

Support Raising Packet

Introduction

Welcome!

As followers of Christ we are commissioned to be continually inviting people into a deeper relationship with Him. Giving others opportunity to be used by God is a tremendous blessing! Be encouraged, God wants people to be praying for you on this trip, as well as supporting you through their financial gifts!

Why Raise Support?

Every team member/family needs support from the wider body of Christ. We need the encouragement that comes from knowing friends and family members are behind us. We need the strength and protection that comes through prayer. And we need the Holy Spirit going before us to prepare hearts for the Gospel message.

Therefore, we highly suggest that all team members send out support letters. A support letter asks for the involvement of people in prayer and/or financial support. We want each team member/family to develop a support team. Not only will this further our mission, but it will involve many more people in it, strengthening and growing the church in its passion for God's mission.

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation." Mark 16:15

Part of your spiritual preparation for this trip is raising your support. You have the desire to go, but may not have the personal finances to make it possible. We have good news! God wants to provide!

*"God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's supply."
Hudson Taylor; Missionary to China*

"...the worker is worth his keep." (see Matthew 10:5-10)

Jesus and the twelve were supported by others (see Luke 8:1-3)

Paul was supported on his mission trips by others (see Romans 15:20-24)

Keys to Support Raising

Many team members start out thinking of support raising as "begging". Nothing could be further from the truth. Being a follower of Christ, we should always be looking for opportunities to get people involved in God's work. This is not a "necessary evil;" rather, **this is an opportunity** to be used by God to draw people to Himself! Now that's exciting! Literally, think of support raising as an opportunity to share with others what God is doing and allow them to get involved. You'll be shocked by how many people want to support God's work through you. God's plan for this trip is much larger than our own.

Prayer Support

Having the prayer support of others is critical for the success of this mission. Do not make prayer support secondary to financial support.

The recruitment of a prayer support team is mandatory. All team members must obtain commitments for consistent and persistent prayer support. We suggest having **5-10 people** committed to pray for you.

Contact these people in person, by phone, e-mail, or by letter. Make sure they know that you want them to pray for you daily while on the trip and to also be praying for you before and after the trip as the Holy Spirit leads them.


Before you leave on the trip, make sure to provide your prayer support team with a short list of "prayer points" so they can pray specifically and personally for you.

Financial Support

OK, let's admit it – most people don't enjoy raising financial support. It's scary, right? We often feel "strange" asking other people for money. Why is this?

Your biggest obstacle when it comes to raising financial support is not the cost of the trip or the uncertainty of whether or not people will give; the biggest obstacle is probably YOU! **We are the biggest barriers.**

We focus too much on ourselves - wondering what others are going to think of us when we share the need. Will they question our motives, the mission, or will they think that we are poor or too cheap?

 **KEY:** Focus on God rather than yourself! Give God the opportunity to prove Himself able by trusting in Him and faithfully doing your part.

Our focus needs to be on God and Him alone. If we keep our eyes on Him, we will not "sink below the waves" as Peter did when he walked on the water toward Jesus (Matthew 14:25-33). When we share the opportunity to get involved, we should stress how incredible it is to be partnering with God in what He is doing around the world! Let's get ourselves out of the way and allow people to see God in our lives and efforts in this mission.

Even if you can fund your trip yourself, **we highly suggest that all team members consider raising financial support.** There are always supplies to purchase and some team members might need some additional financial help. Also, the national partner might have a special project that could use some funds as well.

There are many "fundraising" ideas, but the one tool that seems to be the most effective is the **sending of personal letters.** It is highly personal and allows for the communication of your passion to "Go" as well as the opportunity for people to respond.


"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit-fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name." John 15:16

*"And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should."
Colossians 4:3-4*

Policy

All checks/donations must be made out to the church or non-profit organization in order for the donor to receive a tax credit. Your name should NOT appear on the check; rather, there should be a note enclosed identifying the individual and the trip for which the donation is intended.

- All donations are non-refundable.
- Responding to the donors is solely your responsibility. You'll want to thank them anyway!

 **KEY:** A key to raising financial support is to start early - with a list of about 50 people! Four to five months before departure is NOT too early. God wants to provide but He needs you to partner with Him.

Steps to Support Raising

Step One: Commit your Work to the Lord

- Begin with prayer. Stop right now and commit yourself to God.

*“If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.”
Matthew 21:22*

- Admit your need for total dependence upon Him.

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.” Proverbs 3:5

- Ask God to give you a **teachable heart** as you prepare for the trip and allow you to learn more about Him during this process of raising support. Don't miss this HUGE opportunity to draw closer to God!
- Pray that God would build your faith.

