
DEAR PARENTS,

As you may know, our youth group is planning a mission trip this summer. While we understand kids have super busy schedules, we also want you to understand the tremendous, life-changing impact a mission trip like this will have on your child. In today's world where so many activities focus on personal achievements and subtly contribute to the pressures on kids today, a mission trip can have a radically significant impact on the growth of your son or daughter, and the experience offers unparalleled personal development, skill-building, and spiritual growth.

We've chosen to partner with a well-respected nonprofit organization, Group Mission Trips, for our mission trip because they have decades of experience in offering the highest level of safe, meaningful, hands-on service experiences along with intentional programming designed to invest the most valuable life skills and spiritual growth in today's teenagers.

In addition to the community service certificate your son or daughter will earn on this mission trip they'll also discover and develop essential skills they'll use for a lifetime:

- **Responsibility:** Your son/daughter will work in a crew of 4–5 other teenagers and 1 adult leader at an assigned location to complete a service project over the course of 5 days. Every member of the crew has an important role which includes ownership of specific responsibilities, learning effective time management, and being a valuable and equal contributor to the team.
- **Teamwork/Relationships:** By working together as a team with one common goal, your teenager will learn how to navigate relationships, utilize effective communication, and discover the satisfaction of accomplishing a project that is bigger than each of them individually.
- **Resilience/Problem Solving:** While mission trips are fun, they are not vacations and teenagers may likely face challenges such as hard (sweaty) work, dealing with new/different people, etc. Every year crews find creative and clever solutions to overcome obstacles and accomplish their tasks, and learn how to persevere, ask questions, work together, and thrive.
- **Confidence/Self-worth:** The secret behind every mission trip is not in the actual tasks kids accomplish, but in the transformation that occurs when they realize what it feels like to reach beyond themselves and serve and love others. Even more importantly, the program is designed to pour God's love into teenagers and remind them they are unconditionally loved, known, valuable, and worthy.
- **Compassion:** Many teenagers have a very limited view of the real world around them, and simply lack exposure to the realities of people living in poverty. Being immersed in a community in need and building relationships with the residents they serve is eye-opening and soul-shifting—and an important catalyst for growing beyond a self-focused perspective and discovering the ever-lasting joy of helping others.
- **Spiritual Growth:** Your son/daughter will attend morning and evening programs with worship and teaching that are interactive, fun, Scripture-based, and designed to grow their faith in Jesus. There will also be meaningful devotions during lunch and opportunities for deeper conversations within our youth group to discuss everything they're experiencing during the week.

Your support is crucial in getting your kids on this life-changing trip! Thank you for encouraging them to put their faith in action and investing in what we believe can be one of the most important weeks in your teenagers' lives.

Sincerely,

The Education and Spiritual Growth Committee
