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Support Raising Guide



A guide to raising support for your . . .

Short Term Mission Trip

"...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15

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RAISING SUPPORT FOR SHORT-TERM MISSIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

RAISING SUPPORT is not a new idea. Hundreds of thousands of missionaries have gone before us using a variety of methods to obtain funds for ministry. True missionary support began with Jesus (Luke 8:1-3).

One of the most challenging and yet thrilling experiences for anyone going overseas with Nehemiah Network is to watch the Lord meet both his or her personal and financial needs. This may be the very first time you have actually stepped out in faith, trusting the Lord to meet your financial needs. You, too, can have the privilege of experiencing firsthand the promise of Philippians 4:19, which says:

"But my God shall supply all of your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

This manual is designed to encourage and help you raise both prayer and financial support for a short-term missionary experience that you will never forget and will perhaps change the whole course of your life. One of the most challenging and faith-building experiences of any missionary journey is trusting the Lord to provide the funds. Missionaries usually refer to this as a time of deputation. Without this experience you can never truly say that you have experienced real missionary life. The Lord wants us to come to a place of complete dependence on Him so that He can prove Himself strong on our behalf. This does not mean that we just sit back and do nothing, because Scripture plainly says that a person who does not work should not eat (II Thessalonians 4:10). Raising support takes prayer, work and time.

Out of several thousand people who have gone with us on previous Nehemiah Network missionary trips, the funds have come primarily from the following sources:

1. Personal savings
2. Friends and relatives
3. Churches
4. Fund raising projects

II. THINGS TO CONSIDER

A. The importance of attitude:

1. You need to be very optimistic in your plans to go on Nehemiah Network. It will be very difficult to get people to support you if you are not fully committed and make statements such as “If I go . . .”
2. Keep in mind that the ministry you will be involved in is not your ministry but the Lord’s. Therefore, you are really not asking for support for yourself, but for the ministry that you will be a part of.
3. When you ask people to support you in this short-term missionary endeavor, you are actually asking them to become partners and fellow workers with you in this ministry. When people support our work they entrust their gifts and prayers to our care, which makes us accountable to them as well as to the Lord.
4. If you deny people the opportunity to participate in the Lord’s work that you are involved in, you are actually denying them a blessing that He wants to give them.

B. How should missions be supported?

1. Those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel (I Cor. 9:14). This means that when we go out to serve the Lord, it is Biblical to ask others to help to support us.
2. Sometimes Paul supported his work as a tent-maker (Acts 20:34). This does not mean that he never received support from others but simply that he chose to support himself on this particular missionary journey.
3. At other times Paul received support from a church (Phil. 4:14-18).

C. The need for prayer:

1. A person once said that he did not need to write a prayer letter because he had the necessary resources. Regardless of whether or not we need financial support, we always need prayer support. Jesus instructs us to pray (Luke 11:9-10).
2. God cares about us and knows what we need even before we ask (Mt. 6:8).
3. God often answers prayers through other people (Ex. 35:4-9).

III. PRAYER LETTERS

The writing and mailing of personal prayer letters to friends and relatives is a very effective way of raising both prayer and financial support for your short-term missions trip. You should plan to write this letter and send it out just as soon as you have been accepted and know where you are going. The following suggestions are shared to help you in writing this letter:

