



INFORMATION PACKET



VILLAGE
STUDENTS

Brokenness and Expectation

Dear Parents and Students,

Eleven years ago I found myself sitting down over a walking bridge outside a mosque in the Middle-East. I had just left having a conversation with a Muslim who had tried to persuade me that 9/11 never happened and that Jesus is not Lord. As a follower of Christ, I was overwhelmed by the sense of hopelessness with this conversation, knowing that it was not the exception but the norm of the cultural context. I often find myself pondering little moments like this, moments of feeling broken to the point of tears for the lost in our world. **My prayer is that our students would find themselves broken this summer.**

Although our summer mission trips look exactly the same as 2023, we know that each day God is doing a new work in this world and in our lives (Isaiah 43:19). Is God at work in the monotony of life with a 9-5pm work life? Yes and how much more-so as we meet new people to love and share the gospel with? Gen Z has high expectations for the lives they want to live and even higher expectations of what God can do in them and through them. **My prayer is that our students would find themselves raising their expectations on God even higher!**

Between brokenness and expectation, our one goal for Student Missions in 2024 is to allow God to break through our expectations! Every leader on these trips will be expected to push students through mediocrity, raising the bar of what God will do, and allow inward brokenness to be renewed by the gospel. As the Holy Spirit is at work pursuing 8 billion souls, we want to participate in the work that is already being done in God's kingdom!

As you review the following application, please pray through what trip God is calling you to, not based upon familiarity or comfortability, but upon what will break you the most while raising your expectation of what Jesus can do. As a shepherd, I will be challenging each student individually to see why they chose what they chose. Finally, please note two changes: At our January 7 parent/student meeting, we will be announcing a drastic change to Student Missions in 2025. Secondly, we will be having an end of the summer celebration for both students and parents! Come hungry and excited to celebrate Jesus' faithfulness!

In Christ Alone,

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2024 YOUTH MISSIONS PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

LEADERTREKS - Memphis, TN **Open to students in grades 8-12** **June 30-July 6, 2024**

Within our student's generation, the majority of the world will be living in cities. Our desire is to continue to cultivate a love for cities that are broken through policies and social barriers. Traveling to Memphis, TN will accomplish this mission to help students learn to love what God loves. Here's what students will walk away with from a week on LeaderTreks:

- Leadership skills that teach them about themselves and how to lead others
- How to study scripture in an effective way so that we understand it how God desires us to understand it
- Learning to love those from different socio-economic backgrounds and ethnicities
- Develop how to partner with other ministries in our local community
- Create a greater biblical worldview that cultivates a greater faith in Jesus

For a better picture of what "boots on the ground" looks like, please visit: <https://www.leadertreks.org/youth-mission-trips/>

CAMP BARNABAS, MO **Open to students in grades 8-12** **July 19-27, 2024**

It's easy to create a messiah-complex while on a missions' trip— a mentality where serving others becomes the opportunity for an individual to be in the spotlight. Camp Barnabas will develop students into servant-leaders that do not need the spotlight, but come and serve persons with disabilities. Students will be pushed to being comfortable with being uncomfortable through the following ways:

- Cultivating a mentality that sees everyone made in the Image of God
- Developing a grit to overcome difficult scenarios
- Serving in a manner that is dependent upon God's strength
- Learn practical skills with working with persons with disabilities

For more information visit: www.campbarnabas.com

Barnstormer (14-15 years old):

Barnstormers work hard to help make camp happen. They keep the camp in tip-top shape by prepping meals, serving food, and tidying up during the week. They also play a role in building relationships with campers by participating in daily activities and evening themed parties.

Counselor: (16+ years old):

One-on-one counselors are the lifeblood of Barnabas. These incredible individuals put aside their own personal desires and needs to pair up with campers and unconditionally love, accept, and care for all of their needs during the week. Counselors help to give the campers the best camp experience they possibly can have!

APPLICATION PROCESS

(KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS)

Getting Started:

- Pray, pray, pray about your decision of serving the Lord through Student Missions. Ask others to pray for you as well! Pray for guidance as you seek wisdom in which teams to apply for.
- Read the project description sheet to learn more about each team and what type of ministry we will be doing.
- Thoroughly read through the Student Commitment sheet. Decide if you can commit to each of these. If you can't right now, consider any adjustments you may need to make so you can fulfill them.

