

St. Croix Long-Term Disaster Recovery Mission

Trip information as of 13 June 2019

1. *What is the primary focus of this mission trip?*

Mission teams will provide home repairs in the rebuilding efforts of St. Croix for homes damaged/destroyed by Hurricane Irma and Maria in 2017. Each team will provide services for 15 days with the option to stay longer. Anyone wishing to stay less than 15 days will not be able to acquire FEMA funding, but are still welcome to join us self-funded. United Methodist Volunteers In Mission (UMVIM) began bringing teams June 2, 2018 and we have committed to providing volunteer teams through the end of 2019 to assist with their recovery efforts. Each team will include volunteers with varying skill levels, some skilled in construction as well as able-bodied volunteers to work under the guidance of these skilled craftsmen. Most of the teams will include volunteers with disaster relief experience, including several who have served on FEMA long-term recovery teams. Team membership will be open to volunteers regardless of religious affiliation.

2. *Who should consider participating in this mission trip?*

Healthy, hearty, hard workers! Unlike some mission trips where local labor does all the heavy lifting, we do all of the work! The work itself primarily consists of roofing repairs on corrugated metal roofs. Often, we must repair the masonry walls of the home prior to repairing or replacing the roof. This translates to a need for skilled labor with carpentry, roofing, and/or masonry experience in great need. We encourage teams to organize with a minimum of two skilled carpenters or general construction persons to each four unskilled workers.

Eight hour days, five days a week in the Caribbean sun is the work environment. FEMA expects a minimum of 40 hours each week for their investment. The minimum age is 18 years old.

3. *What is the cost to participate?*

This mission is a collaboration with FEMA and Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). FEMA will pay for round-trip airfare for each volunteer and will **reimburse** each volunteer approximately \$50/day for housing, food, and miscellaneous expenses once they return home; FEMA also reimburses you for travel to and from the airport and any additional luggage fees on your flight. FEMA does not cover the cost of airport parking. Lutheran Disaster Response, our local partner, has arranged for housing and meals at a rate of \$30/day for each volunteer (\$450 total less your \$50 initial deposit) which will be billed after member departs St Croix. You will also be expected to purchase your own UMVIM insurance which is designed for travel at a reduced rate (see Item 5 below for more information).

4. *So why am I being asked to pay \$85 up front. . . and why am I sending it to St. Paul UMC St. Croix Mission fund?*

Your \$85 will be spent as follows:

- \$50 will be paid to Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) as a deposit for room and meals. At the end of the project you will be billed for the remaining balance, to be paid to LDR when you receive your FEMA reimbursement. You will receive instructions on where and how to send this payment prior to leaving St. Croix.
- \$10 will be used to purchase your team t-shirt. Your team leader will provide this to you when you reach St. Croix.
- \$25 to be used at the discretion of the team for miscellaneous purchases needed to complete projects and/or to purchase a small "housewarming" gift for owners of each home we repair/rebuild. Any funds remaining at the end of Team's stint will be passed down to following team.

Wayne Jones, Coordinator for UMVIM-MS, is the project coordinator and a member of St. Paul UMC in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. A special account was opened to facilitate transfer of funds to Lutheran Disaster Response, to purchase t-shirts, and to ensure that all funds are used as intended.

5. Forms needed for the trip include team member application, medical release form, and skills assessment form. Where do I send them?

If possible, please scan completed forms and forward the UMVIM project coordinator, Wayne Jones at umvim@mississippi-umc.org and copy Jodi Crimmel at crimmel04@gmail.com

To pay the \$85.00 deposit online, visit www.stpaulos.org

- 'Home'
- 'Giving On Line'
- 'Easy as ABC'
- Select option: 'A'
- 'St. Croix Mission'
- Enter \$ amount of donation in 'blank block'
- 'Donate'
- 'Add to Cart'
- 'Check out'
- Enter personal data
- Enter payment method
- 'Place Order'

If you prefer, you may mail all forms with \$85 deposit to St. Paul United Methodist Church.

