

Church of the Presentation Youth Ministry 2024 SUMMER MISSION TRIPS

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE, SUNDAY, JULY 14 – SATURDAY, JULY 20, 2024

&

ST. JAMES PARISH, JAMAICA: SATURDAY, JULY 20 - SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024

What are the trips, sizes of the teams, and the dates and costs of the trips?

- ***Wilmington, Delaware: [serving with Catholic Heart Workcamp] Sun. July 14 – Sat. July 20, 2024.***

This mission will serve in the outskirts of Wilmington, Delaware. While specific worksite details are [TBD] we have been informed that each day will consist of basic construction projects that will help in repairing and renewing homes by painting, cleaning, yard work, &/or basic construction projects for low-income families or non-profit outreach program facilities. Other work project(s) may include helping at daycare centers for low-income families and/or helping at Social Service Centers such as food pantries, homeless shelters, etc.). Participants may or may not be at the same location for the whole week; it depends on the project, weather conditions and duration of work. More information can be found at:

<https://heartworkcamp.com/chwc-at-a-glance/>

The cost of the Wilmington, Delaware trip is anticipated to be **\$700.00 per participant**, this includes costs of the Work camp, transportation as well as room and board expenses.

- ***St. James Parish, Jamaica: Mustard Seed Communities: Sat. July 20 - Sat. July 27, 2024).***

This mission opportunity will serve in a Mustard Seed Community residence primarily at the Blessed Assurance residential care center for children with disabilities. The missionary work is supporting and relating to residents who face severe physical and mental challenges. Additionally manual labor projects will be included to assist with maintaining and/or improving the community grounds. More information can be found at: <https://www.mustardseed.com/our-work/where-we-serve/jamaica>

The cost of the Jamaica trip is anticipated at **\$1800.00 per participant**, this includes a fee which supports Mustard Seed's apostolate(s), transportation as well as room and board expenses while on the mission trip.

The expenses of each trip will be subsidized by mandatory team fundraising efforts and individual letter writing campaigns. Applicants will be asked to indicate for which trip she/he is applying. Space is limited on each of these trips. If an applicant applies for both trips, the applicant will be asked to indicate which trip is the applicant's first choice. We will attempt to meet, but we cannot guarantee accommodation for an applicant's trip of preference.

Who can apply?

Any teenager enrolled in high school (as of September 2023) may apply to participate in one of our summer Mission Trip experiences. Any teenager who meets the above criteria must provide the following (more details are provided in this application):

- Completed 2-page application form (pages 5 & 6 of this packet with an indication of trip preference).
- A typed letter of intent, 500–700 words in length.
- For applicants who have not served on a mission trip with us before, ONLY: we require one letter of recommendation from an outside source (explanation below).
- Each applicant will be required to have an Application Interview with members of the adult team prior to being accepted to be a part of a mission trip.
- A *recent* photo of yourself (please staple this to the packet)
- **COMPLETE PACKET** (all of the above) **DUE: Sunday, November 19th, 2023.**

Letter of Intent: This helps us understand why you want to go on a mission trip and what you hope to get out of this experience. Please be detailed and specific in this letter.

Letter of Recommendation: (for first time applicants ONLY): The letter of recommendation cannot be from anyone related to you, nor can it be written by one of Church of the Presentation's staff members or Youth Ministry volunteers. This letter provides us with an understanding of who you are from another person's perspective and explains why you would make a good candidate for a mission trip with our group. The letter should offer special insights into your personality and personal commitments from experiences that the application review committee would not otherwise have the chance to observe.

Extra-Curricular Commitments and Youth Ministry Involvement: These sections give us a sense of who you are and how you spend your time as well as your passions, interests, and any outside commitments you may have. This information will assist us in identifying other strengths that you may bring to the group and will highlight how you have already chosen to be involved in our parish community. While teens from other parishes are not excluded from the process, we do give special attention to teenagers who are registered parishioners and who are involved at Church of the Presentation.

How are candidates selected for a mission trip?

Our youth ministry team puts together a Selection Committee comprised of experienced adult volunteers who review the applications and help select participants for our summer youth mission trips. When reviewing the applications, a particular focus is placed on having a mix of teenagers with a variety of life experiences, who we believe will be able to meet the expectations of the team during the preparation process and while on the mission trip – these individuals must be able to work well with others as unified members of the mission team. We are looking for candidates who will add to the group dynamic and the overall experience in positive ways. Therefore, in some instances, even a candidate who provides a great letter of intent or recommendation, or who has been heavily involved in the Youth Ministry may not be selected for a trip.

Why not accept everyone?

We take the application process very seriously. During many of the years when we previously were able to offer youth mission trips there have been more qualified teens who apply than the maximum number of participants for the given trip; for this reason, we introduced offering an additional mission trip opportunity beginning in the summer of 2019. While we would never wish to be unable to accept a qualified applicant, we strongly believe that the quality of a mission trip is due to the overall size of our group at each mission location and the delicate mix of many variables including details mentioned above.

