



# Contributions and Raising Support for Short Term Trips

## Policies for Summit Short-Term Trips

- Your first action step when you are officially approved for a trip is to **PAY YOUR DEPOSIT** (\$300 for international trips, and \$100 for domestic trips). Please note that this is a non-refundable and non-transferable deposit that will be credited towards the total cost of your trip. You will not be considered an official member of the team until you have completed your application and have paid your deposit. Your initial deposit can be **given online** at [summitchurch.com/give/trips](http://summitchurch.com/give/trips). You'll select your name as well as selecting your trip name.
  - ◆ If you have questions about your deposit, please email [sending@summitchurch.com](mailto:sending@summitchurch.com).
  
- **How people give towards your trip** – After applying, being accepted, and paying your deposit, your next step is to raise support. Again, you must pay your non-refundable, non-transferable deposit (see first section above) before the church can accept contributions on your behalf. All contributions made to the Summit Church are considered tax-deductible expenses and are non-refundable. Once you've paid your deposit, contributions can be made by you or your supporters in two ways:
  - ◆ **Give Online** at [summitchurch.com/give/trips](http://summitchurch.com/give/trips). Contributors will be asked to select your trip name as well as selecting your name. *It is our preference for contributors to give online, if possible.*
  
  - ◆ **Mail a Check** to the church, with a slip of paper indicating “*name of trip - trip participant name*”. Checks should be payable to The Summit Church. If you receive any checks from contributors, you should submit them to your Team Leader or to your Sending Coordinator on a weekly basis along with a slip of paper stating your name and the name of your trip. Checks can be mailed to:

The Summit Church  
Attn: Int'l Sending Team  
2335 Presidential Dr, Suite 114  
Durham, NC 27703
  
- **Payment deadlines** – In general, Summit international short-term trips will follow these financial deadlines:
  - ◆ **4 months from departure:** All deposits are due once you are accepted to the team.
  - ◆ **2.5 months from departure:** Majority of funds are due and airline tickets are purchased. All team members must meet this goal before tickets can be bought for any team members. Airline tickets will not be purchased for those who miss this deadline.
  - ◆ **1 month from trip departure: The full cost of the trip is due for all participants.**
  
- **Contributions are for the trip, not individual participants** – All monies given to the Summit Church are given for the mission trip, not for individual team members; however, each team member is expected to contribute or raise support for their portion of the total trip expenses.

Money contributed to the church by you or at your request will be used to cover trip expenses and is non-refundable, even if you are unable to participate in the trip (except for a medical withdrawal) or receive contributions in excess of your share of expenses. Each participant will be responsible for paying all costs incurred by the church on their behalf for the trip. All funds contributed to the Summit Church for your team are given for the church planting efforts of the church and are subject to tax laws and the financial policies of the church.

- **Everyone going on a Summit trip has already received a subsidy** – Trips administered by the Summit have been subsidized with missions funds. The published trip cost reflects this subsidy, reducing the amount for which you are responsible. Since the church has covered a portion of your costs, additional scholarship money is not available; you will need to cover the entire portion of team expenses communicated to you by your trip leader.
- **Staff member scholarships** – Summit staff and non-staff members are eligible for a trip scholarship if they are leading or co-leading a trip. Any additional staff scholarships will be determined by your campus sending coordinator. Once the scholarship amount has been determined, staff members must fill out this [form](#) to see the scholarship amount applied to their trip page.
- **Viewing contributions** – You are able to view the contributions made to the church at your request by logging into your trip page on the church website. Please allow at least 7 business days for any check or cash contributions to post to your trip account.
- **If you raise more than your fundraising goal** – If you raise more than the total cost of the trip, the extra funds will be used to help cover any unforeseen or emergency expenses for your trip or help cover any team members who are struggling to reach their goal. If your team is fully funded, the extra monies will be placed into a general fund to help subsidize future mission trips. The Sending Team will make all decisions about the allocation of team overages once the final payment deadline for your trip has passed.
- **Cancellation policy:** Occasionally, we have someone drop from a team or the trip is altogether canceled. Here are our policies you should be aware of, in case of cancellation.
  - ◆ **Cancellation by Participant** – If you have to withdraw from a trip, there are several things you should know:
    - Deposits are never refundable except for a medical emergency withdrawal.
    - Other contributions made on your behalf are also not refundable if the trip takes place. Contributions are refundable only if Summit cancels the trip (see below).
  - ◆ **Cancellation due to team size or at the field partner's request** - If the trip is canceled because your team numbers drop and your team no longer meets the minimum required team size, or the field partner cancels the trip, there are several things you should know:
    - Deposits will be refunded
    - Contributions made by your supporters are refundable but must be made at the request of the contributor.
    - You may also transfer your contributions to another trip, but must choose a trip to transfer to within 30 days of your trip being canceled. Otherwise, all contributions will be transferred to a missions account to support future short term trips.

