

The Nuts and Bolts of Planning and Leading a Youth Mission Trip
Led by Eppie Miller (eppiemiller@sbcglobal.net)
Faith Development Director at St. Christopher by-the-River
Gates Mills, Ohio
For the Mission and Ministry Conference
Of the Diocese of Ohio
Saturday, February 3, 2007
9:45am – 12noon

- I. Opening Prayer and Introductions

- II. Deciding where, when, and cost of the mission trip (8 – 18 months prior to the mission trip)
 - * Talk to the Rector and/or Vestry to make sure the leadership of the parish is on “board”.

 - * Decide who the “target” group will be (ie. Middle School, High School, combined group, family, intergenerational)

 - Hand pick who the adult leaders will be and get them “on board”. Recruit adult leaders who have taken the Safeguarding God’s Children Training (or who will complete it prior to working with the teens), who understands teens, and understands it’s about the process not the product.

 - Have a parent, teen, and leader meeting to introduce the idea of a mission trip. Determine/discuss what the goals are. Why would your group benefit from a mission trip?

 - When deciding where to go and what organization to work with consider whether you want to design your own trip or go with a “pre-packaged” organization. Decide whether you want to be on a mission field with just your group or join with others from other communities. These decisions will greatly impact your group’s experience as well as how much work it will be to put together the trip. These decisions can also affect the total cost of the trip (see mission trip suggestions pp. 6 - 7).

- Consider picking a mission experience that will establish a long term healthy relationship rather than doing a “one shot” deal. It’s also important to consider why the mission organization would benefit from you being there.
- Keep in mind that there is “need” in your own back door – you don’t have to go far to have a successful mission experience.
- Do a project where participants can see the results of their work. Consider whether you want to do a construction related project or a VBS type mission or a combination of the two.
- The mission trip is not just about doing but also about making healthy Christian relationships and learning about the culture.
- Know what your group is like and base your project and destination on what your group can/will handle – how far, how different a culture, how long to be gone, what kind of mission project, etc.
- If the location and mission experience has not already been decided, send home a parent survey for ALL the parents to fill out as well as teen survey for ALL the teens to fill out (see attached samples pp. 8 - 9). Collect all the surveys and collate the information confidentially to make a decision about when and where the mission trip will take place as well as how much the trip will cost. Sometimes letting the group have ownership in the decision about the mission trip details is preferable.
- Money – decide how much the trip will cost, how much will be paid by family contribution, how much will come from the church’s operating budget, and how much the group will fundraise. Involve the parents in this discussion! A teen should never be excluded because of money – offer scholarships. Where will this scholarship money come from (diocese, church funds, part of the operating budget for the mission trip, etc.).

III. Once the details of where, when, and cost have been decided (6 – 10 months prior)

- Communicate with the teens and parents when they will have to make a commitment and what is required in order to go on the trip. Is there an application process? When will the deposit and balance be due? How to apply for scholarships?

- Get to know your group – do some lock-ins or overnights prior to the mission trip in order to establish boundaries, trust, and group bonding.
- * Throughout the year learn with the teens about where they are going, learn about the agency they are working with, the people they will be working with, and the culture/customs/language of the place they are going.
- Have the group take ownership of planning and leading the mission trip. Each teen take leadership of a certain area (ie. Worship, planning meals, planning recreation/cultural activities, first aid, logistics, etc.)
- Have separate adult leaders meetings to coordinate the details. Divide duties among the adult leaders to **oversee** the logistics, mission project liason, budget, worship/reflection, food, first aid, fun/culture/nature, and the “buck stopper”.
 - * The “logistics” adult leader will need to arrange all transportation and housing while on the mission trip. They will also set the itinerary – have a balance of working, playing, exploring the culture/fun/nature, and worship/reflection.
 - * The “mission project liason” will be the contact between the group and the mission organization as to what the project will be, etc.
 - * The “budget” person will keep track of the money (income and expenses) and be responsible for having the right amount of money on the trip as well as keep track of the receipts, etc. This person will also be the coordinator for the fundraisers.
 - * The “worship/reflection” person oversees the worship journals, caritas, letters from parents, and prayer partners (see descriptions below) and makes sure that teens & leaders take turns leading worship/reflection everyday.
 - * The “food” person will work with the teens to create menus, go shopping, prepare the meals, clean up from the meals, etc.

