

HH4H Mission Trip Information

Message from the Carvers:

We would like to thank you for listening to the voice of God as He challenges you to GO! We know there are many questions when considering a step of faith like going on a mission trip. This packet is designed to answer some of those. We believe it will change your life and energize your faith! Thank you for helping us fulfill our dream of changing Haiti, one child at a time!

Jonathan & Michelle Carver- Co-Founders, *Helping Hands 4 Haiti (HH4H Inc.)*

Trip Costs

We believe so much in short term missions, we have made our trips as affordable as possible that we may expose as many people to the beautiful people of Haiti so it can change your lives as much as it has ours!

Our trips cost **\$800 per week per person**. You will fly in and out on the same day of the week. (e.g. Sat.-Sat.)

In addition to the cost of your trip is airfare. Obviously, we cannot control nor predict accurately what airfare costs will be. However, depending on your port of origin, most have ranged between \$600-\$900. The earlier one books, the better the opportunity for a reasonable rate. As we book your airfare, our goal is to have your entire team arrive on the same flight to maximize your experience in Haiti! It also gives us the opportunity to get a group rate discount if available. It also gives you an opportunity to meet your fellow “missionaries” on the flight into Port au Prince. Keep in mind, there might be an overnight layover at the airport in your flight plans.

The cost of your trip covers transportation, translators, security, lodging and meals (breakfast and dinner). As we will be out during the day, we suggest you bring some snacks to hold you over until dinner. We will also provide safe drinking water to all our volunteers. Our organization covers all ground expenses while in Haiti. If you wish to purchase souvenirs, there will be an opportunity to do so before returning to the U.S.

Please visit our website at www.hh4h.net to see the list of available trip dates and openings. Special arrangements can be made in advance for a group upon request.

Payment Schedule

All applications must be accompanied by a \$100 NON-REFUNDABLE DEPOSIT in order to reserve you spot. If you are an individual attending, we will book your airfare for you to ensure your arrival is with the rest of your group. If you are part of a large group, often airfare is purchased together by that group. Therefore, the schedule is as follows:

Individual Fee Schedule:

90 days before departure
\$100 with application

60 days before departure
\$400

30 days before departure
Balance (\$300 plus airfare cost)

Group Fee Schedule:

60 days before departure
\$100 with application

30 days before departure
\$700 balance

Facebook Group Page

Upon completing the roster for your trip, we will open a group Facebook page for the purposes of communicating particulars of the trip to you. You will find this a very valuable tool for asking questions and receiving important information about your upcoming trip. In addition, you can get to know the rest of your fellow volunteers and allows you to post your trip photos after you get home.

Before you go

One of the most important things you can do to ensure you experience the best possible trip is to plan ahead. Travel to "developing" countries can be unpredictable and always require flexibility, BUT you can eliminate many surprises by being well prepared.

Passport

Haitian authorities require all Americans entering Haiti to have a valid passport. If you do not have one, check with your local post office for an application or go to the U.S.

Department of State web page: <http://travel.state.gov/passport>. All travelers should bring a color photocopy of their passport for safe keeping.

Immunizations

We do not recommend the type of immunizations needed but encourage everyone to seek advice from their doctor about tetanus and malaria medications, typhoid and hepatitis A and B vaccines, which provide long-term protection.

Medications/Medical

Medical identifications (tags, bracelet, card, etc.) must be carried by anyone with chronic illness such as diabetes or heart conditions. If you take prescription medications, bring enough to last the entire trip. If you require meds that make you sensitive to extreme heat you may want to consult your doctor before coming. In addition, if you have back pain, you should know the roads are VERY rough in much of Haiti and we often are transported in the back of a truck.

We ask that each person bring an anti-nausea/motion sickness drug like Phenergan and anti-diarrheal medication like Imodium, sunscreen and bug spray containing Deet.

Jewelry

Leave it at home. We prefer not to bring attention to ourselves with expensive jewelry or diamonds. A simple cross necklace will be acceptable and may help identify us as a Christian organization.

Raising Support

Tell your church. Consider going to your elders, ministers, missions committee, etc. and tell them what you are doing. Often they will have funds earmarked for such endeavors. They will often pay for all or part of your trip.

Write support letters. Even if your friends and family are not believers in Christ, many still believe in a good cause and will assist you financially. Send letters to friends, colleagues, neighbors, etc. You may be surprised how many people will be willing to help. In fact, you will be amazed how your "loaves and fishes" will multiply when doing God's work! If you need guidance, read the sample letter on the next page.

Get your community involved. Make it a project with your youth group, Sunday school class, friend, family or neighbors. Hold a garage sale, car wash, bake sale or auction. Encourage church, family and friends to become involved by assisting by purchasing some of the items you will bring to help such as deodorant, toothpaste, etc.

Use holidays. Instead of asking for birthday or Christmas gifts, ask family and friends to help you go on a mission trip. You will find the sacrifice of giving up a present will pale in comparison to the joy of being a "Helping Hand" in Haiti.

Be sure to send thank you notes to your supporters. And while you're at it, you might bring them small gifts from Haiti. Haiti has some beautiful and inexpensive art and crafts that are terrific gift ideas. It is a great way to show appreciation and share a little of your experience at the same time.

**Special editors note:

Do not allow doubt and fear of financial provision to prevent you from listening to the call to go. Our advice is, by faith, to treat it as if money was not an issue. Of course, that does not mean to do nothing to raise it. But we firmly believe when God speaks to our heart to serve, and we answer that call to serve, His provision will follow. In fact, we have never seen it otherwise. Furthermore, there is something very powerful about this portion of the experience. It has more value to the person that has sacrificed, prayed, believed and humbled themselves awaiting God's provision. It makes the journey a bit sweeter.

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark 10:45 NKJV

Sample Letter

Dear friends,

I hope all is well with you. I have some exciting news I wanted to share. I am going on a mission trip to the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere--Haiti. I have thought about this, prayed and talked it over with family and friends. I feel it is an opportunity I cannot pass up!

We are making this trip with Helping Hands 4 Haiti. They are an organization that works in Haiti providing Christ's love and compassion for orphans by way of food, shelter, education and medical needs. The dates of the trip are from _____ to _____. The total cost of my trip will be \$_____.

I am writing to you to ask for your financial support. Anything you give will be helpful. If, for some unforeseen reason I am unable to participate in the trip, your gift is will still be used to support the mission.

If you are unable to give at this time, I completely understand! I seek your prayers as I begin to plan for this mission trip. As you can imagine, raising support is sometimes difficult, but I know if it is God's will for me to be on this trip, He will make a way!

While in Haiti, I will have the opportunity to:

- Share Christ's love with orphans
- Deliver food and supplies to needy children
- Help teach and love street children
- Bring needed supplies
- Help build/repair facilities
- Visit terminally ill children at Children's Hospital

If you are able to help, please make your check payable to __your_name__. and put "mission trip" the memo line and return it in the envelope provided by _(date)__. I need to know where my support is coming from and how much more I will need to raise before I leave.

To learn more about the mission and its ministry please visit their website at www.hh4h.net My desire is to make a difference in the life of orphans in Haiti. Please continually pray for me as these plans fall into place.

Love,

Jane Doe

Packing

Depending on which airlines is chosen, it is important to plan ahead for your packing. There are restrictions of weight and size. We are very familiar with these regulations and we will help inform you of the specifics via the Facebook Group Page. We ask you use your carry on for your personal items so we can use the checked bag for group items or supplies you have collected for our needs in Haiti. We have learned the hard way to not assume anything when it comes to packing because changing at the last minute is very stressful. Should you desire to bring an extra piece of luggage there is usually a small fee for that.

In your carry-on luggage:

- Medicine- any prescription meds you take, malaria meds, band aids, first aid ointment,
- diarrhea/motion sickness meds, cold tablets, ibuprofen, wet ones.
- Flash light (with batteries)
- Snack food for daily travels
- Bandanas (for sweat)
- Camera (optional)
- Passport (and color photocopy of passport)
- Money, small crisp bills
- Bible and journal
- Light jacket or sweatshirt (for airport)
- Refillable water bottle (make sure it is empty)
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, lotion, deodorant, hand sanitizer, sunscreen and insect repellent)*see airport security guidelines for packing instructions
- Hat or other head protection
- Sunglasses
- Girls- comfy skirt for church, capris, knee length skirts or shorts, t-shirts ,tops should be modest
- Guys- dress casual shirt and pants for church, light weight pants, shorts and t-shirts
- Pair of comfortable walking shoes, sandals or flip flops

GROUP ITEMS, you MAY be asked to bring (see Facebook Group Page):

- Medical supplies
- Games/toys for children
- Candy and balloons
- Misc. clothing, shoes or other items depending on need
- Housewares/fabric
- Deflated soccer balls (with an inflation device)
- Toiletries (Head and Shoulders, Shea butter lotion, toilet paper, etc.)

