

Thank you for considering a mission trip to build homes in the Dominican Republic. Our 2018 trip will take place the week of March 20-25 in conjunction with the group Building Without Borders and partnering with Pastor Juan, the local shepherd for the village we'll be working in.

Trip Objectives

Our main objective on this trip, and every trip, is to show the love of Jesus to this community. We will do this in two ways.

First, we plan to build at least two homes for two families who are in desperate need. If we raise more money, we may be able to build three homes. (Visit www.bwithoutb.com for more information on the families we'll be helping.)

The second way is by conducting a Vacation-Bible-School-style event with local schools.

We have two main tasks before us: 1) Gather the team of people who will go to the Dominican Republic, and 2) Raise the money to build two homes.

The Team

We are hoping to recruit 15 people for this trip. This will ensure that we have enough people to build three homes.

The earlier we assemble the team, the better. Flight prices are a big chunk of the cost of each trip. The earlier we can book flights, the more significant savings we'll experience on the cost of the trip per person.

Each member of the team is responsible for funding their travel and lodging, which will likely be around \$1,300. Partial scholarships are available from the GREFC missions committee. If you are interested in going but are short on funds, think creatively. During the last trip, one person posted a Go Fund Me campaign on Facebook and was able to fund most of his trip. Ask family, friends and co-workers to sponsor you.

Fundraising

Each home costs \$6,700 - each house costs \$6,500 in materials and we gift each family with a \$200 mattress. GREFC's missions committee has agreed to give \$6,000 to the project in 2018.

In addition to raising the money for two homes, we're hoping to be able to raise enough for a third home and for more tools to supply a third building site.

Who Should Go

We understand that going on a mission trip is a big decision. We only ask that you spend time in prayer and in conversations with your family to consider the possibility. We hope that we've given enough lead-time to help with taking the time off of work, making family arrangements and saving the money needed for the trip.

If you feel the Holy Spirit moving in you and making you curious, we simply ask that you attend an informational meeting on **Sunday, January 14 at noon** (directly after the second service) in the Student Ministries room at Grand Rapids Evangelical Free Church. This in no way commits you to going. It will simply give you more details to hopefully make a more informed decision.

Testimonials

I don't think you will find a person who ever regretted going on a mission trip. Listen to what some of the team members from previous trips had to say about it:

"The unity between the group was awesome and so much fun and the unity between the DR workers and home owner was also special." Tom Geisler

"I saw God provide funds for my participation. Many people stepped forward to fill in the gap that my absence would bring. The best part of the trip was the fellowship in spending time with the other members of the group, and sharing our lives together. There is much more to be said, but in all things I give God the glory for the blessing of being included in this adventure, (yes I would do it again, and again.)" Joel Boyd

"Over and over I found myself pondering the question of why, in God's providence, am I so blessed as to have been born into a "middle class" family in the USA and afforded all the opportunity and privilege that goes with that? I also thought about the responsibility that goes along with being the recipient of such good fortune. I've come to believe that in God's economy, we are blessed so that we might be a blessing to others and so we need to be tuned in and seeking the opportunities God provides for us to share." Doug Hanson

"For over a year, God has been hitting me hard with verse after verse regarding how he feels about taking care of the poor, loving the marginalized, and reaching out to the lost. My prayer is that this trip would pour gasoline on a fire that is already burning in me, and in our church, to, most importantly, love God with all our heart, soul, and mind and to truly love our neighbor as we love ourselves." Paul Huttner

To read more details about previous trips, please visit our blog at <http://grefc.org/blog/>. To learn more details about the upcoming trip, including dates, tentative costs, travel and work details, **please plan to attend the informational meeting on Sunday, January 14 a noon**. We'll be meeting in the Student Ministries Room.

In His Name,
Doug Hanson, GREFC Elder and Trip Leader