



EL SALVADOR • Living Water International • September 23rd-September 29th

"WHY WATER? At least 663 MILLION PEOPLE lack access to an improved source of drinking water—that's 1 in 11 of us. In the places where we work, it's more like 1 in 2. Without water, there's no foundation for other forms of development. Helping communities create sustainable water, sanitation, hygiene, and Christian witness programs—in partnership with local churches—is the best way we've found to demonstrate God's love. Why? Because the water crisis affects poverty, women, health and education—and for us it's a spiritual issue. In the past 25 years, 2 billion people have gained access to safe drinking water—but that's not the best story we have to tell. For us, water is a picture of living water—the good news that God wants to transform people, communities, and the whole world through the person of Jesus Christ."

You can be part of a team that delivers the hope of the Gospel by digging a water well with Living Water International. Join us as we share the true living water - the good news that God wants to transform people, communities, and the whole world through the person of Jesus Christ.

For information on what you can expect on a Living Water trip to El Salvador, please read this document: [Living Water Trips: El Salvador](#).

ITINERARY (tentative)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD

Arrive in San Salvador. One of our field staff will pick the team up at the airport in San Salvador, drive the team to a restaurant for lunch, and then to the team house or hotel. Once at the house, team members can unpack and relax. In the evening the hygiene team will meet their leader for the week to discuss the next day's lessons.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24TH

Community walk (see existing water source, meet community members). Begin drilling and take soil samples. Hygiene lessons, Bible stories, crafts, games. The team will arrive at the community, meet its residents, be greeted by the mayor, pastor, or teachers, and walk to see the existing water source(s). Shake hands with everyone and smile. After introductions, our in-country staff will pray and the drilling and hygiene teams will start their projects.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH

Drill, case, flush, gravel pack. Hygiene lessons, Bible stories, crafts, games...The drillers will drill the hole wider, insert PVC casing, flush the well, put in gravel pack, and may start developing/cleaning the well. The hygiene team will meet with the women and children, delivering hygiene and Bible lessons and deepening relationships.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

Develop well, clean and pack equipment. Hygiene lessons, Bible stories, crafts, games. On this day, the team will have more time to play with kids. It is your last full day with the community. In the morning the drill team will work on developing the well, and in the afternoon will clean the equipment and tools.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH

Complete pump installation. Dedication ceremony. The team will put the final touches on the well and there will be a dedication service.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH

Tourist day. Pack. Various activities will be offered and it is nice after a hard week to relax and enjoy some down time.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29TH

Leave for home. Team members will get up early in the morning and head to the airport.



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FOOD

Team members will have a mixture of typical Salvadoran meals and everyday American fare. Expect to eat plenty of black beans, rice, tortillas, chicken, plantains, and eggs. One incredible blessing for team members is the opportunity to share a home cooked meal each work day prepared by the women of the community. (Lunches are prepared with safe water provided by Living Water.)

LODGING

Teams will stay in one of two locations—either the Living Water Team house near Acajulta, or the Rancho Estero y Mar, a hotel located in La Paz. In both locations team members will be divided by gender into air-conditioned bedrooms with full bathrooms.

COST

The total cost of the trip is \$1,950. It includes hotels, airfare and all your in-country costs (It does not include the 10 entrance fee to El Salvador). It might be a good idea to bring a little money if you'd like to buy some souvenirs.

Payment Schedule:

Deposit- \$100 April 1

1st payment- \$500 May 1

2nd payment- \$500 June 1

Balance- \$850 July 1

FLIGHT INFORMATION

More information as trip is finalized

TIME ZONE/CLIMATE

The time zone is Mountain Time, 1 hour behind Houston. El Salvador has a tropical climate with pronounced wet and dry seasons. Temperatures vary primarily with elevation and show little seasonal change. The Pacific lowlands are uniformly hot; the central plateau and mountain areas are more moderate.

CURRENCY/MONEY

Notice: As of 2001, the Law of Monetary Integration allows the circulation of the US dollar (USD) in Salvador with a fixed exchange rate of 8.75 colones. The colon is still legal tender, however it is no longer in circulation and is rarely used. US Dollars recommend for travel on this trip.

You will need money for meals in the airport, 1 meal a day (\$3-7/day), money for any snacks and souvenirs that you wish to bring home. Cash is best to carry. New bills are best to bring. Credit cards are ok, but you will want to be cautious where you use them.



