

Christian Academy School System

MISSION TRIP MANUAL



Knowing Christ and Making Him Known

2026-2027

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

MISSION TRIPS MANUAL

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Use of Manual

This Mission Trip Manual has been designed to answer questions regarding conduct, culture, and policies for the mission trips of this school year. It will walk you through the mission trip process beginning with an overview of the Christian Academy Missions program through the steps necessary to participate in one of this year's mission trips. As you read through the manual you will notice several key headings that will help answer your questions regarding the trip. However, in the event that you still have an outstanding question, please feel free to contact the Mission's Director through the information listed below.

Mission's Director: Dena Braeger - CAL
dbraeger@caschools.us

Kevin Wilson - CAI
kwilson@caschools.us

Address: Christian Academy School System
Missions
700 South English Station Road
Louisville, KY 40245

Phone Number: (502) 244-3225 English Station
(812) 944-6200 Indiana

As the trip proceeds, you will receive regular updates. Parents and trip participants are asked to provide an e-mail address as soon as possible. If in the event the trip details should change, parents and participants will be notified as soon as possible. It is Christian Academy's prayer that God would be glorified throughout the entire mission trip process (before leaving, during trip, & after returning) and that His name would be made known throughout the world. God bless you as you begin this journey.

Description of Christian Academy Mission Trips

"Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"

Matthew 9:37-38

Christian Academy School System seeks to train the next generation of leaders to share the gospel message with a lost world. Part of that vision includes providing mission trip opportunities around the world for students to share the love of Christ cross-culturally.

For several years, students from Christian Academy have ventured to many nations through a variety of trips. Since 1998, the school system has sponsored at least one mission trip a year around the world with hundreds sharing Christ's love on mission. In 2001, Christian Academy developed a ministry program to provide consistent opportunities for our students to serve our Savior world wide. The ministry program sponsors trips around the world. The mission of the ministry is to know Christ more and to make Him known by actively serving those on our campus, in our community, and around the world for God's glory and the advancement of His kingdom.

Parent Involvement

Active parent involvement is a key component to the success of Christian Academy mission trips. Christian Academy recognizes the trust parents place in the school system by allowing their child to serve in the missions program. We will keep you informed of all events throughout the trip and welcome your involvement in the process.

A parent meeting will be held before applications are due. At the meeting, parents will walk through mission policies and be given details on the upcoming trip(s). Students are encouraged to attend the meeting with their parents, but are not required.

Then students will begin training in preparation for the trip. Parents will be updated during this process and asked to pray on a regular basis for various needs. Likewise, a prayer meeting will be held for all the families participating in this year's trip. Parent(s) are required to attend this meeting.

During the course of the planning process, there are several areas where parents can become involved. Some are as follows: (1) prayer warriors for trips, (2) donors for various trip needs, (3) hosts for dinners/meetings, and (4) hosts for team bonding events. Anyone willing to help is asked to contact their school's respective mission trip leader.

Missions Program-Financial Support Policies

The following policies shall be followed for all mission trips sponsored by Christian Academy School System:

1. A minimum contribution level will be required based on the costs to be incurred regardless of the success of the trip. These costs include, but are not limited to, airline cancellation fees, visa/passport fees, administrative costs, insurance fees, reservation cancellation penalty fees, and border-crossing fees. No financial support may be used for personal expenses such as medication, personal spending money, passport application fees or personal travel items. This minimum level of contribution will often be paid by the student or parent/guardian because it will be due shortly after the initial decision to participate in the mission trip is made.
2. The total goal of financial support for the trip, along with the deadline by which it must be raised, will be set by the trip leader. Students and parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for raising the necessary funds. Students who do not reach their financial support goal may not be permitted to participate. In the rare event that a student is permitted to travel without having met their full financial obligation, the remaining balance must be paid in full immediately upon return. Any unpaid balance will be transferred to the student's account in FACTS (resulting in the loss of a tax donation option, the possibility of late fees, and ineligibility to register for future trips until the balance is resolved, as these trips are not essential to academic progress).
3. In the event of a medical emergency incurred by the student, any costs not covered by the insurance purchased for the trip will be the responsibility of that individual's parents/guardian(s).
4. While some fundraising opportunities may be provided by the Missions Department, the majority of funds come from support letters written by students. Students are encouraged to participate in fundraising which provides others with an opportunity to partner in the ministry. All fundraisers, apart from the support letters, must be approved by the Philanthropy Committee and the Director of Development.
5. All funds (contributions and fundraising) will be accounted for and administered as a missions project set up on the books of Christian Academy. Financial support will be given online or mailed to and tracked by the business office. Trip leaders will receive regular reports on financial support received.
6. Tax-deductible contribution statements (for all eligible gifts) will be provided by Christian Academy.

7. At the conclusion of the trip, thank you letters will be sent by the student to financial supporters and prayer partners.
8. For IRS/tax purposes, contributions for mission trips are made with the understanding that Christian Academy (i.e. the ministry organization sponsoring the trip) must have full administrative and accounting control over the funds, including all decisions about who will receive any support from the gift. A mission trip contribution **can suggest a “preference for” but must NOT earmark or designate a specific individual on the online donation, check, or missions support envelope.**
9. For IRS/tax purposes, students need to understand that they are not raising support for themselves but for the mission project/ministry of Christian Academy. When financial support has been raised in excess of the actual cost of a mission trip, the missions director will recommend to the Missions Advisory Board the best use of the additional funds. The funds may be distributed in the following manner:
 - a. The missionary partner (i.e. mission contact in Poland, etc.) will be contacted to determine if there are additional projects or money needed at the current time.
 - b. Excess dollars may be transferred to a missions support fund to assist with Christian Academy mission endeavors.

*Please note that all funds solicited for missions or raised in excess will be used for missions.
10. So as to not jeopardize the tax-deductibility of all donations given for school-sponsored mission trips, Christian Academy does not refund any gifts or donations related to a trip in which a student has raised support for the trip but is not able to participate. These funds will remain within the missions department.

Guidelines and Procedures for Financial Gifts/Support

1. To make a donation online please visit, <http://cass.servicereef.com>. If you desire to write a check, all checks should be made payable to Christian Academy and returned to Christian Academy in a missions support envelope. (Checks made out to students are not tax deductible and must be returned to the donor to be made out correctly.)
2. If a donor collects gifts from other donors (i.e. a Sunday School class) and then writes one check, a gift acknowledgment receipt can only be provided to the donor who wrote the check. Students should advise the donor who issues the check that if any of the other donors desire a receipt, they must separately provide a check made out to Christian Academy. We really suggest students send out the donation link <http://cass.servicereef.com> to all those who might be interested in donating.
3. Check and cash contributions should be mailed directly to Christian Academy in order to keep donation amounts confidential and to ensure proper and timely recordkeeping. However, if you decide to donate online via <http://cass.servicereef.com> you can avoid postage, envelopes, and the hassle.
4. Please include a missions support envelope with each support letter you mail to potential donors. The student name should be written on the **support preference** space on the back of the envelope that is sent out. **Ask donors NOT to put the student's name in the memo section of the check should they decide to write a check.**
5. If a student receives money from a donor directly, the back of a missions support envelope should be completed and the donation and the envelope should promptly be turned in directly to their Missions Director. Contributions should not be held. If checks are not received in a timely manner for deposit the check may need to be returned to the donor.
6. A list of donors is available on the student's service reef page so that thank you letters can be sent at the conclusion of the trip. Prayer partners should also receive thank you letters. This list will include donors who gave online and those who gave physical payments.
7. No financial support may be used for personal expenses such as medication, personal spending money, passport application fees or personal travel items.
8. Preferences for supporting students should appear on the back of the Missions support envelope, **NOT** the memo section of the check.