Before Saturday, January 7:

- Complete the Student Missions Application and have your parents complete the parent reference form. Give yourself plenty of time to complete the entire application by the deadline.
- Turn in your completed forms at student ministry or the office by **January 7!** All students must turn in the following items to apply for a short term mission project:
 - Student Missions Application (Section A-C)
 - Signed Student Commitment Form (Section D)
 - Parent Reference Form (Section E)

Important Information and Dates (Mark these on your calendar!):

It's extremely important that you attend all meetings!

- At the January 13 meeting we will send hand out letters of acceptance and inform students which team they will be serving on this summer.

KEY MISSION DATES

January 13: 7:00-9:00pm: Parents attend meeting; non-refundable personal donation due

February 25: 12:00-2:00pm: Team Meeting

March 15: 6:30-8:00pm Youth Missions Fundraiser Set-up

Support Letters & Addressee names need to be turned in

March 16: 3:30-9:00pm: Youth Missions fundraiser

April 14: 1:00-3:00pm: Youth Missions Service Day Prep

May (date TBD): Youth Missions Service Day

June 9: 9:00am & 10:45am services: Commissioning Service

TBD, Meetings scheduled by the team

- Final Team Meeting (Parents invited): this is typically 1-2 weeks before departure
- Pack & Pray: on the day before (or of) the mission project
- Parent and Team Combined Reunion: end of July or early August

Any questions please contact Spencer Smith or Meg Fitzpatrick in the church office.

spencer.smith@vcgurnee.org | 224-214-1182

meg.fitzpatrick@vcgurnee.org | 224-214-1203

FINANCIAL INFO AND KEY QUESTIONS

Every year it is exciting to see how God provides for the financial needs of each student & team. It is important that each student plays an active role in helping us raise the necessary funds & building a large network of prayer warriors & financial supporters.

Here is the part you will need to play:

- ⇒ Giving your own financial contribution
- ⇒ Sending out support letters— this is such a great opportunity for others to partner with us in supporting the ministry that will take place this summer

Personal Contribution: \$100 (Due on 1/13/24)
Minimum # of support letters to mail out: 20 (Due on 3/15/24)
Financial goal of support to be raised by letters: \$325

Questions & Answers:

1. What if my family chooses to not send support letters?

While we strongly encourage students to send out support letters, we understand there may be circumstances that lead a family to decide not to send out these support letters. In these cases, we ask the students to take the following steps:

- In place of support letters, students should send out a modified prayer letter (send out as a letter or email).
- Give an additional contribution in place of support letters (see the box above). The amount required is the support letter's goal listed for each team. These amounts should be given by April 10.

2. What if I do not meet my support letter financial goal?

Periodically we will have a student fall short of the support letter financial goal (see the box above). In these cases, there are some additional steps we will ask the student to take. Spencer Smith and your student mission team leaders will help guide the students through this.

- Follow up with the people you sent support letters. This can come in the form of a phone call, text, email, or Facebook note. Ask them if they received your support letter and if they have any questions about what you will be doing this summer. Don't pressure them to give financially, but sometimes people do need a helpful reminder and if they ask, you can express your need for additional supporters.
- Send out additional support letters. Prayerfully consider others you didn't send out letters to initially.
- Find other ways to raise money and give this towards your youth missions support raising. There are tons of options here: babysitting, doing odd jobs, etc.
- Consider making an additional personal contribution.

3. What if I can not attend the Student Missions Service Day?

Participation at the Service Day is crucial; so we ask students to put a high priority on this event! If a student has a conflict during a portion of the day, it is helpful to have them still come for whatever time they can attend. In the case of a complete conflict with the service day, students will be required to make up this experience. This should be communicated well in advance with Spencer Smith or Meg Fitzpatrick and they will help make arrangements.

4. What if I am unable to serve at the Student Missions Fundraiser?

The Student Mission Fundraiser is HUGE, so it is extremely important that everyone participates in this event. If a student has a significant conflict the day of the fundraiser, they must notify Spencer Smith or Meg Fitzpatrick of this well in advance. In place of the roughly 6 hours of serving that day, we will expect the student to fulfill those 6 hours by helping with the preparations leading up to the Youth Missions Fundraiser.