Mail originals and checks payable to: St. Paul UMC
(with notation, "St. Croix Mission")
P. O. Box 909
Ocean Springs, MS 39566

6. Tell me about the required UMVIM insurance.

For Team Leader:

Please register your team with UMVIM 3-4 weeks prior to departure, register everyone even if they choose not to accept the insurance. To register the team you will need the following information for each team member: name as it appears on their passport, date of birth, travel dates, and an email address. Please ask your team before you register who all wants the UMVIM Insurance. US Territories require the international insurance, but only charge the domestic processing fee. Call Gray at the UMVIM,SEJ office for any help you may need, she can walk you through it. The number is 205-453-9480.

All team members on a team must have the same level of coverage; there are 3 levels of coverage available. The cost of the insurance varies by amount, but there is a \$12 processing fee for each person accepting the insurance (there is no fee for only registering someone). There will be a box under each person's email address on the

insurance portion of registering, if a team member wants the insurance, check the box. The system will generate an invoice and team leader can collect from team members and make full payment or each member can pay using the following link. http://umvim.org/send_a_team/additional_payment.html.

Price Breakdown for 15 days:

1. \$10,000 = \$48/person (\$12 processing fee + \$36 for insurance)
2. \$25,000 = \$54/person (\$12 processing fee + \$42 for insurance)
3. \$50,000 = \$65/person (\$12 processing fee + \$53 for insurance)

To register the team, go to the following link: <https://registration.umvim.org>. Create a login (only the team leader needs to do this).

For information about the insurance coverage, go to the following link:

http://umvim.org/send_a_team/international/registration-and-insurance-updated.html.

For Team Members:

All team members will receive an email from sejinfo@umvim.org with a missioner profile and release of claim to complete. Please complete this information from the link in the email, do not try to register yourself; you will be registered by the Team Leader. After completions, make payments using the following link.

http://umvim.org/send_a_team/additional_payment.html

There is no login or password required. If you get a message about a password needed, please contact Gray at the UMVIM, SEJ office, she will be happy assist, 205-453-9480.

Please note that if you have insurance that will cover you in St. Croix, you may decline UMVIM insurance; St. Croix is a U.S. territory. However, please confirm with your insurance carrier prior to declining UMVIM coverage.

7. How do I make travel arrangements?

Caroline Nyholm submits team travel requests for each team.

Information from Team Application and Medical Release forms are added to a database for your team leader and contact information will be uploaded to the FEMA travel form. FEMA does a quick background check on each name submitted, then forwards the list to their travel department. You will be contacted by the FEMA travel department to confirm the information submitted and within a week or so will receive a travel invitation from FEMA. This invitation will provide directions for calling their travel agency where a representative will book your air travel.

Once you have flight information from national travel please email Julie Barnhart with airline, flight and arrival/departure times at juliegrammie@hotmail.com and copy your team leader. If you have any problems during travel with flights please contact national travel at the telephone number you are provided on invitational letter. Keep your team leader up to date on any changes.

8. *Where will we be staying?*

LDR has arranged for us to be housed at Sunny Isle School (now closed). It is located mid-island, behind Sunny Isle Baptist Church. The facility has hot and cold water and showers. The classrooms act as sleeping rooms with up to four single beds each, team size will determine whether couples can stay together in private rooms. There is a full kitchen where the teams cook their own breakfasts and prepare their lunches; all food items are provided by LDR. A washing machine is provided with a clothesline for drying. Sunny Isle is conveniently located close to a grocery store, restaurants, and laundromat.

Anyone wishing to stay at another location will be required to provide their own accommodations, transportation, meals, ect. Please inform Team leader prior to arriving in St Croix

9. *What about meals? Is the water safe to drink?*

Each team will prepare their own breakfast each morning. Lunch may be prepared before leaving the church and placed in an insulated lunch bag or prepared on the jobsite. The evening meal will be prepared Monday through Friday by a local resident hired by LDR. We have been told to expect Caribbean cuisine with a West Indies flair. If you have special dietary needs, please let your team leader know prior to arrival.

