



**SOUTHMINSTER**

Presbyterian Church

# South Africa Family Mission Trip 2024



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## **Southminster Presbyterian Church, Beaverton**

### **South Africa Family Mission Trip 2024: Details at Glance**

- 1. Location:** Cape Town, South Africa. We would stay at the Logos Christian Church which has dorm rooms, showers, and access to a swimming pool.
- 2. Mission Project:** We will work with “Shiloh: Community in Action” Relief organization. The actual mission projects will be based on the current needs in the community (i.e., service-learning with the poor, social & housing projects, and/or children's programming.
- 3. Number of Participants and other Progressive Church Youth:** We are allowed to take as few as 8 participants with a maximum of 22 (but this may be negotiable upwards by a few). Currently we have 8 youth, 6 college students, and 9 adults who have shown fairly strong interest. Additionally, we intend to ask other small progressive churches to send 1-3 youth and this will become a priority over college students.
- 4. Trip Dates:** The dates of the trip will be approximately (within a few days) from July 5-20, 2024. The actual days in Cape Town would be from July 7-18.
- 5. Lodging/Meals/in-country Transportation>Showers and Trip Guides** will be provided by *Experience Mission* and the *Logos Christian Church* (with facilities on the property for groups).
- 6. Estimated Cost:** The estimated cost of the trip would be no more than \$5,000.00 per person. This includes \$1600 per person for food, lodging, travel, and guides in Cape Town; approximately \$2200 for round trip airfare and approximately \$1200 for other or miscellaneous expenses (it may not be this much).
- 7. Southminster Fundraising and Church Support:** At this juncture, due to our current *youth mission, program, travel and international mission funds* and our fundraising during the 23-24 academic year (estimated at \$10-15,000), we anticipate asking families to contribute \$2000 per youth, \$2500 for college students and \$3000 for adults and the church would support each participant in the amount of \$2-3000. For families that can not afford the \$2000 but the youth still would like to go, and **for multi-members in one family who participate, scholarships will be made available.**
- 8. More about the Experience Mission Organization:** Don has spent an hour on the phone with a representative of the Experience Mission organization and this is clearly an organization with a very similar philosophy of "mission" as Southminster. There are many short videos and philosophy statements on their website (which will be very useful for our training purposes). You are welcome to peruse the website on your own (see the information in this packet regarding their “philosophy”: [experiencemission.org](http://experiencemission.org)
- 9. Don's Pre-Travel Trip:** If there was support for this endeavor and it was approved, Don (as always) would travel to Cape Town to meet with the *Experience Mission* organizers and begin planning for the trip in December 2023 or March 2024.

**Details and Logistics**  
**Mission Partner in South Africa: Shiloh**



Shiloh is a local organization in Cape Town whose goal is to provide individuals with an understanding of their value as children of God to enable them to grow and develop into their full potential. They start by helping to build a better future for children through better education, with the hope of eventually building a better South Africa.

As you visit Cape Town you will meet the people of Shiloh in Klipheuwel. Shiloh means “Heavenly Place,” and that is exactly what Shiloh is. Shiloh is an umbrella over numerous different projects that uplift and bring dignity to the underprivileged and less fortunate in the Cape Town area.

Shiloh helps to provide training for teachers through their Jubilee Excellence School (JES). The teachers are taken through a 10-week period of training before classroom placement. They prioritize each person's spiritual and emotional well-being throughout training. The JES provides children with education, nutrition, and care on a daily basis. Shiloh also administers to the local community in the Klipheuwel settlement. The settlement consists of about 7000 individuals, many feeling worthless or have hopelessness for the future. That is where Shiloh steps in to affirm them and lead them to have a sense of dignity and worthiness. Shiloh also partners with children's homes, churches, old age homes, soup kitchens, and underprivileged schools to provide meals as sustenance. They also help to distribute monthly food hampers for families along with help with medical assistance at a very low rate.

## **Cultural Background**



### **Lifestyle**

Daily life is a bit of a contrast between the abundance of the city, while not having basic necessities in the township. This community lacks proper sanitation, running water, and electricity. Not a far walk from things we are used to in Western society, it's a striking boundary that is drawn between the two.

### **Needs**

Homelessness, drugs, and alcohol are issues that paralyze the people here and lead to things like unemployment. Unemployment is a huge issue that impacts the community. Overcrowding in conjunction with the unemployment issue results in elevated crime among the locals.

### **Language**

There are 11 official languages spoken in South Africa. English is a common language that is understood in most locations among teachers and most of the adults you will encounter. Young children sometimes struggle to understand and communicate in English. Teachers will be in the classrooms to help translate when help is needed.

