

Serving in Grand Goave-Things to Know Before You Go

Updated by Mike Harwood Sunday 16th January 2011

The Baptist General Convention of Texas, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and International Ministries ABC/USA are working together in the community of Grand Goave, Haiti. Because of the devastating earthquake in January of 2010, your team will be working with CBF and/or ABC representatives, or our partners Haiti Housing Network / Conscience International, as they assist members of the local community in rebuilding homes, schools, completing mobile medical clinics, and interacting with the local community. Know that you will be traveling to work *among* your brothers and sisters. May your time in country be a blessed and transformational moment in your life and in the lives of those you meet.

As of January 2011 we have two volunteer centers/houses. While we are partner organizations the group with whom you are staying will be your hosts, in country.

| <u>CBF/ABC Volunteer hosts</u> | <u>Haiti Housing Network / CI</u> |
|---|--|
| Mike and Brenda Harwood Jenny Jenkins Jeanson Chery | Jeremy Holloman Matt Cayton Alex Micette |

We will all be happy to answer your questions, however, it would be best to direct your questions to your hosts. Our USA based team will be able to let you know who your hosts will be.

As you prepare to come to Haiti, you may receive information and/or instructions from any of the following people:

Angela Sudermann International Ministries, ABC/USA angela.sudermann@abc-usa.org
Eunice Thetgyi, International Ministries, ABC/USA Eunice.Thetgyi@abc-usa.org
Chris Boltin Cooperative Baptist Fellowship cboltin@thefellowship.info
Marla Bearden BGCT Church2Church PartnershipsCoordinator marla.bearden@texasbaptists.org
Mike Harwood and Brenda Harwood CBF Dis. Response Field Coordinators both at mikecharwood@gmail.com
Jenny Jenkins CBF Medical Coordinator tentladyjj@yahoo.com
Jeanson Chery CBF Haitian Volunteer Coordinator jeanson1985@gmail.com
Jeremy Holloman Conscience International jeremyholloman@gmail.com

We are excited and honored that you have chosen to work with us as God calls you to serve in Haiti. You will bring amazing talent, education, and experience to this team, but what is most important is that you bring **a servant's heart**. Serve the people of Haiti by extending your hands in compassion, love, and hope.

What will you be doing?

Currently the work in Grand Goave, Haiti is divided into two types of work-medical and construction. Depending upon your skills, giftedness and talents, you and your group may choose to work in either of these two areas. **Construction teams will** be working alongside Haitian construction team. **Medical professionals will** assist with mobile medical clinics to remote villages, health screening, and basic medical care for construction teams. **Haiti Housing Network / CI** will be working with the rubble home construction.

Please understand that the daily/weekly work schedule shifts based on the work that was completed the previous week and on the skill sets of the team members. Flexibility is key!

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From Crisis Counseling International-

...Remember that you want to be a blessing and not a burden to your community and missionary hosts. They have been in crisis response mode since the earthquake. Their personal lives and living infrastructure have been substantially disrupted. Your presence inevitably adds to their workload and stress.

So, think things through and do everything you can to maximize your contribution while minimizing the effort that your hosts need to make in order to support you. Respect the work schedules and needed personal time of your community and missionary hosts. Your willingness to adapt to the circumstances, expect the unexpected, and leave your heart and mind open to what God has in store for you through this ministry will make this trip easier for you and your teammates.

Finally, make sure that you are prepared. Have everything that you will need with you. Make sure that all of your vaccinations and inoculations are up to date before you come. The Center for Disease Control recommends Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Typhoid, Tetanus, H1N1, and rabies as well as an anti-malarial medication. Check with your local travel clinic or medical provider.

Also, remember that, because of the heat and high humidity, dehydration is a real risk. You will have to drink plenty of water (check with your MD about the possible need for salt tablets). If you get overheated or sick and you can't drink enough water, there's not a good place to take you for re-hydration. **Please remember to bring your own water bottle, the bigger the better!**

How do you volunteer?

1. Have your group leader fill out an online team application, indicating top two preferred dates of service and type of service (medical or construction).
2. Have each team member review *Medical Screening for Volunteers in Haiti* document to determine if they are eligible for service.
3. Have each team member fill out a team member application. The link to this form will be sent to team leaders once they have completed the team application. It is the team leader's responsibility to share this with all of his/her team members.
4. Once your application is submitted, please allow five (5) business days for processing and notification.
5. After you are notified that your group has been accepted, please mail a deposit of \$100 per person to secure your group's space on our calendar.

For CBF/BGCT Groups, make checks payable to "CBF" and send to:
CBF, Attn: Chris Boltin, 2930 Flowers Road South, Ste 133, Atlanta, GA 30341

For ABC, make checks payable to "International Ministries" and send to:

6. **AFTER** you have received confirmation paid your deposit, you may purchase your airline tickets and supplemental volunteer insurance (mandatory). Please note that you will be flying into Port au Prince. For those groups traveling from the east coast try to arrive in country around NOON. For those groups traveling from either Texas or the west coast, please plan to arrive NO LATER THAN 3PM. Due to service interruption and dependability issues, we recommend American Airlines.

How big/small can my group be?

Groups can be 2-12 people. We are currently not equipped to handle any more than 12.

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How much will this cost?

We have worked very hard to keep the costs associated with this project very minimal. The most expensive part of this trip will be the airfare. (A suggested travel agent's information is listed below.) Basically, here are the expenses for this project.

1. The cost of round trip air fare into Port-au-Prince.
2. The cost of food, local transportation, lodging and translators is **\$320 per person per week** (\$40 per day per person) . This amount covers three meals a day. Some volunteers have opted to bring in additional snacks such as protein bars/snack food .
3. A **\$100 non-refundable deposit** (per person) is required for your group to be confirmed on our calendar. This deposit will go towards the total \$320 per person cost.
4. The cost of an exit visa will be **\$27 per person**. (This may or may not be taken up as you leave. In later days, this amount has been added to the overall cost of the airline ticket coming into PaP. Note that if you fly into a different location the amount may be required to leave the country.)

Please be aware that these amounts **do not** include any funds for souvenirs or other personal purchases.

If you are volunteering through either the Baptist General Convention of Texas or the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, **the remaining balance** (\$220 for a week/per person) **will be collected by CBF's representative after you arrive in Grand Goave.**

If you are volunteering through International Ministries, ABC/USA, the balance can be paid via credit card or a check made payable before the visit to "International Ministries" (mail checks to International Ministries, VIGM Haiti, PO Box 851, Valley Forge, PA 19482).

Purchasing Airline Tickets (for BGCT and CBF groups):

CBF has a longstanding relationship with the LetsUTravel travel company . Sabine (pronounced Suh-bean-uh) Chrysler is the agent in charge. Her phone is 770-312-2577 or 1-866-291-7809. (If Sabine is not available, any of her staff can assist you with your travel needs.)

If you are not purchasing tickets through this company please provide all of your travel information (arrival, departure, airline) to Chris Boltin at cboltin@thefellowship.info . Please note that early

departures from Port-au-Prince are problematic because you need to be at the airport two hours early and your travel from Grand Goave to Port-au-Prince can take up to three hours.

If you are volunteering through **International Ministries, ABC/USA**, please send your travel itinerary to Angela Sudermann at angela.sudermann@abc-usa.org

NOTE: You should not depart for Haiti until you have established contact with the volunteer coordinator in Haiti by phone or email (011-509-3-110-5919 or jeanson1985@gmail.com)

Purchasing Volunteer Insurance (for BGCT and CBF groups):

Individuals and groups seeking to serve through short term opportunities are strongly advised (for Haiti, this is MANDATORY) to purchase volunteer insurance. This supplemental insurance provides excellent coverage at a very reasonable rate. (around 3 dollars per day)

To sign up for this insurance go to www.aaintl.com ,

- Click on **VOLUNTEER ENROLLMENTS**
- Enter the user name as **CBF** and the password as **VOLUNTEER**

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- Click on **International Volunteer Program**
- Click on **Travel Insurance Enrollment**
- Complete **Enrollee Information** (Leave Project/Job Number blank)

*For groups, the group leader can enroll everyone at one time. Be prepared to pay with a credit card for all in the group.

*If you are a college student connecting through BGCT, please contact Brenda Sanders at 1-817-277-4077 or email brenda.sanders@texasbaptists.org to get this same insurance at an even more discounted rate.

*A copy of your insurance coverage will be automatically emailed to Chris Boltin upon completion of the enrollment process.

Insurance with International Ministries:

If you are serving with International Ministries, ABC/USA, volunteer accident and evacuation insurance is provided free of charge. You will still need your own health insurance. Once you have contacted International Ministries, we can give you further details.

Arrival Information:

If possible, before leaving MIA - after getting to the departure gate - fill up your water bottle. This will be for the ride to Grand Goave. There is no good place to purchase water. Also ration yourself at the airport, next toilet stop is Grand Goave, 2+ hrs ahead!

On the plane you should be given two forms - a long, narrow green immigration form and a smaller white customs form. Each person must fill out the green immigration form whereas the white customs form is one per family. Obviously you must fill one out if you are not traveling with immediate family members. Otherwise the head of the family will fill one out for the entire family.

If they do not hand out the green immigration form on the plane they will be handing them out when you reach immigration. Sometimes they will have run out – proceed through, without it!

Your address in Haiti is **Rue A, Petion #44, Grande Goave, Haiti**. Use 36 06 94 32 as the phone number. Most people mark Other in the purpose of visit section. You could also mark Personal but do not mark Business.

Declare any medical items that you are bring in. They will be for medical use so the volumes will not cause the agents any concern.

It is best to try and stay in one group, although larger teams may want to divide in two groups. Select group leaders who will be responsible for keeping track of the group members. If you get separated during deplaning and the bus ride, once you clear immigration you can regroup inside the building.

When you land you will exit the plane like normal and head down a corridor (which contains the last air conditioners you are likely to see until you return to the airport to go home), down an escalator and outside to buses that will take you past the damaged part of the terminal to the immigration area.

When you exit the bus head straight into the building. It is one large warehouse building that houses immigration, luggage pick up and customs. If you did not get the green immigration forms on the plane this is where you should look for someone passing them out. If you have to get a form here grab it and get in line. You can fill it out while you wait.

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The line farthest from the door usually moves fastest (#4). It is also closest to the restrooms. There will be a sign near line 4 pointing to the restrooms at the back of the building. At the desk they will take your green form and stamp your passport. They should detach the bottom of the form and return that to you. Keep it in your passport for departure. Families may approach the immigration desk in a group, but individuals traveling together need to go through one at a time.

Be prepared for the airport to be a real zoo! You will be approached by people offering to carry your bags. Many will simply pick up your bags or try to take them from you. Politely refuse the assistance and walk out as noted above out of the airport. If you will be traveling with a cell phone (with service in Haiti) please turn it on AS SOON AS you land. (Often times our ground team has these numbers and may be trying to reach you.)

Many, many people will want to help you with your luggage. You will have to be VERY firm that you do not need help – they do not give up very easily! There are luggage carts to the right after you pass the immigration counter. They cost \$2 each to use. If you want to rent one you can pay the lady behind the podium next to the carts and she will give you two tickets per cart rental. Take the tickets to the guy that is handing out the carts. He will tear one of and give you the other as a receipt.

Usually most people have the rolling kind of luggage and the carts aren't needed unless you have a lot of duffel bags or other hard to carry luggage.

Your luggage will be on one of the carousels. Usually they use the one farthest from immigration. If it takes a while for you to clear customs then some of your bags may have already been pulled off of the carousel and placed on the floor in the area just beyond the carousel behind the rope barrier. It is OK to cross it and look for bags. If you put identical ribbons on your cases some enterprising Haitian will pull them all off the carousel for you and then expect to be paid! Sometimes the "fee" is excessive. I suggest putting a ribbon or something on each of your bags to make them easier to spot (not identical!). Let some of your group grab the bags and some of your group stand with the bags to keep an eye on them.

Once you have your bags you can exit the building. The exit is opposite the luggage carousel. Give the white customs forms to one person along with the baggage claim tickets and let that person take the lead. As you exit you will pass the customs desk. Give the white forms to the guy there.

If your luggage is searched as you exit the building don't panic. If our greeter is with you let him do the talking and follow his instructions. If he is not, send any group members that are not being searched outside to make contact with the greeter and explain what is going on. They are usually only searching for weapons or quantities of medicine. One bag was seized because the individual was carrying paint ball guns! Everyone else has been OK.

As you exit the building you will be met with even more porters that want to help you – again be strong – one of the best defense is to tell them "I will not pay you" that makes them leave you alone! They all wear a brownish checkered shirt just so you know. Between the time you exit the building and make contact with our greeter do not let anyone help you with your bags.

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Exit through the iron gate at the end of the awning and turn right where you will walk a long way inside an area fenced with a chain link fence. **DO NOT LEAVE THIS PROTECTED AREA UNTIL YOU SEE OR TALK WITH A CBF/GRANDE GOAVE REPRESENTATIVE.** It is a decent walk to the exit and the parking lot. Our representative, normally Jeanson – pronounced Johnson - will be at the end of the fence before the car



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park. He will hold up the CBF globe logo with a sign of the name of your leader.

