



## Bridging the gap in Belize

*To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily. Colossians 1:27-29*

Congratulations on choosing a trip to Central America. We are excited that you have chosen the Cayo District, Belize! Your time on the field will be a spiritually, physically and mentally challenging experience that the Lord will use to give you a vision for your part in His global call.

Please take the time to review this packet. It contains information that will be very important for the success of your trip. The more prepared you are, the more you will obtain from the experience.

The most important things to prepare are your heart and mind. Start now by spending time in the Word and in prayer. Be asking the Lord to prepare your heart for new things you will experience.

The **Bridge the Gap Ministries, Belize** team is praying for you and we know that the Lord will provide all your needs as you prepare to come.

In Christ,

*John & Beate Vandermark*  
*Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc.*  
*MILE MARKER 57*  
*BLACKMAN EDDY, CAYO DISTRICT*  
*BELIZE, CENTRAL AMERICA*  
*BTGbelize@gmail.com*  
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## PREPARATION

# BTG Belize

### Spiritual

In your heart, purpose to spend quiet time with the Lord everyday. Be attentive to his voice and his promptings. You are a tool that He will use, sometimes more than you ever imagined. Be prepared to be challenged in your walk with Christ.



### Physical

Belize has an annual mean temperature of 79 degrees Fahrenheit (or 26 degrees Celsius). Dry-season (March-June) high temperatures are often upwards of 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and "local - winter" lows are seldom below 60 degrees Fahrenheit--even at night. Drinking a lot of water will be essential while you are here. The BTG premises are surrounded by the tropical rainforest. Rugged clothing and footwear will be an important part of your packing.

### Mental

Prepare your mind for being away from family and the comforts of home. Take on a mindset of servant-hood toward the Belizean people, your team and the field missionaries. Belize is an English speaking country although most people speak either Creole or Spanish. Belize is culturally diverse with many different people groups among her inhabitants. Unfortunately, a very large percentage of Belizeans are living on or below poverty level, especially in the villages where we are ministering. Prepare your mind for battle!

Begin now to prepare your spirit, body and mind for your journey. Begin to pray, read the God's Word, and get ready for an adventure!

### Cost

Bridge The Gap is a non for profit 501C3. A \$60 donation per person per day ncludes comfortable and safe dormitory-style lodging, AC, hot water and 3 meals a day at our dining facility. A 20% non-refundable deposit is required 90 days before arrival, to secure reservation date(s); the remaining balance and completed team liability forms are due 21 before arrival. BTG will send a receipt to address requested at the end of the year. Payment can be made by check or PayPal account (PayPal service fees may apply). Please see BTG website for details.

**What to pack:**

1. Small Bible & Journal
2. Passport
3. Spending Money (US Dollars) or ATM Card. Spending Money will be used for snacks, Tourism Day, and gifts.
4. Backpack
5. Personal Snacks (trail mix, nuts, drink-mix singles, etc)
6. Sunglasses/Sunscreen & Hat
7. Swim goggles
8. Flashlight
9. Plastic Water Bottle
10. Camera/Film/ (batteries are hard to come by and very expensive)
11. "Personal" Items
  - a. Shampoo & Conditioner
  - b. Soap
  - c. Toothpaste
  - d. Toothbrush
  - e. Personal Medications
  - f. Deodorant
  - g. Stuff for Contact Lenses
  - h. Ear plugs
  - i. Travel sickness medicine
  - j. Tissues
  - k. Band-aids
12. Insect Repellent
13. Towel/Washcloth\*
13. Hand Sanitizer
14. Medium, light jacket for cool spring-time evenings

Optional – Rain jacket if traveling with us October-January.

*\*We are in need of towels and pillows, so don't hesitate to pack ones you would like to leave behind.*

**Clothing:**

A good rule to keep in mind is: ***If it is questionable don't bring it.*** If wardrobe items do not meet BTG guidelines you will be asked to change attire or BTG staff will provide appropriate clothing.

**Women:**

- ✓ Casual lightweight skirts/tops or dresses (below the knee or longer) for church and visitation ministries.
- ✓ Modest split skirts or shorts (at the knee length) and lightweight slacks / jeans may be worn on the BTG main campus and for tourism.
- ✓ Long, heavy jean slacks are required for any jungle exploration, this includes the bush areas on the BTG premises.
- ✓ Modest, one-piece bathing suits or full-coverage tankini-style swimsuits only. Shorts/ swim-skirts are to be worn over swimsuits when traveling.
- ✓ No strapless tops, spaghetti straps, plunging necklines or mid-drifts. Undergarments should be concealed by outer clothing at all times. Any makeup or jewelry worn should be moderate.
- ✓ Comfortable flat walking shoes or supportive sandals are suggested for church, visitation ministries and tourism. Due to the jungle setting work / hiking boots or sturdy sneakers are required when on the BTG premises.