### **Christianity in South Africa**

Christianity was first introduced to South Africa in the 1600s when large numbers of Christian missionaries began arriving from the Netherlands. South Africa's religious composition was (and continues to be) deeply shaped by these early interactions. Today, the majority of South Africans identify as Christian (84.2%). The 'African Independent Church' makes up the largest Christian group. This consists of several churches and subdivisions are denominationally, ritually and linguistically diverse. However, they are all united by the fact that they were established by African initiatives rather than foreign missionaries. African Independent Churches often openly incorporate aspects of ancestral and traditional African religions with Christian practices. The largest church of this kind is the Zion Christian Church (ZCC), which presents a syncretism between the worship practices of Christianity and traditional African religions that focus on physical and spiritual healing.



## Christianity and the Apartheid

Christianity has had an influential role in South African society and politics, both during and after apartheid. For example, the Dutch Reformed Church became the official religion of the National Party during the apartheid era, accumulating more than three million followers by the 1990s. This church posed a barrier to political reform as many clergy members were highly committed to apartheid. However, many Christian churches also played an instrumental role in the abolishment and transition from apartheid. Former president Nelson Mandela often called upon churches and religious organizations to help in the process of building a “new” South Africa.



## Traditional African Religions



The earliest known religion in South Africa was the traditional beliefs and practices of the Khoisan people, who resided in the region for centuries. Bantu-speaking groups introduced further religious traditions to the region in 1000 CE. Today, South Africa is home to a diversity of traditional African practices, with roughly 5% of the population identifying with a traditional African religion. Some South Africans adhere solely to traditional and ancestral beliefs and practices.

However, it is also common to find a mixture of such beliefs and practices with Christianity, reflecting how religious demarcations in South Africa are often blurred. A respect for past and present elders plays an important role in most traditional African religions.

## **About “Experience Mission”**

### **The Organizing Mission Agency based in the U.S.A. (central offices in Washington State)**

We want you to feel great about partnering with Experience Mission for your mission trip experience. Below are a few basic questions about our organization. Read more about EM’s mission and guiding values on the [About Us](#) section of our website.

#### **What types of trips and programs does Experience Mission offer?**

Experience Mission offers week-long short-term mission trips for groups of youth and adults across the U.S. and around the globe. We also offer 1-9 month IMMERSION and GAP YEAR programs for individual young adults (age 18-30) seeking a longer experience. Each program seeks to engage people to serve, while developing leaders, and empowering communities.

#### **How does EM create a positive and meaningful experience for communities receiving mission trip teams?**

At Experience Mission, we place a heavy emphasis on building relationships and maintaining the dignity of each person that is served on a trip. This is evident throughout EM’s 3 Focuses as an organization and integral to our approach to missions.

#### **Which denominations does Experience Mission partner with?**

Experience Mission is an interdenominational Christian non-profit organization. We are not directly affiliated with any specific denomination, and participants from all denominations or Christian backgrounds are welcome on EM mission trips, including both protestant and Catholic mission groups.

#### **Who does Experience Mission partner with around the world?**

In each mission trip community, Experience Mission partners with a wide variety of local churches and outreach organizations who are serving and ministering year-round. We call this “joining a community in motion.” We believe this allows mission trip teams the opportunity to encourage local leaders while furthering their ministries with additional resources and time. It also helps dispel the notion that any one group of volunteers is “saving” a particular community with their week, month, or year of service. When we serve alongside people doing the work on an ongoing basis, we are able to see our small part in furthering their mission and vision while remaining open to what community partners and the people we meet can teach us about life and faith.

## **Typical 12-Day Schedule in Cape Town**

Our time in South Africa will be coordinated by the EM Africa staff with local community partners. During your trip, you may have the opportunity to help with farm outreaches, holiday programs, meal prep for the less fortunate, packing food parcels, preaching opportunities and so much more. Below is a basic schedule for the week, but we also like to “build the plane as we fly it.” We allow time for plans to change so that teams will live in the moment. Our primary focus is building relationships with the local community and sharing the love of Jesus.

Each morning there is time for your own personal devotions. This is a time we strongly encourage everyone to spend with God journaling and processing their thoughts as the days pass. In the evening, the EM Africa staff lead a time of debriefing alongside the team leader(s). This is also a great time to spend time in worship if you have those that are gifted in those areas. There are also a few added bonuses that we include during your experience, including visiting Table Mountain, The V&A Waterfront, the botanical gardens, and much more.