- A. Suggestions for your mailing list- Compile a mailing list of names and addresses of potential supporters. We have learned that the average person going on Nehemiah Network needs at least 75-100 people on this list. The people on this list may consist of:
- * Family members (immediate and distant)
 - * Personal friends
 - * Church friends
 - * Past school friends
 - * Your pastors (past and present)
 - * Teachers
 - * Neighbors
 - * Business associates
- B. Suggestions for actually writing the letter:
1. If possible write it on Word of Life letterhead. It will immediately identify you with Word of Life and make what you have to say more official.
 2. Do not write more than one page, front and back. Don't crowd; leave plenty of white space at top, bottom and sides. Use shorter sentences and paragraphs to make the letter readable. Use headings, if you wish, to capture attention. Chose ink and paper that makes it easy on the eyes. For example, stay away from dark green ink on light green paper.
 3. Give your testimony as to how the Lord has led in your life this past year and now how He is leading you on this mission trip.
 4. Tell where you are going and the dates of the trip.
 5. Share what you hope will be accomplished in your life and in the lives of those to whom you will be ministering.
 6. List the types of ministry you will be involved in, such as work team, healthcare team, or technology team.
 7. Share the total amount needed for the trip, which includes airfare, ground transportation, food, lodging, etc. Also give the deadline dates for needing specific amounts in order to make airline deposits.
 8. Be sure to request both prayer and financial support for this ministry that God has given you. Explain that all gifts are tax deductible and should be sent directly to Word of Life Nehemiah Network with your name attached.
 9. Be as personal as possible. Speak in terms of you (singular) and me. Letters that address a group read like they are directed to no one in particular.
 10. Use of graphics or photos will help catch the readers' attention.
 11. You will need lots of prayer as we will go into spiritual warfare. Mention specific prayer requests

and tell about answers to prayer. (Example: You are ministering in “country” with the Nehemiah Network.)

12. Be sure to put your name, and the name and address of Word of Life in your letter as the place for people to send their gifts.
13. Once you have the letter written, make sure you have is proof read carefully for errors and awkward sentence structure before having it printed. Also, send a copy to the Nehemiah Network office.

Always be very neat. Remember that before any of the material you have labored long hours to produce has been read, the appearance of your letter will determine its ultimate effectiveness.

Note: Keep in mind that it may take two or three letters to raise the amount of support needed. Ideally the first letter should go out immediately after you have registered for your trip. This does not mean that you cannot start at a later date and still raise the funds. The second letter needs to go out about six weeks after the first letter, with some sort of graph showing how much has come in and how much is still needed. Often people have good intentions of making a contribution when the first letter arrives but fail to send it in. Then when the second letter arrives they are reminded to put their support in the mail. If the funds are not all in by the second deadline, a third letter needs to be written, giving another graph and sharing your final deadline.



(Nehemiah Network sample letter to an individual friend or relative)

(It would be best to put this on Word of Life letterhead)

Mr. and Mrs. John Doe
100 Main Street
Your Town, USA 99999

Dear John and Mary,

I have some exciting news to share with you! The Lord has given me an opportunity to participate in a missionary outreach with Word of Life Nehemiah Network into (country you are going to) this coming (dates). We will fly to (country you are going to) where we will minister through free healthcare clinics/work teams offered to the people of the country. It will be a very practical training experience for me and a wonderful opportunity to serve the Lord.

Along with this wonderful opportunity comes the responsibility of raising both prayer and financial support. I would like for you to take a few moments right now and pray and ask God how you can be a part of my summer ministry. If the Lord leads you to help support me financially, please know that your money will be used to help reach people in (the country you are going to) this coming summer. If you feel led to uphold me in prayer, I will appreciate that also.

In order to go on this missionary journey, I need to raise approximately (total amount needed) for air fare, ground transportation, food, lodging, and other trip-related expenses. I need \$900 right away for the airline ticket deposit and the balance by (May 15). Please pray that the Lord will supply the funds. If the Lord leads you to help in this unique opportunity, please send your check (made payable to Word of Life Fellowship, Inc.) along with the enclosed support slip to: Word of Life, Box 600, Schroon Lake, NY 12870 and make sure it has my name and trip included on it. They will send you a tax-deductible receipt.

Thanks so much for your interest and prayers!

Your Friend in Christ,

(Your name)

IV. CHURCH MEETINGS:

A. How to arrange meetings.

1. By writing letters.

Churches are the backbone of missionary support. As soon as you have registered for a Nehemiah Network trip, you need to go to your pastor and ask for his support. Arrange for a time when you can go before the church and present your ministry. Also ask if he could write a letter of recommendation for you to some of his pastor friends and try to arrange for you to make a presentation in these churches.