Step Two: Identify Contacts

If you are having difficulty coming up with names for your mailing list, use the brainstorming pages to help you. Categories of friends and acquaintances are listed on the following pages to stimulate your thinking and to help you organize your names. Many of your acquaintances might fall under several categories. However, list each one only once. Don't feel like you need to fill every slot in every category. Remember: It will be easier to scratch names from your list than to add names.

- **Resist the urge to “blanket” your church with letters.** Choose only those you personally know well. Be creative and look outside the church to expand God's influence in the lives of people. Remember, there is outreach potential here!
- **No address, no problem!** Even if you don't have the address, put the name down anyway. You can get others to help you track down an address. The person that you can't reach may be the one who needs the ministry you can give!
- **Communicate your trip with non-Christians.** That's right. Non-Christians will most likely “admire” what you are going to do and it will peak their interest. Make sure that

unbelievers are on your mailing list. Even if they don't support you financially, ask them if you can share the experience with them when you get home. You'll find that 99% of people will want to hear about your trip.

- **Don't judge** whether people have the ability to give or not. This can be very difficult. Remember, you are only giving them an opportunity to get involved. Let them decide if they can or should give.
- **Pray and obey God's leading.** You might be surprised to whom God is leading you to send letters. Follow that leading. Remember that God's plan for this trip is far larger than ours. He might use your letter to impact somebody's life that you wouldn't expect.

Step Three: Type Your Letter

Once you have collected your names, you can begin to write your letter. A sample letter has been enclosed to guide you. Keep your letter to one page and include these aspects in your letter.

1. How God is working in your life currently
2. The opportunity you have to serve God as a part of this team
3. How you expect God to work in your own life
4. The cost of the trip
5. How soon you need to raise support
6. Specifically how the supporter can help you reach your goals and impact people


Once opened, your letter has about 20 seconds to capture the reader's attention. Therefore, keep these things in mind:

- **Be Personal:** Write a personalized hand-written note on all letters. This note will stand out and is often read first. Personally sign each letter and include a photo of yourself.
- **Be Brief:** People get a lot of mail today. Avoid long words and sentences. Write in conversational language. Keep the letter to one page in length.
- **Be Specific:** Tell them how they can be involved in this experience (prayer and financial support) and give them some financial increments to choose from (example: \$100, \$50, \$25).
- **Be Clear:** Ask someone else to read your letter and give you input.
- **Be Accurate:** Check your spelling. Be sure that your trip details are accurate and be clear about how they can respond.

Step Four: Assemble Your Packets


Once your letter is written, duplicate it as many times as necessary. Try to get good, clean copies. After writing any personal notes on the letters, you're ready to prepare your packet. This packet should include:

1. Letter
2. Response form with your name on it
3. Self addressed, stamped envelope with your address

 **KEY:** *Providing people with a convenient way to respond is important. Include this statement in your letter: "We have included two items in this packet to help you with this." This will increase the possibility that they will respond.*

You will want the responses to come back to you so you can know who has responded and who hasn't. You'll want to send a "thank you" note to those that responded right away!

Response Form. A page of sample response forms is included. You may use it to design your own; otherwise, you have permission to photocopy the response form page and cut them out. Write your name in the "Team Member I'm Supporting" blank.

 **KEY:** Your letters need to be mailed at least 4 months prior to departure in order to allow people to respond and meet payment due dates.

Step Five: Follow-Up

This can be a critical step in gaining support. Some people will want to support you but they may have lost your letter in the piles of other mail they receive or they may have just set the letter aside. They may need personal contact such as a phone call, e-mail, or a visit to see if they received your letter and/or if they have any questions. Use this opportunity to update them with details about the trip and the preparation of the team.

Step Six: Respond to Supporters

It is crucial that people know you appreciate their support and don't take their prayers or financial gifts for granted. When someone indicates a willingness to support you financially or by prayer, you **MUST** send a thank-you note. This will allow them to know you received their support and that you appreciate their sacrifice!

Failure to complete this step can turn people away from missions and could possibly stop them from ever wanting to be involved again. You are reaping the benefit of their sacrifice, please take this responsibility seriously!

A form has been provided on the following pages to help you track who you've sent a letter to and if they have replied.

After the trip, report back to these supporters with photos and personal stories. Invite them to the Celebration Party and **let them know that they are part of the team!**

Brainstorming Pages

Friends From Other Churches in Your Area (not your home church)

1.	9.	17.
2.	10.	18.
3.	11.	19.
4.	12.	20.
5.	13.	21.
6.	14.	22.
7.	15.	23.
8.	16.	24.