FINANCIAL REMINDERS

- Send all money to the Business Office at Christian Academy School System, 700 S. English Station Road.
- All checks should be made payable to Christian Academy.
- Student names should never be listed on the memo line of checks.
- In order to properly recognize the donor and account for the student's success in raising financial support for the trip, money should be turned in using a completed missions support envelope; **PLEASE include a missions support envelope with every support letter you send.**

Fundraising Letter Writing Directions

Open Your Letter with a Trip Summary

The following Items should be included in your letter:

Date your letter	Explain the purpose of your trip
Personalize your greeting	Be personal throughout your letter
Identify yourself	Explain why you chose to participate
List your personal goals	Be vulnerable
Talk about your planned activities	Make sure you ask for prayer

Continue Your Letter by Asking for Specific Action Based on Your Need

- 1) Ask for prayer support.
- 2) Include a summary of trip costs (airfare, lodging, food, translators, transportation, ministry needs).
- 3) **Include the following paragraph EXACTLY as written, filling in the blanks where needed:**

"As you can imagine, there are financial needs associated with my trip. The total cost is \$_____, and each team member is responsible for raising this amount through gifts to the school. I would greatly value your prayers that the funds needed for my trip will be provided. Gifts made to the school, with an expressed preference for my trip expenses, are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

If you will commit to praying for my team and me, we would be deeply grateful. If you are also able to make a financial gift to help cover my expenses, there are several ways to give:

Online: Scan this QR Code and click the "Donate" button to be guided through the process. (Insert a QR code that links directly to your personal service reef page here. If you don't know how to make a QR code you can use Canva.)

By Mail: Use the provided envelope, check the box indicating your interest in supporting my portion of the trip expenses, and make your check payable to Christian Academy. Please do not write my name on the memo line.

If, for any reason, I am unable to participate in the trip, your gifts will be used to support the school's continued mission endeavors."

- 4) Thank your reader for considering their partnership and commitment to the short-term mission team!
- 5) Close the letter and personally sign it.
- 6) Add a P.S. Handwrite it. Commit yourself to a specific action, i.e. ...I will visit or call on a specific day.
- 7) Include your phone number for any questions or comments.

Enclose the missions support envelope (yellow) provided to you with every letter you send.

Upon Your Return – Send Thank You Letter to Donors

Upon returning from your trip, send a one-page follow up letter explaining your trip and how God worked in your life and the lives of others. Use scripture that was important to you on your trip and add a picture. Or you can send a picture collage postcard sharing about your trip too. Thank your partners again for their prayer and financial support.

You must give your trip leader a rough draft of your letter before you send it out.

Example Fundraising Letter

Dear _____,

Date _____

Can you envision a land where families live on one dollar a day, children walk miles for a gallon of dirty water, and many have never been given the chance to hear about Jesus? I want to share with you a challenging ministry opportunity God has presented to me. On (trip dates here), I will be going to (trip location) with a team from Christian Academy.

Our trip has many facets but our main goal is to know Him more and to make Him known among the peoples of (trip location.) Our trip is three fold:

1. We will allow God to work in our lives through the personal enrichment that comes from this type of a mission trip.
2. This journey will help us focus our individual prayers by traveling to a foreign land and praying 'on-site with insight.' We will pray that God will open eyes and hearts to the message of Jesus.
3. We will visit a Compassion center, which functions out of a local church, where over 300 students between the ages of 4 – 18 gain access to education, medical care, spiritual investment, and nutrition. We plan to help with light construction at the church as well as spend time fostering relationships.

As you can imagine, there are financial needs associated with my trip. The total cost is \$_____, and each team member is responsible for raising this amount through gifts to the school. I would greatly value your prayers that the funds needed for my trip will be provided. Gifts made to the school, with an expressed preference for my trip expenses, are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

If you will commit to praying for my team and me, we would be deeply grateful. If you are also able to make a financial gift to help cover my expenses, there are several ways to give:

Online: Scan this QR Code and click the “Donate” button to be guided through the process. **Insert a QR code that links directly to your personal service reef page here.**

By Mail: Use the provided envelope, check the box indicating your interest in supporting my portion of the trip expenses, and make your check payable to Christian Academy. Please do not write my name on the memo line. If, for any reason, I am unable to participate in the trip, your gifts will be used to support the school’s continued mission endeavors.

While money is important, prayer is the fuel that will allow us to be successful as we follow God's lead in ministry. Without prayer, nothing will happen. Please pray that we will be used to Glorify God in every way He needs.

Because They Haven't Heard,
(Your Name)

Who Should I Send A Letter To?