SEE SAMPLE LETTER ON PAGE 9

You need to get a list of the names and addresses of all the pastors to whom your pastor sends a letter of recommendation. Then, write a letter to each pastor, introducing yourself and asking if it would be possible for you to share your testimony and the burden you have to go on this short-term missionary journey during one of their church services. It is best if your letter can be sent along with your pastor's letter.

SEE SAMPLE LETTER ON PAGE 10



(Sample letter from your pastor to a pastor friend)
(Would be best for this to be on Church Letterhead)

Pastor Gerald Brown
First Baptist Church
Left Overshoe, NY 10000

Dear Brother Gerald,

Greetings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ! I am writing about the enclosed letter to you from one of our people, Joe Harris. You may not know Joe, he is one of our finest members and is very sensitive to the Lord's leading in his life in the area of missions. It has been a personal prayer request of mine that the Lord would move in the hearts of our people to consider serving Him in the area of missions, and Joe is one who has been a direct answer from the Lord to that request.

As you know, a venture like this requires much support, both in prayer and finances. It is difficult for him to raise the needed amount with his limited contacts. That is why I am writing to you on his behalf, to ask if you or your church would have a part in assisting Joe in this missions endeavor. I can assure you that this program will be profitable both to Joe and in reaching people for Christ in (country where you are going). I believe it will be a great help to Joe in determining what area of missions he will seek in the future.

Joe's family, our church, and many individuals plan to give to help Joe raise the needed support. However, because (total amount needed) is a substantial amount, we have opened the opportunity to help in this endeavor to other churches of like faith. I hope that you will give this matter your serious consideration, and then give Joe an opportunity to share his heart at your church some Sunday very soon.

Let me say that if you have any questions concerning Joe, his family, his involvement here, or the nature of his anticipated ministry, I would be happy to talk with you about it. Please feel free to give me a call. May the Lord bless and direct you in His will as you consider this important matter.

Your Friend in Christ,

(Your pastor's name)

(Sample letter from you to a your pastor's friend)
(Would be best to put this on Word of Life letterhead)

Pastor Gerald Brown
First Baptist Church
Left Overshoe, New York 10000

Dear Pastor Brown,

Thank you for allowing me to introduce myself through this letter. My name is (your name) and I am a member of First Baptist Church. Through my life experiences I have gained valuable experience which can be used through the ministries of the Nehemiah Network. These experiences, coupled with my daily devotions and Bible study, will help me better serve the Lord in the future.

The Word of God clearly teaches that worldwide evangelism is one of the primary purposes Christ left the Church on this earth. Christ said in John 4:35, "*Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.*" There is a tremendous need for people to hear the Good News of the Gospel, but as Paul said in Romans 10:14, "*How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*" The harvest is full, but there are few laborers working in the field.

I have been burdened to participate with Word of Life's Nehemiah Network missionary team. For two weeks, (dates), I will be blessed with the opportunity of laboring in the Lord's fields in (country you are going to) as a short-term missionary.

I would count it a great privilege to share with your church my testimony and opportunity for serving the Lord with Nehemiah Network. I need to raise (amount you need to raise) to pay for my plane ticket, ground transportation, food, lodging, etc. I look forward to hearing from you concerning the dates you have available.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

In Christ,

(Your name)

2. By Phone Calls:

Allow sufficient time for these letters to reach each pastor. Then make a phone call to each pastor, asking if he has received your letter and if he would allow you to give your testimony and share the short-term mission opportunity that you have with Nehemiah Network.

Things to say when you call:

- 1.) Identify who you are and why you are calling.
- 2.) Be positive when you call and never apologize for calling.
- 3.) Ask if he has received your letter.
- 4.) Ask if he has a particular day when he would like to have you come and share with his church. If he does not have anything to offer, be prepared to suggest a date that would fit your schedule, or maybe he would be willing to allow you to present your ministry to a Sunday School class or another church group.
- 5.) If you are able to set an appointment, it should be confirmed in writing as soon as possible.
- 6.) If several weeks elapse between the time you set the appointment and your actual meeting date, you should phone him again just before you go to let him know you are still planning to be with them. People do forget, and this can save an embarrassment to them and to you.