Co-Workers/Business Associates

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Neighbors

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Friends From College or Military Days

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Friends From Former Residences, Churches, Jobs

1.	13.	25.
2.	14.	26.
3.	15.	27.
4.	16.	28.
5.	17.	29.
6.	18.	30.
7.	19.	31.
8.	20.	32.
9.	21.	33.
10.	22.	34.
11.	23.	35.
12.	24.	36.

Friends From Other Cities

1.	9.	17.
2.	10.	18.
3.	11.	19.
4.	12.	20.
5.	13.	21.
6.	14.	22.
7.	15.	23.
8.	16.	24.

Relatives and Family Friends

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Friends From Athletic/Social/Service Organizations

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Friends From "Back Home" (where you grew up)

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

People You've Ministered To (Sunday School, Bible Studies, etc.)

1.	6.	11.
2.	7.	12.
3.	8.	13.
4.	9.	14.
5.	10.	15.

Friends From Church (try to work outside your church first!)

1.	13.	25.
2.	14.	26.
3.	15.	27.
4.	16.	28.
5.	17.	29.
6.	18.	30.
7.	19.	31.
8.	20.	32.
9.	21.	33.
10.	22.	34.
11.	23.	35.
12.	24.	36.

You might also want to try to think of people in the following career fields:

Accountants	Contractors	Entrepreneurs	Landscaping
Athletes	Dentists	Executives	Large Companies
Auto Industry	Doctors	Farming	Lawyers
Banking	Electricians	Government	Nurses
Chiropractors	Engineers	Insurance	Optometrists
Pastors	Pharmacists	Pilots	Printers
Real Estate	Retailers	Service Industries	Small Businesses
Teachers			

You won't necessarily send a support letter to all these people, but they form your pool of contacts. Spend time in prayer, asking God to lead you to send letters to the right people.

Sample Support Raising Letter

John,

I hope you are having a GREAT summer! You are an important person in my life so I want to share with you an exciting opportunity that I am going to be a part of this upcoming summer.

My relationship with Jesus is growing and I've chosen to follow His leading to go on a short-term mission trip. I am so excited to step out in faith and serve God in this adventure! There is an incredible opportunity to go with a team from my church to the country of Bangladesh.

Imagine 143 million people in a land area the size of Arkansas! That's Bangladesh. Approximately 87% of the people adhere to the Muslim faith with a small 3% of the population bravely declaring Jesus as their Savior. My church is connected with an organization there that is run by nationals and is doing incredible humanitarian work. They also share the reality of a personal relationship with Jesus through their work and send evangelists into rural villages.

On this trip, our team will be leading a day camp with crafts, games, and Bible teaching for approximately 1,100 underprivileged and orphaned children! Yes, 1,100! We will also be doing some evangelism in predominately Muslim villages. The opportunities for God to impact the lives of people are endless. Recently there has been some great success in leading Muslims to Christ through this type of ministry. I'm so excited!

I need 10 prayer partners that would begin praying now for the success of this missionary trip. I would like to offer you the opportunity to join me in praying for this trip. Prayer is essential for the team's success and safety.

Also, I would like to ask you to partner with me financially in order to make this journey. The cost is (\$) and I would ask you to prayerfully consider sending me to help these people. If (#) of my friends and family will give (\$) each, I will be able to serve as God's tool in this remote region. Would you pray about being one of my supporters and respond by mailing the attached form by (date)?

The trip leaves (date), so I do need to hear back from you as soon as possible. Please respond as the Lord leads you by using the attached form and envelope.

Thanks, John! I'll contact you again soon to update you about the team's preparation.

Have an awesome day!

(Signed with personal note)

Sample Response Form

You may use this page to design your own response form; otherwise, you have permission to photocopy this response form page and cut them out. Write your name in the "Team Member I'm Supporting" blank.

Missions Support Response Form

My Name: _____

Team Member I'm Supporting: _____

Country and Date of Trip: _____

- I would like to be a part of your prayer support team. Please send me your requests.
- I would like to be a part of your financial support team by giving \$_____.
 • Please make checks payable to _____ (Team Member's Church).
 • Write _____ (Trip Name and Dates) in the memo field.
 • **DO NOT put name of person being sponsored on the check.**

Missions Support Response Form

My Name: _____

Team Member I'm Supporting: _____

Country and Date of Trip: _____

- I would like to be a part of your prayer support team. Please send me your requests.
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Country and Date of Trip: _____

- I would like to be a part of your prayer support team. Please send me your requests.
- I would like to be a part of your financial support team by giving \$_____.
 • Please make checks payable to _____ (Team Member's Church).
 • Write _____ (Trip Name and Dates) in the memo field.
 • **DO NOT put name of person being sponsored on the check.**

Supporter Tracking Sheet

You have permission to photocopy these two pages for this mission trip, if you need more space.

#	Name	Address	City, State, Zip
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
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Comments:

