

BMPC Guatemala Trip Informational Packet

Thank you for your interest in the intergenerational BMPC Guatemala trip July 25-August 1. Please take your time to read through the following informational packet and if you feel called to apply to be part of the BMPC team that travels to Guatemala, please fill out the attached application and **return to Mary Katherine at the church office by February 14**. Due to the nature of the trip and our intention to strengthen our partnership with Eben Ezer Church through home stays, we are restricted to taking only about 10 church members.

Background

Our congregation has been in partnership with our Guatemalan brothers and sisters at Eben Ezer Church in San Antonio, Guatemala for over 20 years. Many Presbyterian Churches in the Presbytery of Western NC are partnered with Presbyterian Churches in the Guatemalan Presbyteries of Sur Occidente and Suchitepequez.

In order to keep strengthening this partnership, we are taking another intergenerational BMPC trip to Guatemala. Our last church-wide trip was in June 2016, though BMPC members have been part of the annual Presbytery of Western NC the majority of the last 5 years.

Details

Who can apply? Any BMPC member currently 16 years old and older

When are applications due? By **February 14, 2017**, to Mary Katherine.

Why applications? Part of our trip involves home stays with individual in the Eben Ezer church. Hosting more than about 10 people is not feasible for them. Also, due to the nature of travel in Guatemala, our transportation will not hold more than about 10 folks.

Who reviews the applications? Members of the Guatemala trip planning team including Mary Katherine, Dave Kadau, Mary Carroll Dodd.

When will we hear who will be on the BMPC team? By February 26.

How much will it cost? We estimate the total cost of the trip to be about \$1200, but the church is willing to pay up to \$500 per person. So, the cost per participant will be about \$700. This estimate excludes personal preparation expenses (passports, immunizations, malaria pills, etc.). A nonrefundable deposit of \$150 will be due on March 5. A second payment of \$200 will be due April 6th. The final payment will be due May 18th. *Additional financial aid is available. Contact Mary Katherine to inquire.*

How will Mary Katherine, Dave, and Mary Carroll decide who will make up the BMPC Team that goes to Guatemala?

Some of the decision factors will include:

Group dynamics between trip participants, staying true to the intergenerational nature of the trip, the male/female balance, the youth and adult balance, one's leadership gifts, one's language skills, one's ability to adapt and thrive to a developing country context.

Will there be other BMPC trips to Guatemala? YES. While we don't anticipate taking a trip to Guatemala every year, we do hope that this will be one of many BMPC trips that takes small intergenerational teams of BMPC members to be with our partner church in Guatemala.

Are there other opportunities to go to Guatemala next summer? Yes! The Presbytery of Western North Carolina usually takes a trip every summer and fall to Guatemala to visit our partner churches. Jim Layman, Grace Stitt, Lauren Nalley, and Matt Begley have all been on the Presbytery of WNC trips as BMPC representatives.

Goals for the BMPC Guatemala trip

1. Strengthen our relationship with the Black Mountain Presbyterian congregation and the Eben Ezer Church congregation
2. For BMPC team to be encouraged by and learn from our sisters and brothers in Eben Ezer Church
3. For our BMPC team to encourage the Eben Ezer congregation and individuals in the congregation
4. For BMPC to harness buy-in from the whole congregation for the partnership and increase our communication between Eben Ezer members and BMPC members

BMPC Application Guatemala Mission Trip – July 2017

Name _____ Age _____
Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
Phone/Cell _____
email _____

All participants must make certain commitments before, during and after their mission experience. Please consider and initial the below and sign your pledge to pursue them if accepted. Team members will receive additional materials for reflection and study prior to the trip.

___ 1. I commit myself to working with Mary Katherine to help our congregation grow in faith through cultural awareness and a continuing partnership with our sister church.

___ 2. I will pray regularly for all participants in our team and for those with whom we will be interacting in Guatemala, that we will all be sensitive to God's leading.

___ 3. I will participate in Spanish classes with the team at the church.

___ 4. I will study the orientation booklet in preparation for the trip.
(This will be given to all participants at a later date.)

___ 5. I will abide by the guidelines for the team. I understand these exist for the well-being of the group and our relationship with Guatemalans.

___ 6. I will keep a journal of my experience and prepare to share my reflections with others in my church.

___ 7. I will be in good physical health and able to carry my own luggage, walk considerable distances, climb stairs, and walk on uneven terrain.

___ 8. I will choose a good attitude throughout the trip and be willing to step out of my comfort zone.

I pledge myself to do the above.

Signature _____

Date _____

Please answer the following questions briefly on a separate sheet of paper:

1. What would you hope to learn from your brothers and sisters in Christ in Guatemala?
2. Why do you think God is calling you to participate on this trip?
3. In what ways do you think you might be able to strengthen BMPC because of your participation on this team?
4. Do you speak Spanish? If so, with what proficiency?
5. What gifts of personality, skills, and experience will you bring to the team? (The team will need a broad variety of gifts to become a strong team, so include anything you think might help... first aid training, good humor, music, photography, good organizer, etc.)
6. Do you have any health concerns or restrictions or dietary restrictions? If so, please describe.
7. Have you already connected with someone in Guatemala (or other Latin American country)? (Pen pals, alternative giving, making banners, Christmas cards, hearing speakers) If so, please describe:
8. Have you traveled out of the country before? If so, where did you travel and for how long?
9. On a scale of 1 to 10, please rate yourself as to what you expect your ability to adapt to traveling in a developing country. (With 1 being unable to travel out of the country, and 10 being an expert traveler in developing countries)

Submit by February 14th to **Mary Katherine**. You will be notified by February 26th.