3. Here is a sample phone conversation to use as a guide

Hello Pastor _____, this is (your name). I'm calling in regards to the letter I sent to you about my opportunity for a short-term ministry in (countries) with Word of Life Nehemiah Network. Did you receive a letter from pastor (your pastor's name)?"

(If he says yes then proceed.)

When would be a good time for me to come and share the ministry the Lord has given to me with your Church?"

(Wait for his answer. If you confirm a date, then say:)

"Thank you so much Pastor (his name) for allowing me to come and share my missionary burden with your people. This means a lot to me, and I'm looking forward to being with you on (the date you have set to be with them)."

B. Personal preparation for meetings:

1. Things **not** to do.

- (a) Do not be apologetic in your approach.
- (b) Do not try to be something that you are not.
- (c) Do not read your presentation to your audience.

2. Things to do.

- (a) Be sincere. People need to sense your heart.
- (b) Give your own personal testimony.
- (c) Share the Gospel, as many people may be unsaved.
- (d) Tell about some of the things you will be doing.
- (e) Give specific prayer requests.

3. Things to consider.

- (a) Spend time in prayer before going.
- (b) Check with the person in charge as to how much time you have.
- (c) Dress appropriately and modestly. Do not look sloppy!
- (d) If available, show the Nehemiah Network video. Make sure that you have a VCR and TV to use and that you know how to use them.
- (e) Plan to arrive on time. If it is a church service you should plan to be there at least 30 minutes ahead of time. If it is a meeting with a business person or pastor plan to arrive 10 minutes early. If it is in a home, arrive just on time. Surprising your host in the midst of cleaning up after a meal is not a good start!



V. FUND-RAISING PROJECTS

The following fund-raising projects should only be considered after the previous suggestions have been implemented. It is important that we never get away from complete trust in the Lord to meet our needs whether it is by letter, speaking or a fund-raising project. The Lord works with different people in different ways. Sometimes all the money comes in just through prayer letters and speaking engagements. Other times it takes these plus some fund raising projects. There are many types of projects that may be considered, but the following should at least give you some ideas:

A. Nehemiah Network Dessert Benefit:

This is an evening program in which you invite friends and relatives to a presentation of your upcoming Nehemiah Network ministry. After the presentation, you share your testimony and burden for reaching people for Christ.

1. Planning -
 - (a) Set the date four to six weeks in advance so the people can get it on their calendar.
 - (b) Solicit desserts to be donated by various members of your church, family or friends.
2. Promotion -
 - (a) Send out a letter of invitation with response slips. (See sample letter on page 15.)
 - (b) You may want to choose a person to follow up by phone the letters that were sent.
 - (c) Have your church include the Dessert Benefit on the church calendar and in the bulletin.
3. Program -
 - (a) Welcome people with coffee, tea or soft drinks.
 - (b) If available, start with showing the Nehemiah Network video available from Word of Life Headquarters.
 - (c) Afterwards, the host should introduce you and tell something about your plans for Nehemiah Network.
 - (d) You should give your own personal testimony and burden for reaching people with the Gospel of Christ in the country you are planning to minister in.
 - (e) If you can play an instrument, sing a song, tell a Bible story or give some type of special presentation, it would be great.
 - (f) If possible, it would be great to have a former Nehemiah Network person come and share his or her experience as to the missions trip they went on.
 - (g) The host or youth pastor should bring a brief challenge on missions and then present an opportunity for those attending to have a part financially in your summer missionary endeavor with Nehemiah Network.
 - (h) Be sure to have support slips on hand and explain how the funds are being handled and that tax-deductible receipts will be mailed to all who give. Explain how all checks need to be made out to Word of Life Fellowship, Inc., but should include your project code.
 - (i) Take an offering and collect support slips before you dismiss.
 - (j) Have prayer and spend time in fellowship with all the friends your host has invited.

