



***A guide to raising short term  
missions financial support.***

## Unlimited Resources

### Introduction

The call to missions is peppered throughout the scriptures for all Christ followers. Unfortunately, many never answer this call. The reasons and excuses seem to be numerous. The intention of this guide is to help with at least one of those excuses. Money! Or perhaps better stated, “Lack of money!”

Use this guide to help you in your pursuit of acquiring the funds you need to go on mission. Not only will you discover tools to help you raise the needed funds, but you will also discover the biblical basis for raising missions support, and have your thinking challenged in regard to support raising.

I am excited you are considering going on mission. Your life will inevitably be changed. My prayer for you is that both the trip and the support raising process will be a faith growing opportunity. Be diligent and persevere, and remember . . . where God guides, God provides.

Blessings on your journey –



Jimmy Jones,  
Horizons Global Missions

## The Support Raising Process

### Step One – Think Like a Missionary

Where God guides. God provides. Many people never go on a short term mission trip because they are scared off by the price. They look at the cost and determine they could never afford it and then decide not to go right then and there. However, this is the wrong approach and the wrong kind of thinking.

### Step Two – Seek the Will of God

Decisions about going on a mission trip and where to go should never be governed by the cost of the trip. God has unlimited resources, and a few thousand dollars (or even a few million dollars for that matter) is nothing to Him. If God guides someone to a particular trip then He will certainly provide what they need for that trip. The best approach for a prospective short term missionary is to look over the opportunities, pray about which one God would have you be a part of, and then follow His leading.

Then after you have decided on the trip God is leading you to, you can begin focusing on secondary issues, like how to pay for it.

“And the same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from His glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:19, NLT

### Step Three – Change Your Thinking

A common myth among short term missionaries and those interested in going on a short term mission trip is that they intend to pay for the entire missions experience out of their own pocket. Fortunately, there is an alternative approach to this short-sighted thinking.

### Everyone is Called

One of the great things about missions is that God calls all of His followers to be the “hands and feet” of Jesus and to spread His love. This could mean your own neighborhoods (Jerusalem), right here in America (Judea and Samaria), going across the world (the ends of the earth), or even helping one of His servants get to the mission field. No Christ follower is exempt from the call to missions. Because this calling exists, those going on mission need to remember that those who are staying home may be called by God to give financially towards their mission.

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” Acts 1:8

“ . . . the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:28, NIV

## Step Four – Just Ask for Help

Believe it or not, God has laid it on the heart, or will lay it on the heart of some, to open their check book and support His work through their financial giving. Perhaps you have never even thought of asking others to help pay for your mission trip. Or you choose not to ask for help out of pride. You may say things like, “I could never ask someone for money,” or “It’s wrong to ask others for money if I have it myself,” or a variety of other reasons. Most of these reasons end up being poor excuses to exclude others from participating on your mission trip financially.

“And we can be confident that He will listen to us whenever we ask Him for anything in line with His will. And if we know He is listening when we make our requests, we can be sure the He will give us what we ask for.” 1 John 5:14-15, NLT

## The Blessing Killer

Another thought many do not consider is the blessing factor. It is possible that when people choose to pay for a trip out of their own pocket, they eliminate the opportunity for someone else to be a part of spreading the Gospel, and the blessings that God has in store for them. Remember, a missionary does not have the exclusive rights to ministering to a particular area or people group. Others are also called to be a part of missions even if they are not on location, and can do that through financial support.

“Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.” Proverbs 3:9-10

## Step Five – Find a Plan that Works

The next step is to develop a plan for getting the money for the trip. This can be done in a variety of ways and each support raising missionary needs to decide what the best plan of attack is for raising the needed funds for his/her trip. It is recommended that each short term missionary commit to paying a portion of the trip out of your own funds. This demonstrates to others that a personal sacrifice has been made on the part of the participant.

Five Step Process:

- Step One - Think Like a Missionary
- Step Two - Seek the Will of God
- Step Three - Change your Thinking
- Step Four - Ask for Help
- Step Five - Find a Plan that Works

## Support Raising Tool Box

The following information is a suggested way to raise your support. These techniques have been used with great success by many people to obtain the financial support needed for their mission trips.

Follow these time tested methods and, chances are, you will open the flood gates of God's provision.

### Where Do I Start?

1. Pray for God to place on your heart individuals, families, businesses, etc. that you could ask to be a part of your missions support team.
2. Pray some more.
3. While you are praying, begin writing out a list of everyone you know and everyone that came to your mind when you prayed. Continue to pray over this list and ask God to reveal anyone that you should not have on that list. This list is now your potential financial support team.

**\*\*NOTE:** Participants should create this list consisting of people outside the church. The church already asks those who attend to give to the overall missions efforts of the church. In addition, if all short term participants begin to solicit these same people, it will become overwhelming and counterproductive for the missions program and missions efforts of the church. An exception to this would be family members, close friends, and small group members.

### Who Should Be On My List?

Here is a short list of some people you could ask for support. Try to double this list with your own ideas of people you could ask to support you.

Parents	Co-Workers	Former Co-Workers	Employer
Brothers	Sisters	Former Employers	Step-Parents
Uncles	Aunts	Grandparents	Neighbors
Cousins	Doctors	Former Neighbors	Mentors
Lawyer	Dentist	Secretaries	Mechanic
Accountant	Servicemen	Small Group Members	
Fraternity Brothers		Sorority Sisters	

4. Next, put together a letter for the potential financial supporters.

#### The 10 Commandments of Writing a Support Letter

I. Explain the details of your trip.

II. Share the what, when, where, and why you will be doing what you are doing on this mission trip.

III. Tell your reader how much the trip will cost.

IV. Another portion of your letter needs to include an invitation for the reader to be a part of this mission's experience through a financial gift. Don't beat around the bush, just come right out and ask.

V. When asking for financial support you may want to consider asking for a specific amount, but remind them that any gift would be appreciated.

VI. Don't forget to include in the letter that you will be contributing 20% (of whatever amount you choose) of the trip's total cost out of your own personal finances.

VII. Invite them to be a part of your prayer team as well, whether they support you financially or not.

VIII. Include information on how they can respond to this letter, i.e. where to send their donation, to whom the check is to be made, and how to make sure it gets to you (See donation procedures located in this toolbox). Some missionaries like to include a pre-addressed response envelope with the letter so that people can simply place their check right into the envelope and send it in.

IX. Let them know that you will follow up with a phone call within the next 10 days to see if they have any questions. If it is done the right way, this can be very effective without being pushy. Also, remember to thank them and that you look forward to their response.

X. Have a qualified person proofread your letter.

## Sample Response Card

A helpful tool is a mission trip support response card. This tool serves a two-fold purpose. First, the response card helps explain how the potential donor can send in his/her support. Second, the response card will help you track the amount of support being sent in as well as who is sending it.

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### Horizons Adult Missions Support Response Card for Hurricane Katrina

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address:

Phone Number:

E-Mail:

I would like to be on the support team for \_\_\_\_\_.  
I would like to commit to giving a gift of:

(circle one)    \$25.00    \$50.00    \$75.00    \$100.00    \$150.00

Or    \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

If the figures listed above do not specify the amount you would like to give, please fill in the amount you would like to give in the blank above.

Comments:

Please return to: Horizons Community Church / Adult Missions - 1503 - 157<sup>th</sup> Ave. NE \* Ham Lake, MN 55304

## Sample Support Letter

Below is a sample letter of what you might want to include in your support letter. Feel free to use some of this letter as inspiration in putting yours together.

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Dear George and Laura,

I would like to share with you an amazing opportunity I have been blessed with. This summer I am going on a mission trip to Biloxi, Mississippi, with a mission team from Horizons Community Church. Horizons is dedicated to taking the gospel to people all over the world and meeting the practical physical needs of those we minister to.