The water on the island is primarily from cisterns and should not be consumed. Bottled water will be provided for you throughout the mission trip.

10. *How will we get to and from the work sites? How will we know where to go?*

LDR has 2 vans and 3 trucks that we will use to travel to and from work sites. Additionally, each team leader will have a small rental car to run errands. Vehicles will be available on non-work days for volunteers to use, but they must be refilled (at the expense of the volunteers) for Monday morning travel.

LDR is doing all casework. They will identify and prioritize homeowner requests for assistance issuing work orders to us. The typical client is an elderly person who has no home insurance and no means for repairing their damaged roof.

11. *What about tools and supplies?*

Building materials are supplied by the homeowner or by LDR and will be on site when we arrive. When there are instances where an item is needed and the homeowner has no way to get it, the team leader/construction leader will step in and make good use of the "team" funds provided for in your initial deposit. The most important thing to remember is **KEEP A RECEIPT FOR EVERYTHING** so that we may account for all funds.

There are ample quality tools available provided by LDR, hand tools and power tools. *However, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN GLOVES at a minimum, but also bring any currently owned hand tools and tool belt for your comfort and convenience.*

12. *What will our work schedule look like? Will we have any free time?*

Team work schedules are set by the construction leader. We will not work on Sundays, but hours the other days will depend upon the workload, the weather, and the progress being made. FEMA expects approximately 40 hours of work per week from each volunteer. We generally work 7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

When working outside in a tropical climate it is generally prudent to begin early and accomplish as much as possible during the cooler hours of the day. Be sure to bring hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Typically, Saturday and Sundays are available for personal time and excursions. Most of the island has re-opened to tourists, so you may wish to investigate opportunities which include water sports, hiking, and shopping.

13. *When I've traveled outside the continental U.S. before I've needed special electrical adapters, had to exchange money, and needed a passport – are these things I will need for travel to St. Croix?*

No. St. Croix is part of the U.S. Virgin Islands; you will not need a passport. You will, however, need a driver's license to be able to drive a team vehicle. (By the way. . . they drive on the left side of the road in St. Croix!) They use U.S. currency, so no need to exchange money. There are ATM's available on the island. You may wish to bring \$100 or more if you wish to do some shopping, scuba diving, or if you need to go to K-Mart for laundry detergent or a personal item you neglect to pack. No special electrical adapters are needed, but it's always a good idea to pack an extension cord!

14. *What kind of clothes should I pack?*

Two guidelines to keep in mind – safety and appropriateness. Lightweight casual clothes that can be washed will be all you need. Long pants or shorts (of appropriate length) may be worn; remember you are working on a hot metal roof when packing. Closed-toed shoes must be worn at construction sites. Please bring your own gloves, tool belt, and hand tools **IF you own them**; LDR does provide these items, but there is a limited supply. For church services on Sunday, Jeans or shorts are acceptable, but dress clothes are the norm.

15. *Is there a recommended packing list?*

Each volunteer must bring his/her own twin size sheets (or use a set that has been left from previous volunteers), pillow, pillow case, towel(s), and bath cloth(s). You may wish to donate these when you leave. There is a *Sample Personal Checklist* on the UMVIM website at http://umvim.org/resources/for-team-leaders/downloadable_files.html that may help you decide what to pack. Just remember that Kmart is open on the island in case you forget something.

16. *Will my Cell Phone Work on the Island?*

Cell phone coverage is fairly good island wide. Sunny Isle has free WiFi that works relatively well. Typically there is no additional charges as St Croix is a U.S. Territory. We have had no problems with major carriers but you may wish to confirm with your provider if additional charges will apply.

17. *What if I think of another question?*

Please contact:

Wayne Jones 228-596-5480 umvim@mississippi-umc.org

Jodi Crimmel 570-881-0029 crimmel04@gmail.com