

A PROJECT OF NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

**THOUGHTS ON FUNDRAISING**

Here are some attitudes to keep in mind as you seek God for the funds necessary to facilitate your short-term mission trip.

**God is the source, not your donors.**Any donation is ultimately an offering to the Lord, not to you. And you are NOT reliant on them, but on God. Make sure your trust is placed rightly.

**Prayer demonstrates our dependence on God as the source.**Just like Nehemiah, we should pray “to the God of heaven” ([**Nehemiah 2:4**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Nehemiah%202:4&version=NIV)) instead of depending on people or our church. God is more interested in our spiritual growth than just meeting a need for funding.

**Biblical fundraising is a spiritual ministry,**not a worldly effort to be reluctantly or apologetically endured. We often look at fundraising as secular, having not studied the Bible to find clear examples of supporting one another in ministry. If what we are doing is done in obedience to God, raising funds for it is a spiritual activity.

**Receiving support for Kingdom work is biblically sound, but does not entitle you to be pushy or demanding.** Don’t ever expect someone to give (even if you think there is reason that they should—whether they are rich, in your mind, or if you have given to them in the past, or if you’ve always bought Girl Scout Cookies from their daughter). They need to be obedient to God as much as you do.

**Expect to raise 100% of the amount you need for the trip.**There are enough resources in God’s world to fully supply your need if God has called you to go on a mission trip.

**Focus on the giver, not the money.** Paul said in [**Philippians 4:17,**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%204:17&version=NIV) *“Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account.”*Paul was not preoccupied with the Philippians’ money, but with their spiritual progress. You are looking for partners in God’s ministry in your life.

Take a few moments and ask God to show you if your attitudes are consistent with the Bible before starting the process of raising funds for your mission trip.

**HOW TO PROCEED**

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| STEP 1 | **PRAY.** Express your total dependence on the Lord.  Enlist others to pray with you. |
| STEP 2 | **BEGIN WITH ASKING YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY.** This is a wonderful opportunity to begin a spiritual conversation with those closest to you. People give to people they know and care about. The BEST WAY to ask is to ask personally by explaining the trip verbally and then asking for support — and if they aren’t sure, or are not ready to give you an answer in person, ask for permission to follow up by sending them a support letter.  If you are a teen raising money you should obviously talk all of this through with your parents and get clearance to ask any adults you intend to write or ask. |
| STEP 3 | **MAKE A LIST OF POSSIBLE MINISTRY PARTNERS/DONORS.** Include church friends, relatives, neighbors, schoolmates, club and civic contacts, and your Christmas card list. How about your doctor, lawyer, or dentist? Do not leave people off your list because you think they will not or cannot support you. God may have other plans. Someone who has VERY limited resources but who decides to give a small portion of that are an enormous encouragement and blessing. And do not forget that the donor himself (or herself) is blessed by giving, because he/she will actually share in whatever fruit is the result of the trip.  **IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE:** By asking, you are GIVING DONORS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MINISTER / PARTICIPATE – even if they cannot go themselves. Many people LOVE to give to things like this, knowing it isn’t possible for them to go. Many WANT to help people have experiences like this.  Please remember that it is okay to ask your church friends on an individual basis, but avoid writing mass letters to groups of people you don’t know. |
| STEP 4 | **WRITE YOUR LETTERS.**Your letter should contain a personal greeting from you and then an overview of the trip, your needs, and what your desire is for God to do through you.  Describe where you will be going, what you will be doing, how they can pray for you, and specific financial needs along with deadlines. We encourage you to insert your information into the sample letter at the bottom of this page or use it as a reference as you create your own letters.  Remember to include a self addressed stamped envelope for the person to submit payment.  **Important Note Regarding Contributions:**If the donor, be it you or someone contributing to your trip, wants to receive a receipt and thus tax credit, the check MUST be made out to New Life Christian Church (not to you), and the memo line in the check should say: KY Mission Trip for <your name>. |
| STEP 4a | **OPTIONAL STEP.** The reality, when someone receives a letter like this, is that many people who DO want to give, read the letter and then put it in a pile of things to get to later. Then other things get put on top of that, and they forget. Or they plan to talk to a spouse and haven’t gotten to it yet. Fundraising studies have shown that you will raise as much as 2 to 3 times more money if you then follow up the letter with a phone call, about a week after you send the letter. The phone call can be something as simple as this:  *“Hello \_\_\_\_, I wanted to give you a quick call to follow up on that letter I wrote last week about the mission trip — did you get it? I just wanted to see if you have any questions about the trip that I can answer for you.”*  At that point many people who meant to give but didn’t will say “Oh yes, right! I want to give.” Or, if they cannot give, they will tell you why. At which point you should be completely understanding, whatever their reasoning, you should thank them sincerely for considering it, and ask for prayer. Encourage them that you trust God is going to provide and that you’d value their prayers immensely.  TWO NOTES:  One: It is totally OK for someone NOT to be able to give. Some people will be called to help support you. Some will not. So consider this less fund-raising, and more fund-finding. The resources are out there if God is calling you to go, you just have to find them. And for those who can’t give, be sure to be gracious and thankful that they considered it—assuming they are being obedient, God is calling them to give to something else worthy.  Two: Obviously making these calls might feel uncomfortable. But they really do remind people who are living busy lives, and it calls them subtly to action, either way. If you are a teen, who is not used to using the phone because you text or use social media to communicate, adults do still use the phone. If you do not feel comfortable doing this, though, don’t do it. That said, you have to discern WHY you feel uncomfortable. It might be a step of faith that God would have you take. |
| STEP 5 | **KEEP TRACK.**As you receive gifts, have a simple way to keep track. |
| STEP 6 | **COLLECT FUNDING AND SEND/SUBMIT TO NEW LIFE:**  Once you have collected the checks, you should mail or bring them to New Life.  **By Mail.**Simply mail your checks to New Life Christian Church, 14550 Lee Road Chantilly, VA 20151.  **In Person.**You may also bring your checks to the church during our regular Monday through Friday. |
| STEP 7 | **SAY THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO SUPPORTED YOU.** Write a personal thank you note BOTH when you receive the check *and* then again after you return from your trip with your results and experiences.  This is critically important. The people who commit to giving – or praying – for you ARE partners in the ministry and not only deserve to be updated, they WANT to be updated. They want to share in what God did during the trip. |