While we would love to offer these experiences to everyone, several factors limit the overall number of Missionaries on each trip. First, we are limited by the amount of people it takes to work on certain projects at given mission locations, the number of people that can fit safely into our transportation vehicles, the capacity of the sleeping facilities, the cost incurred with each service trip, and our ability to provide enough adult chaperones for our groups.

Second, we feel that larger numbers of missionaries would compromise the communal experience as well as the quality of work experiences that we are able to engage in. This concern has been affirmed by some of the staffs of the sponsoring organizations we have served with in the past, and the feedback provided by past adult chaperone teams who have participated in our youth mission trips over the years. We are very proud of the history we have of offering quality service work in the communities in which our youth missionaries historically have served: domestic locations, including, Kearny, NJ, ,Newton, NJ, Washington D.C, New Orleans, LA, and international locations, including Jamaica, Nicaragua, Mexico and Costa Rica. We look forward to continuing this tradition on our mission trips next year!

Finally, it is important to note that *NEITHER OF THESE TRIPS ARE VACATIONS*. The mission work entails early wake-up times, long days and physical labor as well as potentially emotional work with community residents who may suffer from significant poverty and/or health challenges. We recognize that not all teens may be mature enough to handle these experiences and that some teens may benefit more from a mission trip later in their high school years. ***We request that parents/guardians and teens discuss this issue before applying for one of these programs.*** On the rare occasion that we receive an application from someone who we feel is not prepared for a mission trip, we may suggest that they reapply the following year.

What commitments are required for this trip?

There are **several required elements** of these mission trips. The formation and community building meetings are **critical** to the group's formation and success during the mission week and are **essential** for the group to develop a trust level and good working relationship prior to the trip. The formation process also help us assess each teen's ability to handle the physical stresses of the mission work and emotional challenges of living and working in a potentially uncomfortable environment. Through the course of our formation meetings, the mission team will work together on team building activities, fundraising events, and prepare for the mission work that lies ahead. Participants will engage in cultural sensitivity training, explore Catholic social teachings with consideration for the societal challenges in the communities with which we engage, and learn to develop trust and respect through a variety of team building exercises. Teenagers must be sure that they can make ALL the commitments before applying for one of these trips. If a teenager cannot make all the team formation events, we may offer that spot on the trip to another individual who is able to make all of the commitments and provide a positive and supportive presence for the rest of the mission team.

When will I find out the Committee's decision on my application

All completed applications submitted by November 19, 2023, will be considered for the summer 2024 mission trips. Applicants will be contacted to meet with the Selection Committee composed of members of our adult team, from November 27-December 3, 2023. The Selection Committee will make decisions and applicants will be notified by December 6, 2023. If selected, a **\$150 (nonrefundable) deposit** will be required for those on the Catholic Heart Workcamp Mission Trip (*Wilmington, Delaware*); a **\$300 (nonrefundable) deposit** will be required for those on the Mustard Seed Communities' Mission Trip (*St. James Parish, Jamaica*). Should we receive more applicants than we are able to bring on our mission trips, up to three applicants will be selected per trip location as alternates (if other missionaries withdraw from the mission trip).

What are the next steps to take if I am accepted for this year's trip?

MANDATORY MEETING: Applicants notified of their selection for a mission trip, with a parent/guardian, must attend an informational meeting on December 11, 2023, during which the deposits will be collected, fundraising will be discussed, information on the formation process will be provided and questions answered, and teens will sign up for the initial fundraising events.

FUNDRAISING EVENTS: As a group, we will participate in several **GROUP FUNDRAISING PROJECTS** in order to raise money for these trips between January - June 2024 (**see dates below**). Missionaries will staff flower sales, sell tickets for and staff the annual pancake breakfast, sell tickets for other fundraising events and participate in the annual car wash. In addition, missionaries will be required to undertake personal fundraising through a letter/email writing campaign which will begin prior to Christmas. We will provide detailed guidance and support on these requirements at our meeting on December 11. Proceeds from our mission fundraisers will be used to offset the total trip costs. **If the allocated portion of the group raised funds, including the non-refundable deposits, is insufficient to meet the full cost of the trip, each individual missionary will be responsible for raising the additional funds needed to meet the full cost of the trip which will be due by JULY 1, 2023.**

SPIRITUAL FORMATION: A significant component of each Mission trip is spiritual preparation. To help the mission team focus on the essential mission of each trip we will hold spiritual formation sessions for the participants. Part of our spiritual formation includes participation in the Antioch Retreat Weekend from March 1-3, 2024.

2024 YOUTH MINISTRY MISSION TRIPS - MANDATORY TEAM COMMITMENTS:

Sun., November 19th, 2023: **Completed Applications due.**

November 27 – December 3, 2023: **Applicant Interviews:**

- Applicants will be notified of their appointment date and time.