First and Last Name: _____



2024 STUDENT MISSIONS APPLICATION

Due by January 7, 2024

Drop off at the Welcome Center or church office, or bring with you on Sunday night

Date Returned: _____
(for Office Purposes)

STUDENT MISSIONS APPLICATION

Deadline: Sunday, January 7, 2024

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

Ephesians 3:20-21

SECTION A: PERSONAL INFORMATION

Full Name (first & last): _____ Birthdate: _____

Name you prefer to go by: _____ Year in School: _____

Email Address (PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY!): _____

Address/City: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____ T-Shirt Size (XS-XXL): _____

Food Allergies/Dietary Restrictions: _____

Parent(s) Name(s): _____

Parent Email(s): _____

SECTION B: TRIP INFORMATION

Please pray and think about which team you want to serve with and place a “1” and “2” in the order for which you wish to be considered. Our Student Missions leadership team will make the final placements.

___ **LeaderTreks, Memphis, TN**
Dates: June 30-July 6
Grades 8-12
***Personal Contribution: \$100**
***Support goal: \$325**

___ **Camp Barnabas, MO**
Dates: July 19-27
Grades 8-12
***Personal Contribution: \$100**
***Support goal: \$325**

___ Barnstormer (14-15)

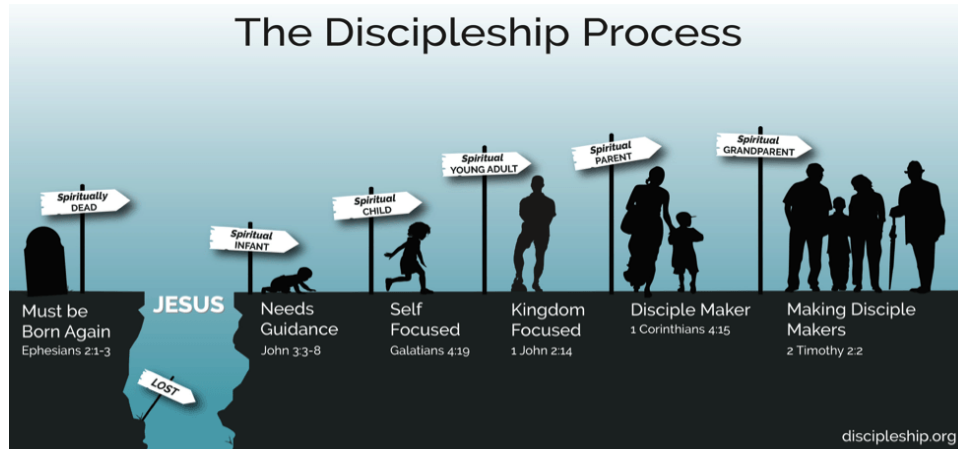
___ Counselor (16+)

Tell us why #2 selection is not a #1 selection:

SECTION C: SPIRITUAL INFORMATION

Please take some time to prayerfully and thoroughly answer the following questions about yourself. We ask that you respond in as much detail as you can in order to help us have a more complete picture about how God is at work in your life. (Use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.)

1. Where are you in your spiritual journey? Mark on the chart where you would put yourself. Tell us about your own story.



2. What event has impacted your spiritual growth the most over the past year?
3. What do you think is the purpose of a mission trip?
4. Why do you want to participate on a student mission team?
5. What are 1 or 2 things you hope to learn or grow from on the mission trip?
6. Is there anything that will keep you from attending the meetings or service day?
(see page 2 in the Youth Missions Information Packet)
7. Which trip will make the greatest difference in your life and why?

SECTION D: STUDENT COMMITMENTS

The participants with Village Church Student Missions are expected to follow and fulfill several core commitments. Please read through each of these carefully and reflect on your willingness to accept and follow each commitment listed.

As a member of Village Church Student Missions, I accept the following core commitments...
(Initial each commitment and sign the bottom of the page.)