- * The “first aid” person will work with the teens to put together a first aid kit for the trip as well as be responsible for the physical health of every member of the trip. This person will also be responsible for the medications each teen takes while on the mission trip (it’s great to have a doctor or nurse in this capacity).
- * The “fun/culture/nature” person will work with the teens to explore the fun and cultural activities that are near the work site that the group can do during free time.
- * The “buckstopper” is the person who is ultimately in charge in case of a crisis or conflict. This is the final say. It’s important to establish this before the trip in case this is needed.

IV. Immediately prior to the mission trip (1 - 3 months prior)

- * Worship journals – include prayers that parishioners and parents have submitted, liturgies from the *Book of Common Prayer*, favorite songs/hymns, and blank pages for journaling (see example)
- * Caritas – little “gifts”, candies, and notes of encouragement from parents and parishioners to be given while the teens are on their mission trip throughout the trip.
- * Letter from parents – this is a surprise that the teens will get at some point during the mission trip.
- * Have parishioners sign up to be a “prayer partner” for each person going on the trip. Let the teen be aware who is praying for them.
- * Have a final parent, teen, and leader meeting. Make sure to collect all the signed covenants (make sure the covenant includes that if a “non-negotiable” covenant is broken the parent will pay for their child to be sent back home at their expense). Also collect all the signed Medical Release/Permission forms as well as copies of medical insurance cards. (see samples pp. 10 - 12). Pass out “what to pack” information, itineraries, and how parents can reach the group in case of emergency. Also discuss how much money each teen should be allowed to bring on the trip (I suggest to establish a set, low amount so no one has too much money and everyone has an equitable amount of money).

V. The Sunday before the teens leave

- * Have a “blessing” for the missionaries during the main service (see example p. 13) and bless their prayer journals

VI. The day the missionaries leave

- * Have a send off liturgy with parents, teens, leaders, and other interested parishioners (see example p. 14)

VII. On the mission trip

- * Have each person take turns making meals, go shopping, clean, do laundry, lead worship, etc.
- * Have an entire group “check-in” meeting, reflection, and worship time everyday
- * If needed, have a separate “check-in” meeting for the adult leaders to talk about group dynamics, concerns, etc.
- * Remember – you are only as fast as your slowest member. Be patient. When traveling with a group everything takes longer than you would think. Recognize that each person has a different personality, needs, and interests. Depending on the culture you are in you might encounter a difference in their sense of time as well.
- * Send email updates to parents and the parish if possible.

VIII. After the Mission Trip is Over

- * Have a reunion to share pictures, reflect, and write thank you’s (to prayer partners, caritas contributors, prayer journal contributors, monetary contributors, etc.).
- * Do a presentation to the parish to share about the trip, write an article for the parish newsletter, and post a bulletin board with pictures and reflections.

AWWWY 2006

Outreach/Mission Trips Possibilities

Emily Gowdy Canady
egowdycanady@columba.org

Episcopal Relief & Development - www.er-d.org

ERD is an effective, reliable and vital ministry of the Episcopal Church in communities around the world, ERD provides emergency assistance in times of disaster, rebuilds devastated communities after the immediate crisis is over, and offers long-term solutions to help people sustain safer, healthier and more productive lives.

Camp Coast Care - www.campcoastcare.com

Lutheran Episcopal Services in Mississippi in response to Hurricane Katrina. Currently operated at Coast Episcopal School in Long Beach, MS for Adults, There is a youth facility on the site of Christ Church, Bay St. Louis, MS. To organize a trip for youth trip contact Fr. Roberts at NBRobertsJr@bellsouth.net. He is the coordinator for the youth camp. The recovery effort has many different facets so work will vary at different times during the year.

Diocese of Louisiana Office of Disaster Relief -www.edola.org/odr_main.php

The Diocese of Louisiana just recently hired Matt Holt, a Kanuga Veteran, to serve as the coordinator for youth rebuilding and recovery projects in areas effected by Hurricane's Katrina and Rita. This is a very new position and firm plans for what youth will be able to work on is still developing.

Volunteers of America Southeast - www.voase.com

Volunteers of America is a national nonprofit, spiritually based organization providing local human service programs and opportunities for individuals and community involvement. Amanda Gonzales agonzales@voase.org - 251-344-4500 is the contact person in Mobile, Alabama. VOA Southeast has worked with many groups of young people on Hurricane recovery. You can also check out the national web-site, www.voa.org for more ideas in other areas.

