

## **Frequently Asked Questions For Short-Term Missions** **[Aug 2017]**

### **How can I make a Check payment?**

Check payments can be made payable to “Bethel Church” and mailed to the following address:

Bethel Church  
ATTN: Short-Term Missions  
20 Lake Blvd.  
Redding, CA 96003

*Please include a note with the payment suggesting the payment be applied towards the Trip Name and the Applicant's Name. Ex: Zimbabwe - Joe Revival*

### **I am having issues applying for a trip, how can I fix this?**

When applying for trips, please use a laptop or computer. Our website is not mobile-friendly and many errors occur when applicants apply for trips using their phones, tablets, or iPads. If you are using a laptop or computer and are having issues, try using a different web browser like Google Chrome or Firefox.

### **Are donations tax-deductible?**

All donations made to 'Bethel Church' for mission trips are a tax-deductible contribution of employees/citizens of the United States of America only. Bethel Church has a Tax ID **only** in the USA. For donations made in 2017, tax contribution letters will be sent out to the donors at the end of January 2018. Donors for other countries will not receive contribution letters, but will still be held to the IRS regulations for financial giving.

### **What happens if I cannot make my mission payment by the commitment date?**

Contact your Trip Leader right away. Your trip leader will communicate with us. It is solely your responsibility to make contact with your leader about mission deadlines. Please be proactive in this.

### **What happens if I need to drop off my mission trip?**

In the case where you cannot go on the mission trip due to extenuating circumstances, you will first need to contact your Trip Leader to explain your situation. Your Trip Leader will then follow the necessary steps to drop you from the trip. If you are dropped from a trip, you will not be added to another trip unless we found your circumstances truly extenuating. You have committed to your team when you sign-up and dropping a trip means you are taking a spot away from someone else.

### **Can I switch trips after I have been chosen for one?**

We do not allow switching of trips after trip applications are submitted. We trust God in the process that you will end up where you are supposed to be whether it is your first choice, the choice you didn't mean to pick, or your 15th choice in round 3. Please do not email us to ask to switch your trip order or go on another mission trip.

### **Can I extend my mission trip and stay longer?**

No. In order to maintain safety, BSSM guidelines, insurance coverage, and IRS guidelines, the Bethel Short-Term Missions Department has a policy that if a team goes together then they must also come back together.

### **Do I need a passport to go on a Missions Trip?**

Yes, if you are on an international missions trip. A passport card (US) **cannot** be used in lieu of a passport. If you are on a domestic missions trip, you will not need a passport (unless you are an international student on a flying domestic trip). You will need to have a passport that expires at least 6 months after the date of your return ticket. Many countries will not allow you to enter their country if your passport expires in less than 6 months. If you do not have a passport, you will need to apply for a passport ASAP. The ticket for your flight will need to be booked well in advance before your trip leaves and if you do not have a passport at the time of ticketing, you will not be able to go on the trip. Airlines will not let you book a ticket if you do not have a passport when flying internationally.

## How can I make a donation towards a trip online?

To make an online payment go to <https://trips.ibethel.org>. From there you will see the "Give Today" and a search box that says "Search For A Traveler." Type in the traveler's name. There may be multiple trip options for a specific traveler. Look for the **trip** you'd like to donate to. On the right hand side you will see the word "Give." Click on the "Give" and from there it will take you to a form for you to fill out your information for your credit/debit card.

## How do I upload a picture of my passport?

Once you have logged into your account, click on the link that says "My Info" in the left corner. Once there, you will see all your current information that is in your profile. Please go through and update any details as needed on this page. To upload your passport, make sure you have a picture of your passport on your computer and click on "Choose File" and choose your passport photo to insert the photo to your profile.

## Can I request a refund?

For tax purposes we need to abide by the United States tax code in order to retain our 501(c)3 non-profit status. We have auditors review our transactions and books every year to make sure we are in compliance. Based on the IRS guidelines and the legal statements we cannot give a refund. This is stated online before each donor donates online.

All proceeds donated to Bethel Church for the purpose of Bethel Short-Term Missions must be used strictly for Bethel Short-Term Missions only. When someone donates to Bethel Church for the purpose of Bethel Short-Term Missions, they must agree to (by clicking on) the statement below. This states that the donation being made is non-refundable and may only be used at the discretion of Bethel Church *Short-Term Missions*.

*By selecting "I agree", you are agreeing to make a tax-deductible donation (For U.S. Taxpayers only) to Bethel Church to support missions trips being sent through their missions department. This donation is non-refundable, and is to be used entirely at the discretion of Bethel Church. You are also acknowledging that you are not receiving any goods or services for this donation. Thank you for your generosity!*

I agree

Note that the money you donated will stay in Missions and be used for other students to go on mission trips as Bethel Church does not profit or pocket these donations.

If you are an international donor requesting a refund, proceeds remain non-refundable in keeping with Bethel Short-Term Missions policy.

## If I receive additional donated funds that exceed the total amount of money that I need for the trip, what happens to those funds?

Per IRS regulations, since donated funds are made for the benefit of a trip (and not an individual), Bethel Short-Term Missions and the trip leaders have discretion over the allocation of all donated proceeds. The donor, however, may *recommend* that the proceeds be used for the benefit of an individual. Furthermore, we encourage generosity and raising funds as a team! Bethel Short-Term Missions usually takes excess funds to help the trip hit their fundraising goal.

## Can I carry over funds year-to-year?

At this point in time, you cannot carry over funds year-to-year. Per IRS regulations, since funds cannot be donated to individuals if the donor would like to receive a tax-deductible receipt, Bethel Short-Term Missions cannot earmark nor setup a separate account for the benefit of an individual. This policy also applies to non-US donors/students.

## **I am a BSSM 2nd Year Student. Can I use my Travel Discount to pay for my missions trip?**

2<sup>nd</sup> Year travel discount can be used to help pay for your missions trip. ***The travel discount can only be transferred to a student's mission's account if it will completely pay off the balance due for the trip.*** Students may not use their travel discount to make a commitment date if it leaves a balance owed. Travel Discounts applied towards paying off a Missions Trip is a one-way transaction and cannot be reversed, even if the traveler is dropped from a Trip.

For instance, if a student needs \$300 more to pay off their trip in total and they have \$350 in their travel discount, they may apply a one-way transfer \$300 to cover their trip. If the student decides not to go on the trip after the transfer, the \$300 travel discount will remain with the trip.

If they need \$300 to pay off their trip and they only have \$250 in their travel discount, they cannot transfer their discount money until they have a balance due of \$250 or less.

## **Do I need a visa to go on a missions trip?**

Every country has different requirements for which countries are required to have a visa or if no visa is required to enter the country. Please check with your Trip Leader and visit this website to see if you need a visa: <http://cibtvisas.com/visas>. In certain cases, although a visa may not be required, a departure tax may (also) be levied upon the traveler.

## **Do I need vaccines to go on a missions trip?**

Some locations will require you to have specific vaccines (Yellow Fever, Malaria, etc.) before you may pass customs. Check with your Trip Leader to see if you will be required to receive a vaccine. For more information, please visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's website to view the list of recommended vaccines for each location: <https://www.cdc.gov/>