Student Ministry Participation– Being Actively Involved in Church and Student Ministry

- _____ I will attend church on a weekly basis
- _____ I will attend Student Ministry youth group regularly (more than 50%)

Team Preparation– Taking My Role Seriously

- _____ I will participate in all mission team meetings (*Indicate any conflicts with these meeting dates/times*):
- January 13:** 7:00-9:00pm: Parents attend meeting; non-refundable personal donation due
 - February 25:** 12:00-2:00pm: Team Meeting
 - March 15:** 6:30-8:00pm Youth Missions Fundraiser Set-up
Support Letters & Addressee names need to be turned in
 - March 16:** 3:30-9:00pm: Youth Missions fundraiser
 - April 14:** 1:00-3:00pm: Youth Missions Service Day Prep, letters will be returned to students
 - May TBD:** Youth Missions Service Day
 - June 9:** 9:00am & 10:45am services: Commissioning Service
 - TBD,** Meetings scheduled by the team
- _____ I will complete all outside preparation work needed for my particular team
(*Ex: ministry prep, required forms/passport, etc*)

Support Raising– Sharing My Part in Raising the Needed Funds

- _____ I will submit the required personal contribution amount (*see chart in Student Missions Information Packet, page 4*)
- _____ I will send the required number of support letters (*see chart in Student Missions Information Packet, page 4; this also lists the required contribution if your family elects to not send support letters*)
- _____ I will serve at the Student Missions Fundraiser set-up and event

Comments:

While we will work with some conflicts, the student missions commitment needs to be a significant priority. If a student cannot meet these commitments and has numerous conflicts, we will direct them to not serve on a Student Missions team this year.

Cancellation Procedure: If the student is no longer able to participate in this mission project, he/she will forfeit his/her personal contribution and should notify his/her team leader and Spencer Smith immediately. The student must also send a letter to his/her supporters informing them of his/her decision and advise them that their support will go toward others on the team.

Students: By signing this, you indicate that you understand the above guidelines and agree to abide by them. Please understand that failure to follow through with your commitments to any of these guidelines could jeopardize your position on your team.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parents: By signing this, you indicate that you understand the above guidelines and agree to assist your student in abiding by them.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

SECTION E: STUDENT MISSIONS PARENT REFERENCE FORM

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this reference for your child who is applying to join one of our Student Missions teams. Your input will give us a more complete picture of your child! We recognize it's sometimes difficult to be completely objective but please be as thorough and honest in your evaluation as you can.

Student Name (Print): _____

Parent Name (Print): _____

1. Describe how you see your child growing as a Christian. How is God at work in and through his/her life? In what ways could we as a student ministry equip you?

2. In what ways do you believe he/she could serve effectively while serving with this mission team?

3. How would you describe your son/daughter in ten words or less?

4. Do you have any concerns regarding these projects that would be helpful for us to address with you?

5. "Open-mic" time: Share with us anything else about your child that you feel we need to know (anxiety triggers, depression, ADHD, anger issues, separation anxiety, dietary issues, medical issues, etc).

SECTION F: PARENT COMMITMENTS

As part of your child's participation on a summer missions team, we ask parents to be involved in the process. The primary area we need your help is with the Student Missions Fundraiser; participation by at least one parent (preferably both) is required for the fundraiser on March 2 or helping with preparations leading up to the event. Parents can choose from options to help: either prepare for the Silent Auction or help the night of the fundraiser.

Help with preparation for the Silent Auction:

The silent auction is our main source of support from the fundraiser. We need an army of volunteers to make this a success. If you volunteer and get selected for either A or B, you will not be asked to help the night of the dinner. Here are volunteer options:

- A** Donation team (contact local businesses, pick up donations, organize donations by category, give donation)
You can work on your own for most of these
- B** Basket preparation team (organize supplies, create baskets, make bows, put the baskets together)
You can work on your own or come in on "work nights" and work together with other volunteers

Help the night of the Fundraiser:

- C** Set-up Team (2:30-5pm)
- D** Meal Team (4-6:30pm)
- E** Clean up Team (6:30-9pm)

Please indicate your 1st and 2nd choices for the area you would like to serve. Use the letter listed above to indicate your choices.

Parent 1:

Name: _____ Email: _____

1st choice: _____ 2nd choice: _____

Parent 2:

Name: _____ Email: _____

1st choice: _____ 2nd choice: _____

Donations Needed:

We have been very blessed in past years by the success of our Silent Auction. A huge reason we have been successful and able to raise a lot of support for our youth missions teams is because of donations we have received. Please let us know if you have an item that you would be willing to donate. Here are some ideas of items we have received in the past:

Gift cards or cash donation (these will be used to buy supplies and filler items), restaurant gift cards, iTunes gift cards, tickets to sporting events, home decorating items, toys, games, rental property, tools ... anything you think could be used in a gift basket (only new items).

Comments: