

WHY WE SUPPORT SHORT-TERM missions



By **Kyle Bailey**
Associate Minister of Missions

Short-term Missions, as we do it now, is a relatively new phenomenon. In the 1990s, there was a boom in churches sending mission teams to Latin America. Then, as air travel became cheaper with more options, teams started going farther and farther, and the world, for many churches, became smaller and more connected. However, with the rise of short-term missions, there were also problems. Many people have rightly criticized this movement and pointed out the unintended consequences of these good works. There are clear examples of when this kind of helping has hurt communities and caused damage to the work of the Gospel.

Some critics have gone as far as to say that churches should not send these groups at all. They view it as wasteful spending that could be better used to fund national ministries. With all of the potential pitfalls of short-term missions, we must ask: Why do we still do short-term missions? At Dawson, we invest significant financial resources to send our people to serve around the world. We view it as a stewardship responsibility to look at the cost/benefit analysis. Is it worth the cost and time? After helping to lead short-term missions for almost three decades, I can confidently say the answer is, YES!

It is worth it. Here are four of many reasons why I believe we must send short-term teams:

1. First, the Bible clearly calls us to make disciples in all the world.

Acts 1:8 records the words of Jesus, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (ESV) This is not a sequential calling. We are called to our neighborhoods and to the outer reaches of the world—at the same time. We must go places where people do not yet know Jesus and share the Good News of His life, death, and resurrection.

2. Second, God's word describes the Church as One Body.

The Church here in America is just one small part. Short-term missions allow us to see and know the other parts of the Body of Christ. It helps to understand how to best pray for our brothers and sisters around the world. We also learn from Christians with a different and needed perspective on what it means to follow Christ.

3. Third, we go to support mission partners.

Oftentimes, missionaries are the most isolated workers in Christendom. Though their service

is rewarding, they are away from their friends and family and have limited opportunities for fellowship. When done well, our visits can provide needed encouragement and refreshing.

4. Fourth, we go because God's uses it as a tool for our own growth as Christians.

I have seen it over and over again—when we go outside of our comfort zone to serve, God stretches us and teaches us things we could never have learned at home. God also uses the stories of serving on short-term mission projects and stories of how the Spirit is moving around the world to encourage those who stayed behind and prayed and who supported these projects in other ways.

As a church, we are committed to mobilizing our people and resources to love our neighbors and reach the lost. We invite you to pray and consider if God is calling you to serve on a Dawson short-term mission project in 2024.



Kyle Bailey is Dawson's Associate Minister of Missions. Originally From Marietta, GA, Kyle graduated from Beeson Divinity School in 2013 with a Master of Divinity. Kyle and his wife Ali served primarily with mission partners in South Asia and Latin America. They have two children, Thomas and Claire, and a Goldendoodle, Gus.



DAWSON | 2024 MISSION PROJECTS

SOUTHEAST ASIA

EDUCATION SUPPORT PROJECT

Estimated Cost: \$1,900*

Dates: March 8–16

Leader: Belinda Stroud

Type of Ministry: Teaching, Children's Ministry,
Cross-Cultural Worker Support

Participant Profiles: Adults, College Students

LAREDO, TX

FAMILY MISSION TRIP

Estimated Cost: \$750*

Dates: March 23–29

Leader: Bryan Howard

Type of Ministry: Service, Community Outreach, VBS

Participant Profiles: Adults, Families, Students

(Per Send Relief, the minimum age for volunteers is 12.)

EURASIA

MINISTRY SUPPORT TEAM

Estimated Cost: \$1,900*

Dates: April 6–13

Contact: Kyle Bailey

Type of Ministry: Children's Ministry, Cross-Cultural
Worker Support

Participant Profiles: Adults

GUATEMALA

MEDICAL MISSION PROJECT

Estimated Cost: \$1,000*

Dates: April 13–19

Leader: Dr. Randy Stewart

Type of Ministry: Medical Outreach

Participant Profiles: Medical Professionals, Adults,
College Students

EURASIA

COLLEGE MINISTRY TEAM

Estimated Cost: \$1,900*

Dates: April 28–May 8

Leader: Cole Griffith

Type of Ministry: Outreach, Prayer, Evangelism

Participant Profiles: College Students, Young Adults

WALES

WELSH PRAYER/MISSIONAL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

Estimated Cost: \$1,700*

Dates: June 9–17

Contact: Kyle Bailey

Type of Ministry: Outreach, Evangelism

Participant Profiles: College Students, Young Adults, Adults

COLORADO

SPORTS CAMP OUTREACH

Estimated Cost: \$975*

Dates: July 7–14

Leader: Andy Cartee

Type of Ministry: Sports Camp, Community Outreach

Participant Profiles: Families, Adults, Students

HONDURAS

FAMILY MISSION PROJECT

Estimated Cost: \$1,000*

Dates: July 20–26

Leader: Reyna Craft

Type of Ministry: Children's Ministry, Community
Outreach

Participant Profiles: Families, Adults, Students

CAMBRIDGE

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT OUTREACH

Estimated Cost: \$1,500*

Dates: July 28–August 11

Contact: Kyle Bailey

Type of Ministry: International Student Outreach

Participant Profiles: College Students, Young Adults

UGANDA

MEDICAL MISSION TRIP

Estimated Cost: \$2,500

Dates: August 30–September 10

Leader: Debbie Moss

Type of Ministry: Medical, Refugee Relief

Participant Profiles: Medical Professionals, Adults

**Note: Through the generosity of Dawson members, the per participant cost for 2024 mission projects is substantially discounted. Additional scholarship funds are available as needed.*