Sample invitation to the Dessert Benefit

Dear Friend,

I would like to invite you to a special Dessert Benefit for _____, which will be held at _____ on _____ night at _____ p.m. This young person is preparing to take a short-term missions trip to _____ this coming summer. _____ will travel with a large group from all across the United States and Canada. As a special friend, I know you would like to hear from _____ regarding what he/she will be doing and how you can have a part in this great opportunity. If you need directions, please call _____.

A short video will be shown, explaining what this missionary endeavor is all about. Also, _____ will give his\her testimony and telling how he\she will be involved in this outreach. A time of dessert fellowship will follow.

A free- will offering will be taken to give you an opportunity to participate in this special ministry in a financial way. Please take a moment right now to complete the RSVP form and send it to the address below, or call to let us know of your interest.

If you know of others who might be interested in hearing about _____ and his/her summer missions opportunity, please feel free to invite them and then give us a call to make sure we know they're coming.

What an encouragement it will be to _____ if you can attend! I sincerely hope that you will plan to be with us on _____ at _____ p.m. Why not circle that date on your calendar right now? If you have any further questions, please feel free to call.

Sincerely in Christ,

(Name of host)
(Address of host)
(Phone number of host)

Please RSVP as soon as possible.

Yes, we accept your invitation to attend the Dessert Benefit for _____.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Send to: Name _____ Address _____

B. Nehemiah Network Free Car Wash:

This idea was used by one church, of less than 80 people, to raise over \$9,000 during one car wash to help send six people on a short term mission trip. It is a great way to get your whole youth group involved in your missionary project. The amount of money you raise will depend on the number of people involved and the pledge totals of each person times the amount of cars actually washed. Make sure to emphasize that this is a FREE CAR WASH. (Write us for specific instructions and sample flyers).

PLEDGES:

Have each participating person solicit pledges from friends, relatives, and local businessmen (i.e., 5 cents, 10 cents, 25 cents, 50 cents, etc. per car) for each car washed. The goal of each participating person should be a collective total of \$2.00 per car washed. Assure potential donors that their pledge will be limited to no more than 200 cars. The people will need to go out several days in advance to get the pledges. Have a sign-up sheet that records the amount each person wants to pledge per car and a place for his signature. After the actual car wash, you will want to go back and collect the money, based on the actual number of cars your group washed collectively, times the amount they pledged.

ADVERTISEMENT:

Get news releases to radio stations, local newspapers, and the community bulletin board of the local TV stations to announce the FREE CAR WASH for you. Explain that this will help fund a person in your church who is going short-term to the mission field.

Make sure that these advertisements are run a week in advance of the actual car wash. Advertise the day of the car wash by way of banners and signs, highly visible from the road and along the route approaching the CAR WASH.

LOCATION:

The location is very important. You will want to find a service station on a busy corner that has easy in and out access. See if the station owner will donate the water, since the car wash will bring in some business for him.

PROCEDURE:

As you wash each car, give the driver an information sheet about the purpose of this project and remind him/her that this is a FREE CAR WASH. (Even though it is free, many will want to make some kind of donation.) Have a large donation jar with a sign marked "Donation" easily accessible. Give out Gospel tracts.

FORMULA: 20 people x \$2.00 each in pledges x 200 cars = \$8,000

VI. THANK-YOU NOTES

- A. **How do you know who to thank?** - You will receive a computer printout each month with the names and addresses of those who have sent in gifts for your project code.
- B. **How often should you write thank-you notes?** - Send them just as soon as you receive the list each month. Never take donations for granted.
- C. **What style should you use when writing them?**
1. Personal hand-written notes are probably the best.
 2. Can be personalized on the computer.
 3. Try postcards sometimes.
- D. **Things you can do while overseas.**
1. Send back picture postcards.
 2. Purchase a small gift (i.e. a book mark) for supporters.

If you are genuinely thankful you will go out of your way to care and show appreciation to your donors for their faithful support.