The Sierra Service Project - www.sierraserviceproject.org

Begun in 1975, Sierra Service Project was inspired by and modeled after Appalachian Service Project. Originally founded by several United Methodist Church ministers, SSP is now an independent non-profit organization. We maintain a close affiliation with the United Methodist Church, and we also draw participants from a number of other Protestant denominations. SSP's "traditional" youth program is centered around

youth groups, and a young person must be part of a group to attend. SSP believes that young people develop a strong and deep understanding of God's gifts and God's grace through the direct experience of being in service to others.

The Appalachia Service Project - www.asphome.org

Tex Evans, ASP's Founder The Appalachia Service Project was once a dream in Reverend Glenn "Tex" Evans's heart. During his 13 years as director at Henderson Settlement, Frakes, Kentucky, Tex saw the region's immense housing need. His compassionate interpretation of the Gospel moved him to envision a way to meet this need while encouraging the church to be part of the solution. His creative plan matches high school youth to home repair projects in Central Appalachia. By transforming Christian faith into action, the ministry he founded (ASP) helped to alleviate poverty's consequences while encouraging growth in Christian faith and stewardship. In 1969, the Appalachia Service Project's inaugural summer, 50 volunteers came to Union College in Barbourville, Kentucky, and repaired 4 homes.

Habitat for Humanity International- www.habitat.org

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry. HFHI seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from the world, and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat invites people of all backgrounds, races and religions to build houses together in partnership with families in need. Habitat has built more than 150,000 houses around the world, providing more than 750,000 people in more than 3,000 communities with safe, decent, affordable shelter. HFHI was founded in 1976 by Millard Fuller along with his wife Linda.

Center for Student Missions - www.gospelcom.net/csm/

Ministry opportunities include: Rehabilitating apartments for low-income residents; serving food and building relationships with hungry men, women and children at soup kitchens and homeless shelters; planning and conducting weekend and week-long Backyard Bible Clubs for inner-city children; joining inmates for worship and Bible study in a prison chapel service; delivering meals to impoverished shut-ins; joining street savvy urban Christians in evangelistic outreach into their local neighborhoods; worshipping with African-American, Latino, and other believers of color in their local churches; and much more. For examples of CSM ministry sites, check out the listings in our City Profiles. All of our "ministry sites" are indigenous to their communities. CSM has no ministries of its own; rather,

we support what God is doing through His people who have been called to direct their full-time energies to ministering in the inner-city.

Group Workcamps - www.groupworkcamps.com

The small investment of one week...the big reward of a life changed. Since 1977, Group Workcamps has become the premier, interdenominational, short-term summer mission for church youth....offering fun, faith and friendship at cost that won't break your budget. More than 160,000 youth and adult leaders have deepened their Christian faith while serving thousands of needy families across the country. While you build wheelchair ramps, apply a fresh coat of paint, repair a broken window or mend a leaky roof, you'll not only be rebuilding homes, you'll be rebuilding lives...helping disabled, elderly and disadvantage residents that could never complete home repairs themselves. Some residents you'll serve must choose between putting food on the table or fixing a leaky roof...your Christian service means the world to them. It's a character-building, faith-building adventure you'll never forget!

Other Contacts in the Episcopal Church

John Floberg, Canon Missioner for Native American Ministry in North Dakota. He helps groups organize trips from construction and repair work to running Vacation Bible Schools. He is most interested in building long-standing relationships with groups/churches. jsfloberg@msn.com or 701-222-0041.

Fr. Ian Corbett is the Vicar of the Utah region of Navajoland, 435-672-2296 or iancorbett@hubwest.com. Fr. Ian coordinates all the groups that come into the Navajoland via Utah each summer. Groups do a variety of work.

Fr. Jim Leehan is the Vicar in Fort Defiance, NM in the Navajoland. He along with Kendall John coordinates groups in the summer to work in this area of the Navajoland. You can contact Kendall John at her office, 928-729-2322.

The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, Bishop of Alaska will put you in contact with their new Canon Missioner. The Diocese of Alaska has numerous opportunities to work from June - late July. Contact Bishop McDonald at mmacdonald@gci.net or Lee Davis, Construction Forman for the Episcopal Diocese of Alaska's Manley Camp at mmdavis@acsalaska.net.

