



Living Water International Trip Information

Where are mission trips offered?

We have trips going to El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras. (We have a limited number of trips going to Haiti through our branch office in Michigan. To find out about trips to Haiti, contact heather@water.cc.) Other than these countries, there are no other opportunities for mission trips or overseas travel through LWI.

What dates are available?

You can find our trip calendar for Latin American countries at this link: <http://www.water.cc/living-water/trip-calendar>. This is a good place to start. If a trip says "reserved," sign-up is not available for the trip at this time, but may become available later. If you would like to go on a trip marked "reserved," go here to fill out a form to be placed on the waiting list: <https://lwi.wufoo.com/forms/sign-up-for-the-2010-waiting-list>. It is quite common for individual spots to open up as trips draw closer.

If a trip says "booked" or "closed," there is no more availability, nor will there be, for that trip.

How do I reserve a trip for my group?

Please be aware that our trips get reserved six months to a year ahead of time, and it is best to book as far in advance as possible. Our calendar for the following year is released June 1st on our website; this is the best time to book a mission trip for a group larger than three. If you are a leader looking to reserve a spot for your group, please use this form: <http://www.water.cc/living-water/trip-form/>. For any trip marked "open" or "open spots" on the calendar, you are welcome to contact Kim or Loren to reserve the remaining spots for your group. After you reserve a trip, we hold those spots until a trip is 90 days away, when any trip spots that we do not have registration forms for are opened to the public and those on our waiting list.

Who is on the team? Who leads the trips?

On our drill trips we typically take 12 people: 8 drillers and four hygiene team facilitators. We cannot take more than 8 drillers or more than 4 hygiene facilitators – the spots on teams are first come, first serve by registration form. Both women and men are welcome to be a part of the drill team; however, due to cultural differences and sensitive health content, we only allow women to be part of the hygiene team. The minimum age requirement is 14 by the date the trip leaves; we cannot take anyone younger. Anyone travelling under the age of 16 must be accompanied on the trip by a parent or legal guardian. There is no maximum age limit.

In every country, we have excellent in-field staff, employed and trained by Living Water International. They are experienced at leading mission teams. They will lead the trip, act as a translator, train you, host you, assist you, and be there to experience the trip alongside you. We have in-field staff members that specialize in team leading, drilling, and health/hygiene.

How long are the trips? What is the itinerary?

Trips are 6-7 days long, starting and ending on a Saturday or Sunday. We currently do not offer any in-field internships or mission trips longer than one week.

We attempt to drill a shallow water well using a mud rotary hydraulic rig or an air drilling rig (depending on location). A team will usually arrive in country on the weekend and enjoy church or relaxing with the locals. On Monday work in your target village begins. For four days you will work on the well (or facilitate hygiene). Usually you will finish up on the fifth day and then have a well dedication. The sixth day is a day to rest and relax with options like shopping in an open-air market, a volcano tour, or dinner at the beach.

The objectives of the trip are to drill a water well, teach hygiene, interact and encourage the villagers (especially the children) and work with God in a way that is totally different from what you experience in the United States. The trip is not only about bringing clean water and the Gospel but also forming a relationship with the village, the in-country staff and the team. They are truly a life-changing experience.

I am interested in a pump repair trip. How is this different than a drilling trip?

Pump Repair trips are the same length, cost the same amount, and have the same preparation procedures and deadlines as mission trips. However, the maximum number of people we can take on a PR trip is six, and there is no hygiene team. Pump repairs are a strategic way to meet the need for clean water – it seems that everywhere you look in Central America, there are broken wells and hand pumps, with the local people lacking the skills or materials to fix them. On a PR trip, you will accompany our in-field staff and learn to assess, repair, and sanitize several non-functioning wells of all kinds, restoring joy to the people as you return clean water to their community. After LWI repairs a well, we take responsibility for the well and it goes into our tracking system so that we can ensure that any future problems will be corrected and addressed. We never want the local people to be forced to return to a former, contaminated water source. Currently, we only offer pump repair trips to Nicaragua (and Haiti; contact heather@water.cc).

What kind of training do I need?

LWI does not require any kind of training to go on a trip; our in-field staff members are uniquely equipped to train you while you are on the trip. However, training can be an incredible experience and often lends to a more satisfying trip experience. LWI offers training for drilling, pump repair, and hygiene facilitation. Check out this page of our web site for a schedule.: <http://www.water.cc/take-action/training/>.