### **TENTATIVE ITINERARY**

#### **Day 1**

Groups Arrive  
Leader's Meeting  
Dinner  
Orientation Meeting  
Team Time (time for your group alone)

#### **Day 2 - Day 5**

Ministry in Cape Town area communities

#### **Day 6**

Additional Ministry TBD

#### **Day 7**

Church

#### **Day 8-11**

Ministry in Cape Town area communities

#### **Day 12**

Depart for the U.S.

\*Experience Mission works closely with local leaders to identify work projects and ministry opportunities that address authentic needs within the community. We ask that you come with a servant's heart and willingness to adapt to the unique qualities represented in each location. Opportunities can vary significantly from one week to the next. Your team may work at one location or serve at multiple locations each day. Due to the changing needs of our community partners, we cannot confirm your specific activities until your team arrives.



# **Lodging, Food & Transportation in Cape Town**

## **Lodging**

Teams will be staying at Logos Christian Church in Cape Town. The rooms are set up with bunk beds or single beds for the team members. There is also a swimming pool and other areas for team time and quiet time.

## **Sleeping**

Beds including bedding will be provided for your team. There will be rooms designated for males and females. Nights between June-August are our winter months in South Africa so you can expect cooler evenings.

## **Showers & Bathrooms**

There are hot showers and bathroom facilities available at Logos.

## **Water**

There is running water at Logos and teams will be provided with purified drinking water at all times.

## **Electricity**

There is electricity provided at Logos. With that being said the electrical service in South Africa is not as dependable as in the United States. Power outages are fairly common in the winter months.

## **Security**

Logos Christian Church is a safe place for teams to stay. There is a security guard on the premises.

## **Food**

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner will be provided. Teams will also have the opportunity to experience local, cultural food while serving in various parts of the community during the day. The local staff members will typically prepare those meals for the team. There will be occasional times when teams will have the option to eat what we serve or to purchase their own meal.

## **Local Area**

Around the area of Logos Christian Church there are many shops with food and clothing should the team need anything. A hospital is also located nearby in case of an emergency.

## **Air Travel**

Destination Airport: Cape Town International Airport. Team members are responsible to cover the cost of their round-trip airfare to Cape Town International Airport.

## **Passports & Travel Documents**

Each team member must carry a valid passport. If you do not have a valid passport, it is of the utmost importance that you apply as soon as possible. The processing time for a Passport can take several weeks once your application has been submitted. An expired Passport is not considered valid.

## **Notarized Letter of Parental Consent**

All team members under the age of 18 must carry a written, notarized letter from their parents giving them parental permission to leave the country. They must carry the original notarized copy of this letter. It cannot be a photocopy of the letter.

1. If the minor is traveling without parents, both parents must sign the letter.
2. If they are traveling with one parent, the parent that is not traveling with them must sign this letter.
3. If their parents are separated or divorced and both parents do not want to sign the same letter, they must have a notarized letter from each parent giving them permission to go.

Experience Mission can provide a sample copy of a permission letter or you can create your own letter that must include the following:

1. The full name of both parents and their formal signatures
2. The full name of the child
3. The full name of the Adult Chaperone serving as the Team Leader
4. The specific traveling dates for each country
5. The destination country
6. The reason for travel to the destination country (e.g. "youth group function")
7. The Airline itinerary (if applicable)

If you have further questions regarding required travel documents we advise you to contact the US State Department: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov)

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## **Ground Transportation**

Upon arrival to South Africa, EM Africa will provide safe and reliable transportation. From airport pickup to airport drop-off, and everything in between.

## **Health and Safety**



### **EM's Health & Safety Plan:**

Emergency Response Plan: Based on the severity of each emergency, EM has a plan for appropriate response.

If a team member becomes seriously ill, they will be taken to a local doctor to receive appropriate medical attention and medications. If they are a minor, their Team Leader along with our staff will accompany them to the clinic. If needed, their parents will be contacted. Their recovery will be carefully monitored by our staff.

If there is an accident that requires a doctor, but is not life-threatening and does not have the potential to cause permanent damage, Experience Mission staff will locate the Team Leader, contact parents or guardians (providing the injured is a minor) and provide safe but quick transportation to a local clinic.

In the event that an accident occurs which is life-threatening or has the potential for permanent damage, emergency medical care will be secured and arrangements will be made if necessary, to transport the injured person to the United States as quickly as possible providing they are serving in one of our International locations. In our domestic locations, local 911 services will be contacted immediately. The family will be contacted immediately to assist in guidance for an appropriate response.

All medical care is the sole responsibility of the team member. Experience Mission requires every team member to be covered by domestic medical insurance and recommends that team members traveling abroad carry additional international travel insurance to cover any medical needs their domestic medical insurance may not cover.

Immunizations: As with all mission trips, it is essential that volunteers are up to date on all childhood immunizations. Each volunteer must also have a tetanus shot.

For more information about health concerns and recommended immunizations, you can visit the [CDC travelers guide to South Africa](#). You should consult your local doctor prior to receiving any immunizations.

## **Experience Mission's 7 Healthy Service & Learning Principles (Philosophy)**

However you have come to serve, we believe everyone desires to participate in change, growth, and renewal in this world, experiencing God's "shalom" that brings wholeness, reconciliation, and justice. But, ultimately, these things will not be the product of *what we do*, but rather *how we do it*.

The following 7 principles are our way at EM of prioritizing the approach and posture we take when serving on mission trips. Serving this way allows us to enjoy the journey, see God work in real-time, and love our neighbors authentically and whole-heartedly while remaining open to what is already present and what might be.

### **1. We release the desire to make this experience about ourselves.**

We choose to approach each opportunity for service and community involvement with open hands, letting go of our expectations (both intentional and unintentional) about what we think will happen. This includes everything from our desire to accomplish big things to our hope for how each personal interaction will play out. This is an act of humility that removes ourselves from the center of the story and allows our eyes to be open to all the unexpected ways God will move in and around us.

### **2. We remember we are visitors and guests, not consumers and tourists.**

When we travel anywhere to serve others, we enter an established community of people as visitors and, hopefully, as welcome guests. As respectful guests, we choose to intentionally assimilate into a community's overall function, pace of life, orientation to time, and way of doing things, rather than expecting the community to bend to what makes us comfortable. We show up eager to listen and learn from hosts, partner ministries, and local community members instead of asserting our own agenda or insisting on being the loudest in the room. This will come with a level of discomfort that we are willing to embrace. We see the difference in cultures as beautiful. Though something may be different, it is no less valuable. We will honor it, learn from it, and value the incredible God-breathed diversity of our world.

### **3. We view this experience as a privilege, not a purchase.**

It is from a position of privilege that we are able to travel and serve in someone else's community. We choose not to view this experience as transactional—to be consumed or checked off of our bucket list—but instead as an opportunity to learn, serve and grow while giving our time, attention, and resources to the work and ministry of local community partners and Experience Mission.



#### **4. We prioritize people over projects.**

People are the most important part of every service experience. We will remind ourselves that every person we encounter is our equal, living a life as complex as our own, with hopes, dreams, giftings, mistakes, ambitions, sorrows, value, worth, and dignity. We will take time to be thoughtful about those we are serving and acknowledge our propensity to push people aside in order to be problem solvers. We will be curious and ask questions when we don't understand and resist the urge to make a judgment and forge ahead on our own. Genuine human interaction will be our priority over the completion of a project or the expression of our ideas.

#### **5. We trust God is already present.**

We acknowledge we do not “bring God” anywhere. We come with open hearts, to see, experience, and participate in the beautiful ways God is and has always been present. We remember that many communities have experienced historical trauma caused by Christian missionaries in the past. Because of this, we engage expressions of faith different from our own with respect and wonder, as opposed to judgment and correction. We tread sensitively when sharing our personal views about expressions of faith and theology (or our opinions about social issues and life in general), trusting that God is working in ways we may not always see clearly or understand.

#### **6. We resist the temptation to tell simple stories.**

As humans, we all have struggles. Some struggles are more visible than others—like poverty, lack of education, substance abuse, or living without a home—while others are hidden inside our hearts—like pride, greed, prejudice, apathy, or self-centeredness. By being transparent with the struggles present in all of us, we acknowledge no one is “better” or “worse”, but rather on an equal footing with each other. We all fall short of the life we were intended to live. Understanding our common human struggles allows us to learn and grow together, making space for God to bring hope and change in our lives through our honest interaction with one another.

#### **7. We recognize and honor the image of God in everyone we meet.**

We cherish the richness and diversity present in all of humanity, each of us bearing the “Imago Dei” (image of God) given to us by our creator. This compels us to see all people as God does—with compassion, empathy, and love—and makes it impossible to write people off, look the other way, or ignore injustice present in their lives. We let the truth of God's love for all people in all places work in our hearts and cause us to seriously consider what it looks like to bring the Kingdom of God from heaven to earth.