Name storming is an essential way of rounding up support. Below is a list of people you may want to think about including when you name storm. Some will not necessarily apply to you because you are still in high school, but this might give you some ideas you can then discuss with your parents.

relatives	friends	friends of family	Christmas list
accountant	salespeople	secretaries	doctors
banker	co-workers	dentist	Bible studies
doctor	lawyer	prayer groups	veterinarian
chiropractor	nurses	neighbors	engineers
civic club members	community leaders	tax preparer	coaches
realtors	fitness club members	pastors	community group leaders

Concerned that people will not understand why they should give money to the mission project or even that they will feel like giving at all? Here are some reasons why people give money:

- People will give because they believe their gift will change lives. Help them understand their gift will help the unsaved hear the gospel and that God's work will and shall be done.
- People will give if you make them feel as much a part of the trip as you who are going. It is important to communicate with them before, during and after the trip, as well as communicate your dependence on their prayers and support.
- People will give when they sense you are completely committed to this trip and enthusiastic about it.
- Finally, begin preparing to write your support letter. Start by coming up with the names of people you would like to receive a letter. Keep in mind, these people will be an important part of your prayer team, whether or not they support you financially.
- Remember, above all else, focus on God, not on your need, claiming the promises of Ephesians 3:20-21.

Keep these tips in mind when you begin your fundraising!

- Be committed to prayer.
- Understand the scriptural basis for fundraising. (Philippians 4:14-19, I Chronicles 28 & 29, II Corinthians 8:1-15, I Corinthians 8 & 9, Luke 6:38, Matthew 6:19-21 Ask the following questions—how did God use other people's resources to accomplish His will? How was God glorified through other people's giving? As a Christian worker, is it appropriate to receive support?)
- Believe that if God's in it and you do your part, God will bless your short-term mission trip through people's giving.
- Name storm! Try to come up with 30-50 names. Don't leave anyone out. You can prioritize later.
- **NOTE: STUDENTS ARE ASKED TO NOT WRITE THEIR TEACHERS WHEN ASKING FOR MONEY.**

Other Fundraising Ideas

You can personally fundraise for your mission trip but you cannot use Christian Academy's name or logo to help with your fundraising.

Yard Sales	Babysitting	Make Crafts	Sell Items on Etsy	Consign Anything	Tutor
Mama Swap	Yard Work	Paint	Part-Time Job	Teach an Instrument/Coach	

Mission Trip Commitment

Students participating in the missions program must understand the requirements and responsibilities that come with signing up for a trip. While participating in a mission trip is one of the most joyful experiences in life, students must remember that **this trip is not a vacation**. Students are asked to make several sacrifices along the way. Just as Christ came to serve and not be served, so too students are asked to take on the role of servants by often putting their own wants and desires behind those of others. Likewise, students are asked to submit to several authority figures throughout the process. These include the trip director, team leaders/chaperones, the ministry we are working with, and student leaders. Anyone unable to submit to authority is asked to reconsider participating in the trip.

Students who are willing to submit and sacrifice are also committing themselves to do the following:

- #1 Attend Team Training Meetings – These are MANDATORY
- #2 Participate in Team Bonding Events
- #3 Serve in **whatever ministry** or activity asked while on the trip (remember being stretched is a good thing)
- #4 Pray for the group throughout the trip
- #5 Obey all authority figures

In the event that a student is unable to complete one of the above items for an uncontrollable reason, students are asked to see the trip director immediately. Finally, students are committing themselves to obey and comply with the regulations spelled out on the Mission Trip Contract. While no one is perfect, students committing themselves to the Missions Program are asked to do their best to display a Christ-like lifestyle. Those that are willing to commit themselves to the trip will be amazed at what God does in their lives. They will begin to see His majesty in a whole new light and will grow in their walks in incredible ways. Welcome to the adventure of your life.

Obtaining a Passport & Visa

In order to participate in our international trips, students must obtain a passport and for some locations a visa may be required. To do so, students are asked to complete the following:

HOW DO I OBTAIN MY PASSPORT?

Here are the steps to follow to obtain a passport:

Step #1: Go to Post Office and obtain a passport application or go online to

<https://www.usps.com/international/passports.htm>

Step #2: Fill Out the Passport Application

Step #3: Get Passport Photos Made

-You will need **2 photos** for your passport

-Passport Photos can be taken at local pharmacies (CVS, Walgreens, etc.)