A few things to know about:

Water

You should NOT brush your teeth with any water in Haiti except from the bottled water furnished by HH4H. Personal water bottles can be refilled at the guesthouse from a Culligan water cooler. Commercial bottled water will be supplied for all trips.

Food / Meals

While staying at our house, we will eat traditional Haitian meals each evening. We have a young Haitian lady who cooks our meals for us and is experienced in serving Americans. Breakfasts will be somewhat American traditional and accompanied by fresh fruits in season such as mango, banana, etc.

In the Field

If you are someone who is accustomed to 3 meals a day, you may want to carry snacks in your backpack such as granola bars, nuts, beef jerky and dried fruit. Bring enough to share with our Haitian workers! We will occasionally purchase papita (fried plantain or as we like to call them Haitian potato chips!) on the street for a treat. They are delicious!

Money

The amount of money you take will depend entirely on your desire to help those special people God puts on your heart. We recommend you bring \$100- \$200 cash for souvenirs and possibly for blessing someone. Do not bring any bills larger than \$20 and be sure they are crisp, with no tears or marks.

Your team leader will assist you in changing them into Haitian currency if you desire. Haitian currency is "gourdes" and the exchange rate varies.

***Note- NEVER give money to ANYONE. Talk to a leader if you feel led to give. Chaos can happen quickly if you begin giving money the "American" way. This is a very poor country and you WILL see beggars. It is heart-wrenching but please allow us to assist you in getting your gift where it needs to go in a safe and appropriate manner.*

Customs/Immigration

Upon entering Haiti you will be given a "green card". You MUST have this to depart Haiti. Do NOT LOSE THIS! Tuck it in your passport. We suggest you leave your original passport in your room and take only your photocopy with you in your backpack each day. It will serve as a means of identification. Items in your rooms are secure and can be left in your room while you are in the field. The address you will be staying at will be provided you before your departure.

Security and Safety

We are often asked if we will be “safe” while in country. While we are in a developing country and anything can happen, we take your safety very seriously. Our house is located in a very “American-friendly” neighborhood. In addition, it is very secure with a locked gate, tall concrete walls with razor wire atop. The house is locked securely at night. No volunteer is ever permitted to be alone or without security personnel being with them. We avoid notoriously dangerous areas as instructed by our Haitian manager. We are also in close proximity to hospitals, should the need arise. And God is our strength and protector too, of course!

Communication with Home

In order for you to have the best possible experience on your trip, we highly recommend you “unplug” from electronics for the week you are in Haiti. I know this more difficult for some than others. Our house does have internet access. It is not as fast as you are accustomed to at home so bandwidth is limited. Therefore, at orientation, we discuss the courtesy to be given to make each person have an equal opportunity to utilize the internet.

Your team leaders will also have a phone capable of calling home if you need to do so. You may desire to call your cell phone provider and discuss international texting, data and calling plans. They can be very expensive so be careful.

Haitians and the Language

Most Haitians understand and can speak French, yet they speak Creole. A morning greeting will be "Bonjou". An afternoon greeting will be "Bonswa". When walking down the street, a typical Haitian will not speak to you until you greet them first. Most are very friendly, especially when we speak a word in their language! While in the U.S. folded arms seem uninviting, this is a normal stance for Haitians. This is not a mad, or stand-offish stance, but rather a relaxed position.

Sometimes Haitians will call you "blanc". This just means white. Always stay with your group and let your light shine. Most Haitians appreciate what we do in Haiti. Please be respectful when using your camera. Some Haitians are sensitive about being photographed due to many taking advantage of them after the earthquake. You can simply ask them formed as a question, Photo? If they agree, snap away! The children and adults alike will likely want to see the result. If they say "Bo mwen", that means show me!