Wed. December 6, 2023: **Applicants will be notified of the selection decisions**

Sat. / Sun., December 2 and 3, 2023: **Poinsettia Flower Sale**

- Each applicant MUST help after *at least one* Mass this weekend.

Mon. December 11, 2023: **Information Meeting 7:30 - 9:00pm**

- This meeting is designed to inform all participants and parents/guardians about the details of our mission trips and to discuss fundraising efforts, letter writing, and to provide a time for Q&A, etc. (at least one parent/guardian must attend this meeting).
- Sign-up for our Pancake Breakfast fundraiser.
- Mission Trip Deposits are due at this meeting.

Mon. January 8, 2024: **Spiritual Formation 7:30 - 9:00pm**

Sat./Sun. February 3 and 4, 2024: **Selling Tickets for Pancake Breakfast (after Masses)**

- Each team member MUST help after *at least one* Mass this weekend.

Sun., February 11, 2024: **Super Bowl Sunday: Pancake Breakfast**

- Together with The Knights of Columbus we will help plan and serve breakfast after all morning Masses.

Fri., Sunday, March 1-3, 2024: **Antioch Retreat Weekend**

Sun. March 10, 2024: **Antioch Retreat Reunion**

Sat./Sun., March 23 & 24, 2024: **Spring Flower Sale**

- Each team member MUST help after *at least one* Mass this weekend.

Mon. April 8, 2024: **Spiritual Formation 7:30 - 9:00pm**

Sun. May 19, 2024: **Mission Trip Signature Fundraiser [Details TBD]**

Sun. June 9, 2024: **Pray-n-Wash Fundraiser 7:30am-1:00pm – weather permitting**

Sat. July 13, 2024: **Catholic Heart Mission Trip: “Pack & Pray” 3:30pm – 7:30pm**

Thurs. July 18, 2024: **Mustard Seed Mission Trip: “Pack & Pray” 6:00pm – 9:00pm**

TEEN APPLICATION FORM: DUE SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2023

WILMINGTON, DELAWARE, SUNDAY, JULY 14 – SATURDAY, JULY 20, 2024
&
ST. JAMES PARISH, JAMAICA: SATURDAY, JULY 20 - SATURDAY, JULY 27, 2024
(Please PRINT Clearly)

Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Sex _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ / _____
(Participant) (Parent/Guardian)

Best phone _____ Teen phone _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Cell phone _____

Parent/Guardian _____ Cell phone _____

High School _____ Grade (as of Sept. 2023 - Circle): 9 10 11 12

Parish: _____

Medical History/Restrictions/Medications: _____

PLEASE INDICATE WHICH MISSION TRIP YOU ARE APPLYING FOR.
(If you willing to serve on either mission trip, please indicate your first and second choice by marking “1” & “2”.

_____ Wilmington, Delaware – Catholic Heart Workcamp (July 14-20, 2024)

_____ St. James Parish, Jamaica - Mustard Seed Communities (July 20-27, 2024)

YOU MUST ATTACH THE FOLLOWING:

You must write and submit a printed Letter of Intent (Please answer the following questions in your letter of intent)

1. Why do you want to participate in this mission experience? What do you hope to get out of this experience?
2. What gifts, talents, motivations, and interests do you offer that would enhance the experience for the group?
3. What experience/expertise will you bring to the group? Why do you wish to do a service trip this year? How do you see yourself growing more deeply this year?

NEW APPLICANTS ONLY: you must provide ONE Letter of Recommendation from an adult unrelated to you, from outside the parish. This letter could be written by a teacher, coach, employer, etc. Please have the writer answer the following questions in their letter:

1. What is their relationship to you?
2. Why would it be good for you to participate in this mission trip?
3. What character attributes has this individual observed in you that would make you a valuable person to have with us on our service experience? Please illustrate how these attributes have been observed.
4. Overall, why would your letter writer recommend YOU?

TEEN APPLICATION FORM – PAGE 2 of 2

FULL Name _____

Please list your extra -curricular activities (if necessary, use separate paper):

Activity	Description of Activity & Responsibilities	Positions held/ Awards achieved	Length of Commitment Hours/week; # of years

Please list your involvement in Presentation’s Youth Ministry or parish ministries:

Activity	Length of Time Hours/Week; # of Years

STATEMENT of AGREEMENT:

By signing this form, I agree that all of the information I have supplied is accurate and truthful. I am stating that I have read through and understand the entire application process. Additionally, I am stating, that if selected for a trip, I am committing to the list of MANDATORY COMMITMENTS, that if selected I will be responsible to fundraise to offset the cost of my trip, and that any funds not raised through group fundraising, or my personal letter writing will be my responsibility. Should I not cover the cost of my mission trip by JULY 1ST, I understand that my place may be given to an alternate candidate.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE _____ **(date)** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE _____ **(date)** _____