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PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Required Documents

- Passport (check expiration date) – **MUST EXPIRE 6 MONTHS AFTER TRIP; RENEW IF EARLIER**
- Color copy of your passport
- Copy of your health insurance (*You will be covered for international medical and emergency insurance.*)
- Background Check (*Trip participants must apply for a background check and be considered "eligible" before they are able to register for a Living Water trip to help ensure the safety of community members and their children and as a precaution against possible allegations of inappropriate conduct.*)

***The cost of the background check is \$31, and is not included in the price of the trip. Each prospective trip participant will pay online directly to Protect My Ministry; no portion will be collected by Living Water. The directions to apply for a Background Check will be emailed to you as soon as you register.**

Immunizations

When considering vaccinations, check with your family doctor. Plan to see your doctor 6-8 weeks before traveling. We do not require any, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that certain vaccinations be up to date, for example:

- Hepatitis A and B (both are a series of shots)
- Tetanus (especially important because of the drill equipment you will be handling)
- Malaria prevention medication (please be aware of potential side effects...*for more information, visit: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/el-salvador.htm>; http://www.cdc.gov/malaria/travelers/country_table/e.html)*

Check with your doctor for any medications/medical supplies you may need, such as:

- EpiPen for allergies
- Inhalers/medications for asthma
- Diabetic supplies
- Medicines/medical supplies not found in a common first aid kit

Valuables

We recommend that you do not bring valuables, such as laptops, iPads, jewelry or other items.

Luggage Requirements

Pack light. Luggage on rollers is recommended. Luggage allowance: 40 lbs. – 1 bag. Please allow extra room for supplies. We will divide supplies between team members – 10 lbs. each for a total luggage weight of 50 lbs.

Preparation Meetings

Once the team is finalized, we will hold a team meeting for details and community building.

Suggestions for a Successful Trip

- Begin praying for the trip and the people we will serve.
- Be flexible and bring a positive attitude.
- Active participation in small group Bible study and worship.

Emergency Contact Information

Please limit to emergencies. We will have periodic internet access and we will post as we are able on the Church Facebook page. Loved ones may contact: Paula Niz pniz@fmhouston.com or 713.962.9915; Kristen Jones at kristenwjones@hotmail.com.



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PACKING LIST

Necessities

- Bible, pen and journal

Clothing

- Sleeved T-shirts/blouses
- T-shirts
- 3 to 4 lightweight pairs of pants, capris
- Modest comfortable clothes to wear around the team house (shorts are acceptable)
- Skirt/blouse/dress (women) for dedication ceremony
- Nice shirt and pants (men) for dedication ceremony
- Rain Jacket/sweatshirt (no ponchos or umbrellas they may get caught in the equipment)
- Work gloves
- Pajamas
- Socks and underwear
- Closed toe shoes
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Shower shoes
- Swimsuit

Personal Items

- Towel for pool/beach,
- Shower towels, hand towels, washcloths
- Personal Care items shampoo, toothpaste, etc.
- Sunglasses/sunscreen/hat
- Trash bags for dirty clothes
- Medicine in prescription bottle/box (anti-diarrhea)
- OTC: Chewable Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, Tums, Tylenol, sinus/cold medicine, antihistamine
- Antibacterial wipes/hand sanitizer
- Travel size toilet paper or individual packs of tissues
- Insect repellent
- Durable Reusable Water bottle
- Ear plugs
- Camera and batteries
- Flashlight
- Snack food (individually packaged, if desired)
- Backpack/day
- Cash for souvenirs in crisp, small bills with no tears or marks (US \$200 recommended)
- Travel pouch or small cross-body purse (to prevent theft, bring something to keep important items close to your person)

**At the community: no open-toed shoes, shorts, tight clothing, low-cut or sleeveless tops*

Be sure to pack a change of clothes in your carry-on luggage in case checked luggage is delayed or lost. Remember to carry your prescription medicines as well as your passport and color copy of your passport in your carry-on luggage.



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SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER

Date

Hello, (Greeting, according to who you're writing and how well you know them.)

I am writing to tell you a little about what has been happening in my life and the opportunity I have this fall.

September 23-29, 2018, I will be traveling with a mission team from my church, First Methodist Church in Houston, Texas to El Salvador on a short-term mission trip. My team will be providing a village with clean water by digging a well.

The cost of the trip is **\$1950**. Would you consider becoming a partner with me and being a part of this outreach to the people of **El Salvador**? All of my support must be raised by **July 1st**. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, you may make your check payable to: First Methodist Houston – **El Salvador** Mission Trip. All donations are tax deductible. You may send the check to me directly at your address.

I would also like to ask for your prayers for the people we will meet and serve and for my team as we prepare to go. Please pray that God will use me in a great way and that many people will come to know God's love for them, and that our hearts would be open to however God wants to use us.