Here are 2 links to free language resources if you are interested in learning some of the basics of Haitian Creole before you come:

<http://www.byki.com/fls/FLS.html>

http://languages.ku.edu/sites/languages.drupal.ku.edu/files/docs/pdfs/haitian/survival_creole.pdf .

Where you will go:

Voice of the Children

Martina and 40+ precious children are the heartbeat of our work in Haiti at this time. We have been doing various projects with them since inception and have some long-term goals for this beautiful group of children.

Mother Teresa's Baby Hospital

Don't let the name scare you. This is one of the most moving experiences of your trip. The clinic/hospital is free and the families may have traveled for days by foot to bring their child as the clinic turns no one away. The compassion of Christ you will feel as you love these children, is life-changing!

The Street Kids

Port au Prince is a city of 2.4 million people over a 13 square mile area. One of the most despised segments of society is the "street kids". Often mistreated, they live on the street with no supervision and little hope. Jimmy Bonhomme established a home that reaches out to those boys and feeds and educates just them. This is an incredible story! HH4H is committed to sharing God's love to the children of Haiti and when we see someone else doing something great, we want to be a help to them!

Volunteer Team Day Out

One of our favorite activities to decompress is our visit to the Tin Village. The "constant "tink, tink, tink" of craftsman working all day long to make beautiful hand-crafted pieces of art is a sight to behold. The shopkeepers love a lively debate and barter. The art and crafts there are some of the best in the Caribbean. In addition, we visit the Baptist mission in the mountains overlooking the city. The view is spectacular and the food isn't bad either. Great photo opportunities await along with more shopping!

Sunday Worship at PAP Fellowship

On Sunday we generally attend an English- speaking church in Port au Prince. The music there is contemporary and well-done, usually by Haitian singers and musicians. There is something very special about the blending of all our voices in worship. There are many fans and the pastor and staff are terrific. It will be a great way to wind down your full week of ministry with an opportunity to worship together with your group and people from all over the world.

Some Simple Guidelines

Be Prompt - Be at breakfast by 8 am. We typically eat dinner ½ hour after returning for the day.

Be flexible- Changes in schedule are likely to occur.

Be patient and understanding- Try to be focused. Look for the good in the bad. Your experience may not always be comfortable.

Volunteer- Transportation can be tricky at times. We will need people to volunteer to ride in the back of the truck or tap-tap. The roads in Haiti are rough so we try to rotate everyone around.

Be open- Leave room for God to show up and do what only He can do. Our earthly plans and schedule can sometimes be divinely interrupted.

Share- Each evening, we will have a share time reflecting on the events of the day. Recalling the many moments and perspectives of each person can add tremendous value to your experience.

Shine bright- Always carry yourself in a manner that makes Christ look good. This is a positive witness to the life changing grace of God.

When You Get Home

We have found when we return home we are so full of excitement and awe. We also feel some guilt at our abundance and even a bit judgmental about our culture and how we spend money and lack godly priorities. Don't be surprised by this, it is quite normal. God has given you an opportunity to obtain a world view and it will affect your faith in a very positive way.

Recognize these feelings and begin to make changes in your own life. Pray. Share your experiences with your family, church and friends. Show them your photos and direct them to the Helping Hands 4 Haiti website. Put a presentation together and ask God to help you raise awareness and funds for Haiti. Hopefully, you saw clearly how one person can impact a life for God.

I'm Home...now what?

- **Sponsor a child**- Voice of the Children sponsorships are available for \$40 per month. Encourage others to become involved in changing the life of a child.
- **Share on social media**- Our culture is socially driven through the internet.
- **Share your story, like our Facebook page** and every time we update it appears on your timeline. Link your Facebook to a Twitter feed and share the good news of Jesus Christ through social media.
- **Present to your church or school**- Take your story and photos and share with your youth group, Sunday School class, or classroom the life changing experience of Haiti.
- **Sponsor another person for a trip**- pay forward the joy God has discovered in you by sponsoring someone else.
- **Host a fundraiser** for HH4H Inc- Talk to your pastor about partnering with us to help the children of Haiti.
- **Pray, Pray, Pray.**
- **Visit our site often** to see the ever-evolving mission God has for us!