If some of your bags don't show up, American has a lost baggage kiosk on the back wall between the luggage carousel and the customs area. You will need to present your baggage claim sticker and your passport and they will take care of you. Give the paperwork they will give you to our greeter so that we can pick up your bag when it comes in.

Please be aware that there are many people arriving and going at all times. If multiple teams are arriving on the same day, you may have to wait for a team arriving after you. The round trip between Port-au-Prince and Grand Goâve is about five hours, so we cannot make multiple trips. Please be patient.

Accommodations:

You will be provided with meals and clean drinking water. You will be sleeping in the volunteer house. This rented concrete building is still being developed for our teams. Beds are wooden bunk beds with air mattresses, on a concrete floor. It is secure and dry, but we are still carrying water and running a generator at night. We hope to soon have water and electricity available 24 hours/day.

What to Bring for Yourself:

- personal prescription meds (pack them in your carry-on bag and bring only enough to last a few days longer than you intend to stay)
- salt tablets (if advised by your doctor)
- a prescription of Cipro (in case you develop “traveler’s diarrhea”)
- a prescription of anti-malarial medication
- **insect repellent** (DEET 35% or less) . . . consider pre-treating your clothing with permethrin
- sunscreen (consider bringing a sunscreen with a higher SPF)
- sunglasses (also, if needed, regular glasses are easier to deal with than contacts)
- a hat, cap, and/or bandana
- work clothes (e.g. jeans, work pants, or modest shorts and polos or t-shirts)
- **church clothes** (e.g. long pants, polo or short sleeve collared shirts for men and a dress or skirt for women; **no shorts or t-shirts, shoulders should be covered**)
- other clothes (e.g. undergarments or sleeping clothes)
- tennis shoes or work boots, and crocs or flip flops (for evening showers)
- a towel
- a modest bathing suit
- baby wipes for quick clean ups and hand sanitizer for constant hand cleaning
- single packs of dry Gatorade mix
- a personal water bottle - PLEASE bring a large volume bottle (Nalgene or aluminum)
- **Optional:** nutritious snacks (e.g. Power Bars, Cliff Bars, or other snacks with wrappers that you can peel)
- flashlight and batteries (head lamp recommended)

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- battery operated small personal fan (optional). There are some at the volunteer house; please bring many D size batteries.
- games for the evenings (that do not need electricity!)
- personal care items (e.g. feminine hygiene, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, soap, deodorant, toilet paper, etc)
- passport (in a security pouch that you wear under your clothing)
- small travel Bible and a notebook (for journaling)

[Try to keep your luggage to 1 bag plus a carry-on]

What Not to Bring for Yourself:

- Jewelry that can be easily lost or taken from you. Wedding ring and watches are now OK
- Warning with electronic equipment - please understand that these items are uncommon and if left around will “walk”. Please do NOT bring computers. Only bring cell phones if they work in the country and you are going to use it! I-Pods and cameras - please bring them at your own risk.

Should you choose to bring these items anyway, keep them with you at all times and be aware that, possibly, you may not take them back home. Sometimes, these items tend to disappear. We cannot be held responsible for the losses of these items.

Again, bring plenty of flexibility and patience as well! You can count on things not going as planned. You will need to remember that all involved have chosen to serve God and the people of Haiti. When you haven't bathed and you're tired, hot, hungry, and heartbroken at what you are experiencing, that knowledge will help you to persevere.

Update on Gifts-in-Kind

Because of customs regulations and our desire to focus on asset-based ministry, **we will no longer be accepting gifts-in-kind**. This includes water filters and medical supplies. Please bring only the materials that your team needs for the week and any items requested by the Grand Goave mission team **and nothing extra**. We cannot be responsible for items confiscated by customs.

Other Important Information:

We are all generous, well-meaning people who want to give from our resources to those who have less than we do. Done correctly, this is helpful. Done badly, it creates dependency, teaches others to be beggars, and causes jealousy between those who get something and those who don't.

So, before giving any monetary or other gifts, check with the host pastor or missionary. Because they will be able to distribute them to the most needy, allow the pastor or the missionary to be the one to give any gifts. This distribution usually occurs during a special occasion, after the team has gone home.

For the sake of safety and security, do not bring any visitors into your living space and do not wander away from your team alone for any reason. If two or more of your team want to leave the team for a short excursion, always keep your team leader informed as to your whereabouts.

The local team in Haiti anticipates your visit with joy. We want you to have a good experience and to remain safe and healthy. Lots of planning and preparation are required by you and the folks in Haiti who will receive you. As we work together, God can accomplish wonderful things through us.