How much do the trips cost?

The trip cost for all countries is \$1,700 per person. This covers roundtrip airfare from Houston to your in-country destination, all meals, lodging, ground transportation, taxes, etc. If you need to fly into Houston from another airport, there will likely be an additional flight fee for the cost of your flight into Houston. LWI will book your entire ticket from your original location, through Houston Bush, into the country.

The only things not included in the trip cost are souvenirs and recreation day activities (approx. \$40). LWI is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and as such, all payments or donations made to LWI are tax-deductible.

Can I fundraise? Are scholarships offered?

At LWI, we firmly believe that when God calls you to go on a trip, he will provide. Though LWI does not offer any scholarships out of our office, we are willing to provide materials and guidance to help you fundraise. We have many trip participants each year that are financially supported by their church, place of employment, or family/friends. You can go to www.water.cc/resources to find brochures about the trips, flyers, videos, and other materials to help you promote your trip and fundraise. These materials are also helpful for group leaders looking to promote an upcoming trip. We have found that sending support letters and getting your local church involved is one effective way to gain financial aid.

As fundraising requires time, we recommend that you begin spreading awareness and raising funds as soon as you sign up for the trip. You are still held responsible for all payment deadlines, and must be in contact with Kim or Loren (and use the remittance form) to ensure that your support is being applied correctly.

If you are signing up for a trip that occurs within 90 days, fundraising is not a viable option due to the payment deadlines.

Who pays for the well?

When you pay the cost for your mission trip, it only covers the costs associated with your expenses on the trip; it costs additional money to drill each well. We match each well drilled with a specific sponsor. In this way, individuals, churches, or groups are given the opportunity to invest in specific communities. Sponsorship of a new well costs \$5,000 in Central America. This covers the cost of on-the-ground materials (such as the pipe and pump), drill rig maintenance, fuel, the materials for the drilling process, future maintenance for the well, etc. We also rehabilitate broken wells (those that were not drilled by us, but someone else drilled it and then it broke), and can often turn a hand-dug well into a clean water solution with a sealed hand pump. Rehabs cost about \$3,000.

It is a really neat experience to see a church or group rally around raising support sponsoring the well – it can unify the group, give them a sense of connection with a Central American community, and give those not going on the trip an opportunity to invest. We have many groups that choose to sponsor the same well they will drill

on their mission trip. On the last day of the mission trip, when the well is complete, we hold a well dedication ceremony where we join local people in giving thanks to God. The well sponsor's name is engraved on a plaque at the base of the well, so that the community always knows the North Americans who gave so that they could experience clean water. It is a joy to watch their faces as the water gushes from the well for the first time.

If you or your group would like to invest in sponsoring a well, contact Loren or Kim for more details.

How do I sign up and pay? What are the deadlines?

Spots on trips are on a first come, first serve basis, based upon when we receive your registration form. When you know that you would like to sign up for a trip, contact Kim (for Honduras), Carrie (for Guatemala) or Loren (for Nicaragua or El Salvador). They will provide you with necessary registration form and next steps. You are not guaranteed a spot on the trip until we receive your registration form. If you do not meet the payment deadlines (and do not communicate with us why they were missed), you forfeit your spot on the trip.

Kim Rathgeber (Honduras) can be contacted at kim@water.cc and 281.207.7821.

Carrie Goodson (Guatemala) can be contacted at carrie@water.cc and 281.207.7839.

Loren Messarra (El Salvador and Nicaragua) can be contacted at lorenm@water.cc or 281.207.7826.

No later than ninety days before the trip, a deposit of \$1,000 is due in order to be able to book your plane ticket and confirm your spot.

NO LATER than 30 days before departure, the remaining \$700 is due as well as any extra flight fee needed to fly into Houston. You may pay using your online registration form at the time you register, by calling Kim or Loren with credit card information, or by mailing a check. You may NOT pay via our water.cc website, firstgiving page, or any other method.

If you or someone supporting you mails a check, you MUST include our remittance slip with EVERY payment so that we can properly track your funds. Without this slip, we cannot guarantee that funds will be properly applied. You may request this form from Kim or Loren.

We appreciate your interest in Living Water International. Please do not hesitate to contact Kim (kim@water.cc), Carrie (carrie@water.cc) or Loren (lorenm@water.cc) for more information, or to **take the next step to obtain a registration form.**

-----Thank you for your interest in mission trips with Living Water International!-----