Thank you in advance for your support through donation and/or prayer. I know God will do great things for the people of **El Salvador** whom we will be serving, as well as our team this **fall**!

May God bless you and your family,

(Name)



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“The Republic of El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated country in Central America, bordered by the Pacific Ocean, Guatemala and Honduras. It is similar in size to Massachusetts and the largest city is also the capital, San Salvador.

El Salvador is rich in natural resources, including hydropower, geothermal power, petroleum, and arable land. Agriculture has historically been a driver of the economy; key products are coffee, sugar, corn, and cotton. Though small, El Salvador has the third largest economy in Central America. Many Salvadoran families lean on foreign remittances, where family members in the US send funds home.

Mountainous El Salvador is known as the “Land of Volcanoes” and is also susceptible to earthquakes and hurricanes. The country’s main environmental concerns include soil erosion, soil contamination from toxic wastes, and water pollution. More specifically, there is insufficient water quality and domestic sewage water control, along with weak management of chemical substances and hazardous waste.

The majority (an estimated 90%) of the population is composed of the mestizo ethnic group, mixed Amerindian and white. Amerindian descendants include the Pipils, Lencas and the Mayas. Spanish is the official language and is spoken by the majority.

WEATHER Teams can expect warm and coastal weather, with highs in the 90s and lows in the 80s. Drink lots of water and take time to rest in the shade to avoid heat exhaustion. If traveling during the rainy season (May to November), be sure to pack a light rain coat.

FOOD If you’re expecting to lose a few pounds on your trip—don’t! Our wonderful cooks won’t allow it. Team members will have a mixture of typical Salvadoran meals and everyday American fare. Expect to eat plenty of black beans, rice, tortillas, chicken, plantains, and eggs. One incredible blessing for team members is the opportunity to share a home cooked meal each work day prepared by the women of the community. These generous women work hard from morning until mealtime to lovingly and sacrificially prepare your lunch. The smile on their faces as you eat is a memory to last a lifetime. (Lunches are prepared with safe water provided by Living Water.)

LODGING Teams will stay in one of two locations—either the Living Water Team house near Acajulta, or the Rancho Estero y Mar, a hotel located in La Paz. In both locations team members will be divided by gender into air-conditioned bedrooms with full bathrooms. Sheets and pillows are provided, but bring your own towels. Both locations have pools (and the Pacific Ocean) on site, so pack a swimsuit! (Swimming in the ocean is permitted during low-tide only.)

If you have special eating considerations, please contact your Trip Coordinator.



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EL SALVADOR CULTURE

It cannot be stressed enough that the time spent in Central America is primarily about relationships. When establishing a relationship with a Salvadoran resident, it is very important to be sensitive to their culture. Central Americans as a whole are overwhelmingly kind and giving, and Salvadorans are no different. They are proud of their heritage and though there might be a sense of shyness at first, that will pass soon after greetings are shared.

- » Latin American culture is generally very proper, so be polite and use good manners. Do not be abrasive, aggressive, or demanding. Body language communicates more than we realize—seek to communicate what is in your heart with your face and your actions.
- » Latin America is a male-dominated culture. Whether we agree with it or not, as we are coming into their country, we need to respect their cultural norms. Women need to dress extra modestly. Do not hold extended eye contact with men, and do not allow your body orientation to become too close as you may communicate something you do not intend. Men can set a great example through their interactions with female team members and the local women. These actions will be watched and you can effect positive change.
- » Morality is very important to Salvadorans and they have very high standards for Christians. A Christian witness could easily be hurt by something that might not be considered offensive to North American Christians. For this reason, it is very important that there is no consumption/use of alcohol, drugs, or tobacco, no use of profanity or innuendos, nor inappropriate displays of affection.

POPULATION 6,107,706 7

LIFE EXPECTANCY [AT BIRTH] 72 7

WATER [RURAL POPULATION NOT USING IMPROVED WATER SOURCES] 13% 7

SANITATION [RURAL POPULATION NOT USING IMPROVED SANITATION FACILITIES] 25% 7

HEALTH [RISK FOR MAJOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES] HIGH 5

ECONOMY[GNI PER CAPITA (PPP)] \$8,070 7 [PERCENT OF POPULATION LIVING AT \$2 A DAY (PPP)] 16.94% 7

RELIGION [CHRISTIAN 94.63% (CATHOLIC 65.06%, PROTESTANT 26.83%)], [NONRELIGIOUS] 4.9%, [OTHER] 0.47% 8