Also - Episcopal Mission Exchange (EMX)
www.episcopalmissionexchange.org
1 877 369-7363

2004 Youth Mission Trip Survey for Teens grades 9 - 12

Please complete and return to Eppie by September 21

- 1) Name: _____
- 2) At this time, do you wish to take part in the Summer 2004 Youth Mission Trip?
Why or Why not?
(If you answer no to this question, you are finished with the survey! If you answer yes to this question, please proceed.)
- 3) Where would you like to go on a Mission Trip this summer? List all possibilities. What kind of mission work would you like to do and why?
(Please be aware that if the Mission Trip is farther than a neighboring state, we will probably fly to the destination rather than drive vans.)
- 4) Would you like to go on the Mission Trip as soon as school gets out/graduation (around June 12) or would you rather propose another date during the summer?
- 5) Any other information or feedback about this summer's Mission Trip?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!
Please feel free to call Fr. Murdock Smith or Eppie Miller with questions.

**Survey for Parents of Rising 9 - 12th graders
For the Summer 2006 Youth Mission Trip**

Please complete and return to Eppie by Feb. 21

- 1) Name: _____
- 2) At this time, do you wish for your child(ren) to take part in the Summer 2006 Youth Mission Trip?
Why or Why not?
(If you answer no to this question, you are finished with the survey! If you answer yes to this question, please proceed.)
- 3) Knowing your teen, where would you like your teen to go on a Mission Trip this summer? List all possibilities. What kind of mission work would you like for your teen to do? (Please be aware that if the Mission Trip is farther than a neighboring state, we will probably fly to the destination rather than drive vans.)
- 4) When is the best time for your teen to go on a Mission Trip this summer...as soon as school gets out/graduation (around June 12), or would you rather propose another date during the summer? (We will not be gone for more than 8 days total.)
- 5) Money...don't you wish we all had more of it! The Youth Mission Trip will be funded by two areas:
 - 1) Fundraising – We are currently underway with the Fall Plant Sale. We can do additional fundraisers.
 - 2) Family Contribution – I encourage families to discuss this portion so that teens work at making money to contribute to the mission trip. We won't know for sure how much each family will need to contribute until we decide where we are going, etc. **This is where this survey comes in...the committee needs to know as a family how much money you can spend on the Youth Mission Trip. Know that you can pay in installments over the year. Remember that partial scholarships are available upon request.**
- 6) Any other suggestions, ideas, or questions about the Summer 2004 Youth Mission Trip?...

Thank you for taking the time to fill this out!
Please feel free to call Fr. Murdock Smith or Eppie Miller (704) 376 – 8441.

Episcopal Outreach Camp

Community Covenant

I agree that it is **NOT ACCEPTABLE** for any member of the Episcopal Outreach Camp to:

1. Engage in any kind of sexual conduct, contact or behavior;
2. Use, possess, or be under the influence of tobacco, alcohol, illegal or non-prescribed prescription drugs;
3. Commit acts of theft or violence;
4. Enter the sleeping areas of the opposite gender;
5. Leave the established boundaries of any activity without permission of the youth leaders;
6. Fail to obey the established group norms (*if you don't understand this, please ask your Youth Leader*).

Additionally, I agree to:

1. Respect and follow all schedules and curfews;
2. Participate fully in all activities, making an effort to be a vital member of the Community;
3. Treat all members of the group with dignity and respect at all times.

A violation of this Covenant is a violation of the Community. My signature confirms that I have read and understood this Covenant and agree to abide by all of the listed standards.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 2005

Signature of Participant

Printed name of Participant

As Parent or Legal Guardian, I understand that if it becomes necessary for my teen to leave the Episcopal Outreach Camp, I am responsible for arranging for and paying for his or her transportation home immediately. I have discussed this Covenant with my teen and we both understand it.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Printed name of Parent or Legal Guardian

Please return this form to Eppie Miller with your check made out to St. Peter's for \$95 and Medical Release Form

(on letterhead)

Parental Consent and Medical Information Form
Youth Mission Trip June 18 – 27, 2005

Full name of child: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____

If not available, please contact: _____

Relationship to child: _____ Phone #'s: _____

Medications your child is currently taking and for what reason:

Do you want a youth leader to administer this medicine or your child to administer his/her own medicine?