Instructions:

1. Do not be tempted to change the ask amounts to lower amounts. If someone wants to give only $10, they will, regardless of what you ask for. Studies show these people will be honored, not offended, that you think they are capable of a larger gift. And with the $50 lowest asking point, some will naturally just go for the lowest amount. Please consider that most people in Northern Virginia pay much more than $50 per month for their cable/FiOS/dish television service.
2. Obviously fill in all of the missing details in orange — and change that to black before printing (We know, you assumed that. But for the ONE person who did not…).
3. Erase all of this stuff so that the logo, at the top of the next page, moves to the top of this page. Save and customize as you’d like.
4. Scroll down to see sample letter.



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<Date>

Dear  <prospective sponsor name>,

<Enter something personal here, about having seen them recently, or being sad that you have not seen them recently, or a line or two about your life and what you are excited about. Do not let the length of the letter exceed two total pages.>

I’m writing today because God has opened a door for me to go on a short-term mission/construction project with New Life Christian Church. We will be headed to Williamsburg, Kentucky from <enter dates>.

Williamsburg's economy has been devastated by the closing of coal mines in the area, and a significant portion of those who live in the community have gone through difficult times as a result. In southeastern Kentucky as a whole, approximately 1 in 3 families are struggling to make ends meet. 60% of the families in the region are living on government subsidy because unemployment is so prevalent.

One of the families the Cross Eyed Builders has served was spending more money to heat their trailer home in the winter than the family was earning each month. Another woman who the team got to know and was able to serve is a wonderful grandmother who is living on disability and having to raise four grandchildren under the age of six in a trailer home she simply does not have the resources to maintain. A different family had not had running water in their home for seven months—until the Cross Eyed Builders team was able to restore it.

We work closely with a church and with Christian leaders in Williamsburg to identify people and families like these — wonderful people who are at a place in life where they simply need a hand.

We send team members down in the spring to meet with the leaders in the area to discuss which families are most in need of help so that when we arrive, we will have projects selected, materials already in place to start work, and be ready to hit the ground running. In the ten years we’ve been going to Williamsburg, we’ve replaced broken windows, insulated trailer homes that had enormous utility bills, rebuilt bathrooms, replaced disintegrating beams that supported a floor in a home, replaced floors, roofs, crumbling wheelchair ramps into homes, replaced exterior walls, and—in one case—replaced a failing trailer home with a new home. All of this at no charge to the people we serve.

We do this to serve. But more than simply seeking to serve people, we are seeking to serve God, taking an opportunity to be his hands and feet and to love people by giving, in much the same way He loved us by giving us His son.

We are thankful to have a healthy, and long-term partnership with people we’ve gotten to know well in Williamsburg.

I’m specifically writing to you to ask you to also partner with me by playing a significant role in making this trip happen. There are two specific ways I am seeking help.

First, our team needs prayer. Please pray that the right families and projects would be selected, that God would raise the funds to make it possible for us to serve these families, that God would protect every person during the travel and during the work week, that the team would experience unity and grow spiritually, that the leaders would be granted wisdom in decision-making, and that God would be glorified (and pleased) by our service.

Second, I personally need to raise money to make this trip a reality. I’m asking people like you to prayerfully consider whether you might be able to help sponsor this trip. This is an unusual opportunity because your gift will accomplish two very different things at the same time: Most obviously, your gift would directly bless someone (or a family) in Kentucky in a very real and tangible way. At the same time, it would be a tremendous blessing for me to be able to participate.

The total cost is <insert dollar amount.> This will cover my travel, food, housing, group outings, PLUS the construction materials necessary for the projects we will complete. Please consider investing $50, $100, $250, or even more in this project. Any money I raise over my initial goal will go toward other people’s financial needs and toward building materials. The more money we raise, the more flexibility we have to do additional work, on site, that might otherwise be cost-prohibitive.

If you would like to help, please place a check in the enclosed envelope and return it me, so I can keep track of my progress, by <insert date here>. Make your check out to: New Life Christian Church, and (this is important) **please write this in the memo line:**

**“KY Mission Trip for <insert your name or family>”**

This is how New Life will know how to credit your gift to my account. Your gift is tax deductible and a receipt will be provided.

Thank you so much for considering partnering with me on this trip. I am grateful,

<Your signature>

<Your name>