Step #4: Obtain Birth Certificate

Step #5: Make an appointment at the US post office for a passport.

Step #6: Organize/Bring (1) completed application, (2) two passport photos, (3) birth certificate, (4) passport fee in the form of check or money order to the US post office.

Only certain Postal employees are able to verify a passport application. Thus, parents might want to call ahead to make sure the correct postal employees are on duty. Also, parents might want to consider expediting the passport depending upon the date. Passport deadlines will be announced in the beginning of the specific trip planning process.

HOW DO I OBTAIN MY VISA?

Please ask your trip leader if the country your child is traveling to requires a visa.

The process of obtaining a visa varies depending on the country. Further information will be given at the beginning of their specific trip planning. **The cost of the visa is NOT included in the price of the trip.**

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW ABOUT PASSPORTS?

Parents should know that their child **will not** be carrying around his/her passport. After moving through customs, the passports are collected from all team members for safe keeping. Students will be carrying copies of their passports with them everywhere. Each individual team leader also has copies of all group members' passports.

Immunizations & Medication

In order to participate on many mission teams, students need to have certain immunizations. While the information below is recommended by the CDC, the best practitioner to help you make these decisions for your child is you and their physician. ***Above anything recommended below, please speak with your child's physician before making any decisions on immunizations.***

U of L International Travel Clinic
250 E. Liberty St.
Louisville, KY 40202
502-852-6464

SHOTS NEEDED

Vaccination	Honduras	Ghana	Poland	United States
Covid-19	Suggested	Suggested	Suggested	Suggested
Hepatitis A & B	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)
Meningococcal		Suggested		
Polio	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)
Typhoid	Suggested	X (Required)		
Malaria RX	Suggested	X (Required) Atovaquone-proguanil, doxycycline, mefloquine, tafenoquine2		
Yellow Fever		X (Required)		
Mumps/Rubella/Measles	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)
Diarrhea RX	Suggested	X (Required)	X (Required)	
Tetanus/DPT	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)	X (Required)

Visit www.cdc.gov for additional information.

Vaccinations are not included in the price of the trip. Plan anywhere from \$40 - \$500 for shots. Contact the International Travel Clinic at 502-852-3691 for an appointment at least 2 months prior to departure. You may also contact Passport Health at 502-423-9799. These two places do not accept insurance. Other sources can be used but plan on delays since most doctor offices do not keep these types of medication on hand and therefore they must be ordered. Recommended vaccinations may change depending on the conditions at the time of the trip. This information will be checked on a regular basis and any updates will be forwarded to parents. (This information was updated on 08-20-2025.)

More Shot Information...

- Please don't wait to begin the shot process or obtain the needed medication. It's sometimes difficult to get an appointment. Plus, some shots require several doses over a period of time.
- Parents are asked to inform the trip leader of any special medical problems that your child might have. Information is kept confidential between the team leadership.

Traveling Procedures

Students participating in this year's mission trips must abide by the team traveling rules listed below:

- #1 Students are not allowed to travel by themselves.
- #2 Students shall be assigned to a travel group headed by a chaperone.
- #3 Students shall always carry a copy of their passports.
- #4 Students are to bring their backpacks with assigned items each day.
- #5 Students are not to be late for a meeting time (if you are late, we are all late).
- #6 Prior to departing anywhere, the individual groups will account for all members.

Communication Before & During the Trip

Once students have completed and handed-in all forms to participate in this year's mission trip, they will be placed on an e-mail list. Any emails sent to your child will also be sent to you as parents. Communication during the mission trip will be sent via Facebook. A 'private' Facebook group will be created and parents will be added to the group before departure. While the team is in the field, updates and pictures (given the internet is reliable) will be posted inside this group page. ANY information shared on this group page should NOT be shared elsewhere on the internet until the group has arrived back home safely.

Removal from a Team

Christian Academy School System reserves the right to remove any student from a mission trip either before or during a trip. While we are reluctant to even consider such a move, our leaders must have this authority as they carry the responsibility for the spiritual well being of the trip and the safety of every student. If a student is removed there will be no refund of previously donated monies. Furthermore, if a student is removed from a team during the mission trip, they will be sent home at the cost to the student and/or family. This expense is outside the trip cost.