Child's known allergies to food, medications, etc. and the reaction:

Special Health Problems/Concerns:

I authorize the chaperones on the trip to give my child the following over-the-counter medications. Please check all that apply;

_____ Advil/Tylenol	_____ Robitussin
_____ Pepto Bismol/Maalox	_____ Immodium
_____ Benadryl	_____ Sudafed

Insurance Company: _____ Policy #: _____

Phone #: _____ Name the policy is under: _____

Name of child's doctor: _____ Phone #: _____

Name of child's dentist: _____ Phone #: _____

I give permission for my son/daughter _____ to participate on the St. Martin's Youth Mission Trip June 18 - 27, 2005. I understand my child will be traveling by 15 passenger van, staying at Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center, and repairing a home through Appalachian Service People (ASP).

I also release St. Martin's Episcopal Church and its youth leaders from any and all liability claims, actions, and obligations whatever for any injuries or loss suffered by my child which arise out of or are related to his/her participation in the Mission Trip.

Further, I give my authorization and consent for the youth leaders (Howie Sasser, Jen Bourne, and Keith Crowell) as representatives of St. Martin's to seek medical care from a licensed physician for my child in the event of an emergency.

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sending Forth of Young People and Adult Leaders for the Mission Trip to
The Cheyenne River Reservation June 17 – 27, 2006

Celebrant: Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we are all baptized by the One Spirit into One Body, and given gifts for a variety of ministries for the common good. Our purpose is to commission these young people and their adult leaders in the Name of God to the special ministry to which they are called.

Celebrant addresses the young people and their adult leaders:

You have been called to a ministry to the Cheyenne River Reservation to lead Vacation Bible School with our brothers and sisters in Whitehorse. Will you, as long as you are engaged in this work, perform it with diligence?

Young People & Adult Leaders: I will, with God's help.

Celebrant: Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

Young People & Adult Leaders: I will, with God's help.

Celebrant: Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

Young People & Adult Leaders: I will, with God's help.

Celebrant: Will you faithfully and reverently execute the duties of your ministry to the honor of God, and to the benefit of the members of the Cheyenne River Reservation?

Young People & Adult Leaders: I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Addresses the Congregation:

We are here to ask for your prayers and blessings as these young people (Molly Simpson, Catie Shonts, Sara Smith, Asa Price, Christine Abernathy, Stewart Boss, Will Munce, Elijah Allred, Matthew Wetmore, and Corinne Bird) and their adult leaders (Terry Ertel, Dick Ertel, Sara Simpson, Don Willoughby, Elaine Willoughby, and Amanda Sale) leave June 17 for the Cheyenne River Reservation.

Congregation: May God go with you as you serve; may God give you peace and strength; and may God give you the energy and enthusiasm to accomplish your servant tasks. We send you out to serve in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

A Litany of Prayers for our Mission Trip to South Dakota
At the Airport, June 27, 2004

Celebrant: Heavenly Father, we are gathered today to send off our young people and adult leaders on the Mission Trip to the Cheyenne River Reservation. We ask that you center us into the joy and nurture of your Holy Spirit that we may be equipped with a sense of adventure and purpose like our brother Christ.

Silence

Celebrant: For a fruitful time and opportunity to serve you, Lord – both for those who go on the Mission trip and the loved ones that stay behind.

All: We beseech you, O Lord.

Celebrant: For a strong network of prayer support, both for us and for those we serve on the Cheyenne River Reservation, that our work would be done as an extension of our faith in Christ.

All: We beseech you, O Lord.

Celebrant: For a strong sense of team unity in the love of Christ, for the strength to take on our roles, and the patience to pick up and move above our shortcomings.

All: We beseech you, O Lord.

Family Members & Other Loved Ones Staying Behind: Be with our loved ones as they move out on an exciting adventure to the Cheyenne River Reservation. Calm their fears, ready them for new experiences, bless them on their way, keep them safe in their travels, and give them an inquiring and discerning servant's heart.

All: We beseech you, O Lord.

Young People & Adult Leaders: We thank you for our families who have modeled for us a life of service to you and others. While we are apart, keep them safe and bless them. Help us to reflect the love we have received from them.

All: We beseech you, O Lord.

Celebrant: Father, grant to us an answer to our prayers, that we would at all time be your faithful, humble, and loving servants. All these things we ask through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.