

# Preparation Guidelines

## Sister Parish North to South Delegations

### FOR NORTHERN CHURCH

- Determine who will be the **main contact person** for setting up the delegation and let Sister Parish staff know. **9 months before the delegation**
- Sister Parish staff will send [Preparation guidelines for North to South Delegation](#) (this document) and the [Orientation Manual](#) to the main contact person. These contain important information about setting up and preparing for the delegation. You can also visit [our website](#) for more information.
- Delegate recruitment
  - Begin recruiting delegates **9 months before** with proposed dates for the delegation (which are simultaneously determined with Southern community and staff).
  - We require a **minimum of 5 delegates** and recommend a **maximum of 12 delegates**.
  - Hold 1-3 meetings over the next three months for those interested (no commitment required yet)
    - Show Sister Parish intro video or slide show, if helpful (available on our website)
    - Questions and answers with people who have been on a delegation before
    - Keep these meetings positive and focused on the benefits of participating (the preparation for other aspects of the trip will come during orientation).
    - Frank discussion of delegation costs and the plan for paying (church subsidizing, collective fund raising, etc.)
- Verify that the minimum number of delegates are committed and **set final dates** based on the availability of confirmed delegates, Southern community, and staff. **6 months before**. If you cannot get the minimum of 5 delegates, discuss options with Sister Parish staff or consider postponing the delegation.
- Send in \$500 deposit to reserve dates. **6 months before delegation**
  - Sister Parish Financial Office: P.O. Box 5202, Fargo, ND 58105
  - Written to "Sister Parish, Inc." with "Delegation" in the memo line
- Determine **who will lead orientation** sessions. This person should distribute the **Orientation Manual** to all of the delegates (electronically or hard copy), coordinate dates, and begin preparing the sessions.
- Delegates interested in Hepatitis A & B vaccines should start. **At least 6 months before**.
- Delegates who do not have a **passport** or need to renew theirs should submit the application **at least 4 months before** the delegation. US Citizens do not need a visa to travel to Guatemala or El Salvador. Non-US citizens should investigate whether or not they need a visa.
- As a community (not only the delegates), talk about your **hopes and goals for the delegation** and how it will strengthen your relationship **4-5 months before**. Share them with the Sister Parish staff who will then share them with your partner community in Guatemala/El Salvador. Let staff know if there are

specific requests for activities on the delegation. Please discuss with staff the safe church policies we need to keep in mind to appropriately coordinate activities.

- Begin **Orientation Sessions** from our Orientation Manual at least **10 weeks before** delegation. It is very important to go through this orientation to adequately prepare delegates for the experience.
  - Schedule according to delegates' calendars, but emphasize that attendance at all orientation sessions is required.
  - Coordinate with Sister Parish staff person Zoom or call into one of the sessions.
- Sister Parish staff will send the **billing** for the delegation. Send in the check at least **10 weeks before delegation**.
  - Costs: \$525 administrative fee per person, plus \$90 per person per day (including travel days) for delegation of 8-12 people - \$100 per person per day for delegation of 5-7 people. These amounts can vary depending on the location of the community and special activities the delegates request to participate and they are not common on a Sister Parish Delegation.
  - Sister Parish financial office: P.O. Box 5202, Fargo, ND 58105. "Delegation" in the memo line.
- As a group, **purchase plane tickets** together **2 months before**. Send the flight information to Sister Parish staff. **Sister Parish requires the delegates to have health insurance coverage** for the delegation. Delegates should ask their provider if they are covered in Guatemala or purchase individual travel health insurance. If needed, you can buy insurance when you buy plane tickets or later with a different provider like [www.worldnomads.com](http://www.worldnomads.com).
- **Take photos of the delegates**, and send to Sister Parish staff along with names and brief biographical info and why they're excited to go. Staff will share this with the community in Guatemala or El Salvador. **2 months before**
- Sister Parish staff will send the lead contact person **health forms and release forms** for all delegates. Health forms can be filled out online. Release forms can be filled out, signed, scanned and emailed to [usoffice@sisterparish.org](mailto:usoffice@sisterparish.org). **2 months before**
- Determine **who will lead reflections** on the trip- one of the delegates or Sister Parish staff? Staff is always happy to lead those. If a delegate or others from the church would like to plan the daily reflections, please plan on staff facilitating at least two of our planned reflections during the visit. Also discuss who will take on other roles (pg. 91 in Orientation Manual).
- **Review packing lists and get ready for a great time!** Remember to bring a photocopy of your passport and health insurance information. All other preparation information is in the Orientation Manual or will be shared by the staff contact in advance of the trip. Good preparation is the key to a successful delegation experience.

**Please reach out to your Sister Parish staff person at any point throughout this process with questions and/or requests for assistance. We are grateful to you for the time and effort that you are putting into making this delegation happen. It is an important way to maintain the relationship you have with your brothers and sisters in the South!**

See our website for other helpful information: [www.sisterparish.org](http://www.sisterparish.org)

*The purpose of both south-to-north and north-to-south delegation visits: To raise consciousness about each others' reality; to increase the sense of solidarity, to experience ecumenism; and to bring about reconciliation- in general- to strengthen the long-term partner relationship between the two communities.*