



American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware

Haiti Mission Trip: Travel Preparation

November 5 – 14, 2011

Mission Project:

We will work with International Ministries and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship in the earthquake devastated community of Grand Goave, Haiti. Our team will work side by side with members of the local community building rubble houses.

Flight:

The team will fly out of the Philadelphia International Airport on Saturday, November 5, 6 a.m., American Airlines, arriving in Port-au-Prince 10:45 a.m. Leaving Port-au-Prince, on American Airlines Monday, November 14, 1:20 p.m. arriving in Philadelphia 11:35 p.m.

Luggage:

International Ministries recommends packing light. They have suggested taking 1 “duffel” size bag plus 1 carry on due to space limitations.

Money:

The official currency of Haiti is the gourde, which has a variable exchange rate (currently approximately 40 gourdes to the dollar). Most establishments in Haiti price items in an unofficial currency known as the “Haitian dollar.” (One Haitian dollar is equivalent to five gourdes.) Others give prices in gourdes or even in dollars. It is always a good idea to clarify with vendors which currency -- the gourde, Haitian dollar, or U.S. dollar -- is being used in a given transaction, as price tags often bear a number without indicating currency. The currency itself shows a value in gourdes.

Passports:

Some Post Offices offer Passport Services. You can locate one at usps.com/passport. You can also download and print applications (First-Time Applicants Form DS-11/Renewals Form DS-82) at that website or hard copies are available at the Post Office. First-time applications must submit their unsigned (your signature must be witnessed) application along with proof of citizenship (birth certificate), proof of identity (drivers license), and two passport photos in person. Photos can be taken at the Post Office for \$15. It general takes between 4-6 weeks to process applications. Fees: First-Time Passport Book Applications \$135/Renewals \$110. Passports need to be renewed if there is less than 6 months left on their expiration date at the time of travel. Visit www.travel.state.gov for more information.

Passport Tip:

Prior to the trip, make a copy of the identification page in case your passport is lost or stolen. To help prevent your passport from being lost or stolen, carry your Passport in a security belt/pouch that you wear under your clothing. It is also a good idea, to carry 2 extra passport photos with you.

Travel Registration:

US State Department provides a free travel registration service to US citizens traveling abroad. Registration allows a traveler to record information about a trip that the Department of State can use to assist in case of an emergency although the Embassy’s ability to provide emergency services is limited.

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui>. ABCOPAD will register the entire group.

Visa: Not Required.

Language:

French and Creole are both official languages, but less than 10 percent of Haitians speak French. French is used mostly in government and business. Everyone speaks Creole, however. Creole is a mix of French and various African languages. Most school classes are taught in French, but Creole’s use is growing on radio and TV.

What to Bring:

- Sun block and sunglasses for protection from harmful effects of UV sun rays. (Remember to apply sunscreen before you apply insect repellent.)
- If possible, bring your eye glasses. They are easier to care for than contacts while in Haiti.
- Antibacterial hand wipes or alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Work clothes (e.g. jeans, work pants, or modest shorts and polos or t-shirts, hat, bandana) Clothing should be lightweight, loose, and light-colored to allow maximum air circulation for evaporation and to give protection from the sun.
- 2-3 pairs of sturdy work gloves – plan to leave them at the jobsite.
- Ear plugs
- Other clothes (e.g. undergarments or sleeping clothes)
- Tennis shoes or work boots and crocs or flip flops (for evening showers)
- Sleeping mat, pillow, and sheets/or a cool sleep sac – more information prior to departure
- Single packs of dry Gatorade mix and a personal water bottle (nalgene or aluminum)
- Optional: nutritious snacks (e.g. Power Bars, Cliff Bars, or other snacks with wrappers that you can peel)
- Flashlight and batteries (head lamp recommended)
- Personal care items (e.g. feminine hygiene, toothpaste/toothbrush, shampoo, soap, sewing kit, safety pins, etc)
- Personal battery operated Fan with Lithium Batteries (no rechargeable batteries, there may not be electricity)
- Insect Repellent (look for brands that contain 30-50% DEET, Picaridin (KBR 3023), Oil of Lemon, Eucalyptus/PMD or IR3535. Products with a higher % of active ingredients will last longer; however, after 50% there is not a marked difference. Less than 10% offers limited protection.)
- Bible and a notebook (for journaling)
- English to Creole Dictionary

What Not to Bring:

- Jewelry (Consider leaving your wedding ring and watch at home.)
- Electronic Equipment (i.e. computers, cell phone, I-Pods, cameras, etc.)
 - If you do bring these items, keep them with you at all times. Sometimes these items tend to disappear.
 - Cameras should only be used with the permission of the subjects.