## **Best Practices for Support Raising**

- One of the first steps of your trip is trusting God through steps of faith to provide the funds. It can be a time-consuming process, so get started as soon as you are accepted to the trip. Don't procrastinate.
- **Why Support Letters?** We advise you to send out support letters regardless of how much you can pay with your own funds. Henri Nouwen defined fundraising as *“proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission.”* This article about [Obstacles to Support Raising](#) may help answer some questions. Remember:
  - ◆ You are raising supporters, not just support. You are looking for a team of people to invest in what God is doing in your life and in the Kingdom, not just asking people for money. You also want a team of people praying for you as you go, and the support raising process is perfect for building that prayer team.
  - ◆ This is an opportunity to challenge other Christians to be involved around the world. Your obedience to go and support our long-term field partners in their great commission work may be what God uses to rally someone else to obedience. Pray and ask that God would use your support raising process to raise up other laborers for the harvest field (Matthew 9:38).
- **Who?** Ask the Lord's help in coming up with your support list. Don't be shy - send letters to friends, family, extended family, coworkers, non-believers, neighbors, etc. Your letter may be an opening for you to share the Gospel with non-believers as they ask questions about why you want to take your time and money to serve halfway around the world. You will be amazed how God will raise funds for you as you let Him direct you. We recommended sending out at least 30-50 support letters.
- **When?** As soon as your application is approved and you've paid your deposit, write your letters and put them in the mail or send emails to your list of supporters. Here is a sample timeline:
  - ◆ First Contact (as soon as you have been accepted to a trip)
  - ◆ Follow up phone call or text (1-2 weeks after first contact making sure people received it)
  - ◆ 2nd follow up call (2-4 weeks after, minus people who have already responded)
  - ◆ Send monthly updates to your supporters to let them know what you are learning and how they can be best praying for you
  - ◆ Final ask (1-2 weeks before deadline)
  - ◆ Thank You/Follow-up after the trip is over
- **How?** There are many ways to do this, but here are our suggestions:
  - ◆ Consider format - discern who might receive a letter best (grandma) and who might prefer an email (coworker) or text message (friend/family). **Do not post on social media** unless you have gotten permission from your team leader and have been given instructions on what you can post for security purposes since many of our field workers live in high security areas.
  - ◆ If emailing, send individual emails. Write a personal email, or include your newsletter-style letter as an attachment. (Don't send a mass email). Canva can also be an effective visual tool.
- **Support letter writing best practices:**
  - ◆ Write a personalized note on each letter or email to make it more individualized.
  - ◆ Share your reason for wanting to go on this trip and what God is doing in your life currently.
  - ◆ Ask your team leader to talk to the field partner to help give you info for the letter as far as what the team will be doing, what details will be appropriate to share, etc.
  - ◆ Make sure you mention key financial due dates
  - ◆ Send thank you notes and ongoing updates to build a prayer support team

## Sample Support Letter/Email

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I hope this letter finds you well. God has been doing an amazing work in my life lately. I've been able to share the gospel with a number of my coworkers, and I have grown so much in this process. By God's grace, He's given me a passion to go beyond my office walls to share with others as well.

This Summer I will be participating on a short term mission trip to South Africa with a team from The Summit Church. The Summit Church has been sending teams to work with church planters around the world for a number of years. Each time, God has used the team in wonderful ways to refresh the church planters in the area and reach the surrounding communities. This year a team is going to South Africa to work with our church planter living in the largest city, Johannesburg, and the surrounding areas. I am so excited to be a part of this team!

The primary goal of this mission trip is to work with a local church in an impoverished area of the city. We will assist them as they faithfully strive to present the gospel of Jesus Christ to the people of their mission field. We want to strengthen these church planters and encourage them to persevere. In addition to ministering to our church planters, we will conduct backyard Bible camps, provide some training for the national workers in South Africa. We also plan to prayer walk through different areas of the city and work with refugees from other areas of Africa, many of whom are Muslim.

The trip dates are **June 1 to June 11** and the **total cost is \$2300**. Will you please prayerfully consider partnering with me? Even a small contribution would be greatly appreciated. I believe the return on our joint investment will yield eternal results! **The biggest part of my support is due by March 15**. The remaining portion is due by June 1. If you can assist me financially, you may give a tax-deductible donation in two ways:

- Give online at [summitchurch.com/give/trips](http://summitchurch.com/give/trips). Be sure to select my trip name and my name: **South Africa - June (32456)**. (\*Replace example with your specific trip name\*)
- If you are unable to give online, you can write a check payable to The Summit Church.
- You can mail your tax-deductible gift to:  
The Summit Church  
Attn: Short-Term Trips  
2335-114 Presidential Dr  
Durham, NC, 27703

Finally, I ask for your prayers. If you will pray, then I believe God can use me in a mighty way and do "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine." Please pray for the local church and church planters we are going to serve; pray that God will grant them fruitful ministries. Pray for the spiritual preparation of our entire South Africa Team and for those we will encounter. Pray that I will be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit and obedient to His voice. I appreciate your prayer and support for this trip.

Whether through your prayers or your financial support (or both), I want to say in advance that we are so thankful for your contribution towards helping us participate in God's work in South Africa!

*With gratitude,  
Tom Walters*