo
I'm just looking.	Sólo estoy mirando.
Do you have others?	¿Tiene otros?

SPEAKING WITH CHILDREN

What's your name?	¿Cómo te llamas?
How old are you?	¿Cuántos años tienes?
I am _____ years old.	Tengo _____ años.

When is your birthday?	¿Cuándo es tu cumpleaños?
Do you have brothers and sisters?	¿Tienes hermanos y hermanas?
Do you have a pet at home?	¿Tienes alguna mascota?
Do you study English?	¿Estudias inglés?
I come from very far away.	Vengo de muy lejos.

CHURCH /MISSION TRIP

Bible	la biblia	Christ	Cristo
God	Dios	Jesus Christ	Jesucristo
songs	los cantos / los coritos	faith	la fe
missionary	el misionero / la misionera	eternal life	la vida eterna
prayer	la oración	testimony / witness	el testimonio
church	la iglesia	Holy Spirit	el Espíritu Santo
sin	el pecado	to believe	creer
believer	un creyente		