

Information Sheet for Mission Trip to El Salvador 2008
Saint Paul's Natick/Saint Mary's Newton
November 17, 2007

St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Natick and St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Newton are planning a joint mission trip to El Salvador for 2008. This trip builds on the experiences of a prior trip that three people from St. Paul's and St. Mary's made to El Salvador in June 2007, as well as St. Mary's historic relationship with a sister parish in El Salvador.

This short document summarizes key information about the trip. Please direct questions to either Mark McKone-Sweet (781) 801-3586, mark.mc-s@comcast.net or Paul Pyzowski (617-331-3446, paul@pyzowski.com)

Important Note: Kick-Off Session on Sunday December 9

The kick-off session is scheduled for Sunday, December 9, 7:30PM, at St. Mary's in Newton. Confirmed mission team members are asked to bring a check for \$100 to secure your spot on the trip.

We realize that most of us have busy schedules, and that other unexpected commitments can come up in the months leading up to the trip. However we need to have a firm, not tentative, commitment to participate on the trip on December 9.

General Information

Mission Team Composition

Due to constraints at our host parish in El Salvador, the team can have a maximum of twelve people. Each parish has six slots. In the event a parish has more than six members that would like to participate, the individual parish will make the decision regarding who participates.

Tentative Dates and Itinerary

On the current schedule, the mission team will depart Boston on Saturday, April 5, and return to Boston on Monday, April 13. However, the trip dates may be moved to May. As guests of the Bishop and the Diocese of El Salvador our schedule will be formed and adjusted as needed. We understand that schedules and time-off need to be planned months in advance, and will endeavor to have the trip dates finalized ASAP.

The details of the itinerary will be fully developed in early 2008. The itinerary could be similar to this typical mission team week:

Saturday	Arrive in San Salvador
Sunday	Worship and fellowship with local church(es)
Monday	Visit historic and religious sites in El Salvador
Tuesday to Friday	Work Project (to be determined)
Saturday	Free Day
Sunday	Worship and fellowship with local church(es)
Monday	Depart from San Salvador

Costs

The cost of the trip for each participant will be approximately \$1500. This includes airfare (~\$650), lodging/food/transport/miscellaneous in El Salvador (~\$750), and ~\$200 project costs.

We will work hard to keep costs down. During our Mission Trip in June 2007, Bishop Baharona specifically told us to go home and raise money for another visit – he said “DO NOT SEND ME A CHECK”. Developing relationships is the top priority for mission team and their home parishes.

It is expected that the Mission Team will work together to fund raise a significant portion of the costs of the trip. Each individual (and/or their supporting parish) is responsible for their costs that are not covered by fundraising.

Accommodations

The Mission Team will be staying at the Anglican Residence at San Juan Evangelista in the city of San Salvador. The residence has four to eight beds per room, shared shower facilities, and a kitchen area where meals are prepared by the staff.

Safety, Health, Climate

El Salvador is one of the poorest and most violent countries in the Western Hemisphere. The combination of tropical climate and third-world health care means that disease passed through food, water, or insects is a concern as well. You need to be aware that in going on this trip you will be facing risks that don't really exist in the U.S., and you will be asked to sign a waiver prior to departure.

However, proper preparation, precautions, common sense, and the experience of both the mission team leaders and local church members will minimize the probabilities that something unpleasant will happen.

Team Member Commitments

As discussed above, each team member will be responsible financially for a portion of the trip costs. The precise amount will depend on the actual budget as well as the amount the team is able to fundraise.

In addition, each team member is expected to attend all four two-hour preparatory sessions prior to departure, a send off social with dinner, as well as one post-trip session. The four preparatory sessions will be held once a month (January to April), likely on a Sunday evening. These preparatory sessions will cover topics including historical background on El Salvador, spiritual and mental preparations, project planning and fund-raising, packing and immunizations.

Who me?

Mission work does not have the word “I” in it – we are team of Christians seeking Christ in others – and ourselves. We are excited that you have taken an interest in this collaborative mission team. We believe that despite your perceived limitations – that God has already prepared you (& everyone of us) for this ministry.

We welcome you with open arms.

Tus Amigos,

Paul & Mark