This particular missions experience will focus on those who have been affected by Hurricane Katrina. Our team will be traveling to Biloxi, Mississippi, and helping rebuild homes that have been destroyed, and to bring encouragement to the people of that area. From the first day I heard about these people I have been looking for a practical way to help. As you can imagine, this is a great opportunity for me.

Before I go on this mission trip there are a few things I need to do.

- First, I need to prepare myself spiritually for the mission. I plan on accomplishing this through spending some extended time in prayer and studying God's Word.
- Second, I need to assemble a prayer partner team to pray for me as I prepare for the trip and while I serve on the trip. As you know, prayer is vitally important to every aspect of life and this opportunity is no exception.
- Third, I need to raise financial support. The cost of this trip is \$800.00. I intend to contribute some of my own money towards this effort. However, I can't do it alone.

I would like for you and your family to consider being a part of both my prayer team and financial support team. Not only does your financial support allow me to be a part of this experience, it's also valuable to know that I have the support of others as I travel to serve. I am challenging each prospective supporter to consider giving a gift of \$75.00 to \$100.00. However, any amount you decide would be greatly appreciated.

If you would like to be a part of the team and pledge a gift, please fill out both of the enclosed response cards. You can mail one of the cards back to me in the envelope with my address on it, and you can send the other response card to Horizons Community Church along with your donation in the envelope added to "Horizons Community Church Adult Missions" enclosed with this letter. If you are planning on sending a gift, please write "Adult Missions/Name of Trip/Participant's Name" on the memo line of the check. All gifts made out to Horizons Community Church are tax-deductible.

If a financial gift is not how you would like to be involved, I still thank you. I would still like to extend the opportunity for you to be on our team by support through prayer. May God bless you and your family.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and prayers.

Sincerely,

Participant's Name

## **Horizons Community Church Donation Procedures**

All dollars are to be given by check or money order made out to Horizons Community Church, and mailed to: Horizons Community Church Adult Missions Ministry @ 1503 – 157<sup>th</sup> Ave, Ham Lake, MN 55304.

**\*\* NOTE:** Please have the donor indicate on the memo line: the mission trip name and the person the donation is for.

Remember, only checks or money orders made out directly to Horizons Community Church are tax-deductible. So encourage your sponsors to make out their checks directly to Horizons Community church and not to you personally.

**\*\* NOTE:** Money personally given towards your own trip is not considered a tax-deductible gift.

### **What Do I Do with Support Dollars Given Directly to Me?**

There are four scenarios which may happen:

1. If someone gives a donation directly to you for your trip, simply send the support to Horizons Community Church. Please make sure you indicate what the money is intended for.
2. If they write a check out in your name, simply write on the back of the check “Pay to the Order of Horizons Community Church” and sign it. Then mail it to Horizons Community Church Adult Missions Ministry.
3. If someone gives you cash, simply write out a check for the total amount given to you, made out to Horizons Community Church, with a note listing the name of the donor, their address and phone number, as well as the amount of the donation each one gave.
4. If someone gives you a donation for personal expenses, they may do so, but they will not be able to receive a credit for a tax-free gift from Horizons Community Church for this donation.

### **What if I Raise More Support than I Need?**

There are three options for support dollars raised over and above the full cost of your trip.

The excess funds can be:

1. Transferred to others needing help to raise the full cost of their mission trip.
2. Held over for use on another trip that same calendar year.
3. Used by the Horizons Community Church Adult Missions Ministry in other needed areas.

\*\* NOTE: Extra money donated may not be used for personal expenses or souvenirs.

### Cancellation Policy

Money raised for Horizons Community Church Adult Mission teams is non-refundable. If a participant cancels his/her trip, the guidelines regarding their finances are as follows:

- Support (minus penalties/costs already incurred) can be transferred to another mission trip or another participant going on a mission trip in the same calendar year. Missions support can only be held for the remainder of the calendar year.
- If Horizons Community Church cancels the trip, the support raised can be applied to participation on a different team, transferred to another individual, held over for the remainder of the year, or returned to the original donor upon written request. Any unused funds will be transferred to the Horizons Community Church Adult Missions general budget.