

All Souls' Youth Mission Trip

San Pedro, Belize
June 30 – July 10, 2017

Trip Leaders:
Terry Dirbas, Shauna Hodges, Jayne Ricker



All Souls' Episcopal Church
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August 1, 2016

Dear Parents,

All Souls' Youth Group is excited to announce that we will be going on a mission trip to Belize next summer! The dates for our trip will be June 30 through July 10, 2017.

We will fly from Los Angeles and spend a full day in transit before reaching our destination of San Pedro, Belize. When we arrive, we will explore the island and enjoy its tropical beaches for the weekend before we begin our week of service at Holy Cross Anglican School. After we finish our work on Friday, we will travel to the mainland and explore local history, rainforests, and Mayan ruins before returning to the United States.

Accommodations will be provided at a local hostel in San Pedro and the Diocesan Guest House in Belize City. Numerous mission teams have stayed at these locations in the past, and the school assures us that they are safe, reasonably comfortable, and affordable.

The cost of our trip will be roughly \$1500 per person, including airfare. If we each do our part in fundraising, we anticipate that families will contribute no more than half of the final cost of the trip.

Enclosed is an informational packet about our trip, including an application and membership covenant. Space is limited, and we ask that you return the application and covenant to the church office no later than Tuesday, September 6, along with a \$200 deposit to secure your young person's spot on the team.

We sincerely hope that your son or daughter will join us in Belize next summer. I am excited about this opportunity for our youth group, and I look forward to preparing for this experience together in the coming months.

Faithfully,

The Rev. Terry Shields Dirbas

All Souls' Youth Mission Trip
Holy Cross Anglican School
San Pedro, Belize

Travel: LAX–BZE (Los Angeles–Belize City); BZE–SPR (Belize City–San Pedro)

Dates: June 30 – July 10 (travel dates may change by 1-2 days on either side of the trip, depending on airfare)

Accommodations San Pedro: Sandbar Beachfront Hostel
 Belize City: Diocesan Guest House

Approximate Cost

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|
| Travel | 700 |
| Housing | 200 |
| Meals | 300 |
| Excursions | 160 – 350 |
| Total | 1360 – 1550 per person* |

No more than 50% family contribution **(680-775 max)**

*This estimate represents a modest itinerary that attempts to balance good stewardship of family/parish financial contributions with general comfort and enrichment. As we see results of fundraising efforts, we may choose to incorporate more excursions or slightly more luxurious accommodations, or we may simply reduce the family contribution. We will make these decisions together as the trip approaches.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---------|-----------|----------|---------------------|--|
| | | | | | 30 | 1 |
| | | | | | Travel to San Pedro | Explore; hang out with local teens; sunset cruise |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| Worship at local congregation; Beach time; Snorkeling | Service at Holy Cross Anglican School | | | | | Altun Ha Mayan Ruins Tour; Historic Belize City Tour; Night Zoo? |
| | Mornings and Afternoons: Work! | | | | | |
| | Evenings: Pray and play! Evening Prayer, Dinner, Activities (TBD) | | | | | |
| | Travel to Belize City | | | | | |
| 9 | 10 | | | | | |
| Worship at Anglican Cathedral; Excursion (TBD); Dinner in a Restaurant | Return to San Diego | | | | | |

Holy Cross Anglican School



Holy Cross Anglican Primary School is located on the beautiful island of Ambergris Caye, Belize. Founded in September 2006, our school educates 440 students from preschool to Standard 6 (8th grade). This is not your typical school, though it may look so from the outside. What makes us different?

- 1 **Our Community.** Our school is located in – and draws many of it’s students from – the incredibly poor neighborhood of [San Mateo](#), which at one time won the dubious honor of being recognized as the most at risk community in all of Belize by the Red Cross. At risk of what, you ask? Well... everything the Red Cross was measuring risk of, be it risk of hurricane, risk of fire or risk of disease. This means many of our families face incredible need and, though hard working, often struggle to provide the necessities for their children.
- 2 **What we offer our students:** We don’t just provide an education; we seek to provide an [excellent education](#) that meets the needs of the modern world. We have a computer lab, a well-stocked library and strive to provide excellent resources for our teachers. We also provide for the health of our students, by providing a nutritious lunch, [dental care](#) and volunteer doctors. Finally, for those who cannot afford their own, we provide the pencils, paper, shoes, [scholarships](#) and more so they can attend school.
- 3 **We embrace visitors & volunteers:** What we have to offer, we can only give because it was given to us first, so we rely heavily on [donations](#). Our school was built and is maintained by [volunteers](#) and all of our [school supplies](#) that we provide to our students are donated by visiting families and individuals. So if you are coming to the island – or you know someone who is – please have them contact us to arrange a [visit](#). We’d love to meet you.

You’d expect a school like this to have a great story behind it. And we do. Great people too. The school was founded in 2006 by Francis and Vernon Wilson, two missionaries from Virginia, USA who were working in Belize City. They saw the incredible need for a new school in San Pedro – the existing schools were full and then some – and, unlike many who would have just felt sad about the need, they did something about it. In just five years they took a muddy lagoon and turned it into the school you see today. Read more of the [history](#) or watch these videos.

[Holy Cross Anglican School History and Vision \(OFFICIAL\)](#)

[Holy Cross History, Part 1](#)

[Holy Cross History, Part 2](#)

Other Helpful Information

Special Diets

Vegetarian food is available, but lacking in variety. Rice and beans, beans and rice!

Gluten-free options are minimal. Many restaurants serve flour tortillas and they are often mixed into the rest of the food. The best gluten-free option is preparing your own meals.

Cell Phones

Not all plans work in San Pedro, and those that do are quite expensive. We may consider renting a cell phone for \$5/day (plus the cost of calls) with a reserved number, so that parents have a number to call in an emergency.

Internet

Computers are accessible during the day at the school when the computer lab instructor is present. There is free wi-fi at the hostel in San Pedro.

Currency

There is no need to exchange currency, as US dollars spend just fine. The conversion rate is \$1US = \$2 Belize.

Dress

Please dress more modestly while at school than you might in the US. Shorts/skirts should come at least midway down the thigh, though preferably closer to the knee. Shoulders and midriffs must be covered, and shoes and shirt must be worn at all times on school property.

Vaccinations

No specific vaccinations are required for travel to Belize. However, it is preferable to ensure you are up to date on all childhood immunizations (MMR, DPT, etc), as well as tetanus, Hepatitis A/B, and chicken pox.

Malaria

Not present in Belize City or San Pedro. The only time we might come into contact with malaria is in the jungle or on trips to Mayan ruins. As this is only for a few hours at a time, a generous application of insect repellent PRIOR to entering these areas is generally sufficient.

Important Mission Trip Dates

Fall Semester

| | | |
|------------------------------|------------|--|
| September 6 | | Applications & Deposits Due |
| September 11 | | Mission Sunday Youth Table about Belize Trip! |
| September 18 | 8am | Car Wash Fundraiser |
| Sunday, October 2 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| October 2 – October 30 | | Holiday Wreath Pre-Order Fundraiser |
| Friday, October 21 | 6pm-10pm | Parents' Night Out Fundraiser High School Lock-in |
| Saturday, October 22 | 8am | Columbarium Cleaning Fundraiser |
| Sunday, November 6 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| Saturday, November 12 | 6pm | Spaghetti & Bingo Bash for Belize! Major fundraising event Silent auction, opportunity drawing Please help however you can! |
| Sunday, November 13 | 11:30am | Food Drive Bag Distribution |
| Saturday, November 19 | 9am | Food Drive Bag Collection |
| Sunday, December 4 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| Saturday, December 10 | 10am – 4pm | Drop & Shop Babysitting Fundraiser |

Spring Semester

| | | |
|--------------------------|------------|--|
| Sunday, January 8 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| Sunday, January 15 | TBD | Lasagna Prep |
| Sunday, January 22 | 9am | Combined Church Service & Annual Meeting |
| | 11am | Lasagna Sales Fundraiser |

| | | |
|----------------------------|------------|---|
| Saturday, February 11 | 6pm – 10pm | Parents' Night Out Fundraiser |
| Sunday, February 12 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting Begin Letter-Writing Campaign |
| Tuesday, February 28 | 6pm | Shrove Tuesday Pancake Fundraiser |
| Sunday, March 5 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting Begin "Mission Trip Stock" Sales |
| Sunday, April 2 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| Friday, April 7 | 7pm-8am | Youth Lenten Lock-In (All Ages) |
| Saturday, April 8 | 8am | Columbarium Cleaning Fundraiser |
| Friday, May 5 | 6pm-10pm | Parents' Night Out Fundraiser |
| Sunday, May 7 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| Sunday, June 4 | 7pm | Mission Team Meeting |
| June 10 | 6pm | Chili Cook Off and Talent Show |
| June 25 | 10:15 | Mission Team Commissioning |
| June 30 – July 10 | | Mission Trip! |
| July/August (TBD) | | Stockholder Appreciation Brunch & Mission Trip Presentation |

**All Souls' Episcopal Church
Mission Trip Application**

Youth Contact Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

School: _____

Birthdate: _____ Age: _____ Grade: _____

I have a valid passport.

Number _____ Expires _____

I do not have a passport yet, but I will apply for one before April 1, 2017.

Parents' Contact Information

Name: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Background Questions

These questions are to help us get to know you, and to help you consider how this trip fits into your social and spiritual life. **Only your trip leaders will read your responses**, so please answer honestly. You may use the space provided, or attach another sheet of paper.

Who lives in your home? What do your parents/guardians do for a living?

**Have you been baptized and/or confirmed?
If so, where?**

Do you belong to a church community? If so, are you involved in any church activities? Which ones?

What are your hobbies, interests, or other activities?

What strengths do you believe God has given you?

When do you feel close to or aware of God in your life?

What things/people/relationships/commitments sometimes take priority over God in your life?

What might you try to do to set those aside while preparing for and engaging in this mission trip?

When you have conflict or disagreement with friends, classmates, or teammates, what do you usually do? What things have worked well for you, and what things have not worked so well?

Why do you want to go on a mission trip? What do you hope to do? What do you hope to learn?

Please list two adult references who are not related to you. These should be people who have supervised you or worked with you in a group setting, whether at church, at school, or in a sports league, or some other activity.

We will contact these individuals solely for the purpose of learning more about you, your skills, and your growth areas, to help you have the best team experience possible!

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Relationship to you: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Relationship to you: _____ Email: _____

**All Souls' Episcopal Church
Mission Trip Covenant**

I, _____, have chosen to participate in All Souls' Episcopal Church's mission trip to Belize in the summer of 2017.

I understand that by participating in this trip, I will be joining a group commissioned by All Souls' Episcopal Church to go out into the world as representatives of our congregation, to join in God's ongoing mission and ministry in Belize.

At all times, I will remember that I represent not only this congregation, but the Church of Jesus Christ, and I will conduct myself accordingly. While on this trip, I will:

- Remember that I am a guest in another country, and that our goals are to listen and learn from our hosts and to develop ongoing relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ living in Belize;
- Respect the views, values, and beliefs of our hosts, and of all nationals that I meet;
- Be open to learning from them about their ways of living, beliefs, and ideas;
- Maintain an attitude of respect, compassion, and understanding both toward my teammates and our hosts; and
- Respect my fellow travelers and abide by the decisions of my team leaders.

Because an essential part of mission work consists of pre-trip preparation, I agree to:

- Strive to attend worship regularly, at All Souls' or at my own congregation;
- Make every effort to attend all mission trip meetings (Sundays, 7-8:30pm)

| | | |
|------------|-------------|---------|
| October 2 | January 8 | April 2 |
| November 6 | February 12 | May 7 |
| December 4 | March 5 | June 4 |

- Participate in youth group fundraising efforts;
- Fill out all necessary forms in a timely fashion; and
- Make all necessary medical preparations with my family physician (including obtaining required immunizations).

I also understand that as a member of this team, I have a responsibility to share my experience with the All Souls' Episcopal Church community upon my return, so that the entire congregation may be enriched by my participation in this mission trip.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Parent

Date