**Men:**

- ✓ Casual dress: lightweight slacks, jeans and T-shirts; collared shirt for church.
- ✓ Long, heavy jean slacks are required for any jungle exploration, this includes the bush areas of the BTG premises
- ✓ Long shorts may be worn on the BTG main campus and for tourism/swimming.
- ✓ Undergarments should be concealed by outer clothing at all times.
- ✓ Comfortable flat walking shoes or supportive sandals are suggested for church, visitation ministries and tourism. Due to the jungle setting work/ hiking boots or sturdy sneakers are required when on the BTG premises.

## General Tips:

1. Pack lightly. Use travel size quantities.
2. Tightly secure any items that may come open while traveling
3. Break in any new shoes before the trip. Blisters = bad moods.
4. Carry one change of clothes and essential personal items with you in your carry-on luggage in case your luggage gets lost.
5. Expensive electronics, jewelry and other showy personal items may be targeted for theft. Consider leaving at home.
6. Teams will need to make a schedule for set-up and clean up at meals.
7. Team Laundry facilities are **not** available. If BTG washers are used cost is \$10/load.

## Conduct:

For years this ministry has taken great care to maintain a godly testimony both on the BTG campus and in the community at large. Christian behavior is highly scrutinized by the nationals and often a one-time or first impression is the only opportunity we may have to make a lasting impact for Christ or otherwise. According to 1 Corinthians 8: 9-13, our lifestyle is not to be a stumbling block for our brothers and sisters in Christ. Therefore we ask that you adhere to the following rules during your short-term stay in Belize:

- No Smoking
- No Alcohol
- No Secular music
- No Recreational drugs
- No Offensive language
- We also ask that you comply with your team leaders and the full-time missionary staff.

We do not expect that any of you will break these rules but it is necessary to state them. In extreme circumstances one may be sent home early **at their own expense** in order to avoid hindrance of the ministry.



## Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc.

Missionary Hosts: John & Beate Vandermark

Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. is a non-profit mission organization. Our home office is in Marlboro, New York and our mission base is in Blackman Eddy, Belize, Central America. All of our finances are from the United States. We are supported by churches and individuals throughout the United States.

**Team Ministry Opportunities:** The workday begins at 8:00 am. Team leaders are encouraged to schedule team devotions accordingly.

- Construction Ministry. Teams must raise all funds for these projects.
- Village ministry. Teams should come prepared to participate in local evangelism.
- BTG educational ministry. Teams may serve as guest speakers/educators in the technical school program.

**Room and Board: \$60/day** Lodging fees must be received at the home office address eight weeks prior to team arrival. Completed release of Liability forms can be emailed or mailed to our home office four weeks prior to team arrival.

7 days - \$420/person

10 days -\$600/person

14 days – \$840/perso

Teams 5 and under will be charged an additional 10\$ a day extra charge ,teams 10 and under is an extra 5\$ a day extra ,this is to help offset the costs.

Electricity and hot/cold running water,AC, are available in both the men's and women's dormitories. Bed sheets, pillows and towels are provided. We also have limited Wi-Fi access throughout the campus.

BTG hospitality coordinator,Beate Vandermark , will arrange meals. Please notify us in advance if there are any food allergies or dietary restrictions. Teams are requested to take care of dining clean up and set up for each meal. (Teams are responsible for their own dining room chore schedule).

Breakfast – 7:00 am

Lunch – 12:00 pm

Supper – 6:00 pm

**Tourism/ Day-trip opportunities:** If your team is interested, there are day-trips available. Some activities can be combined to make a full day of touring—ask for details. Pricing is per person in US dollars.

- San Ignacio Saturday open-air market = \$2.00
- Swimming at the Cal Pech Resort - \$10.00
- Xunantunich Mayan ruins site = \$10.00
- Cal Pech Mayan ruins site = \$10.00
- St. Herman's Cave & Blue Hole (rainforest excursion) = \$10.00
- Belize Zoo = \$30.00
- Cave tubing = \$80.00
- Canoe Cave tour = \$80.00

If your team would like to eat a meal out, in addition the one included in your weekly lodging fees, the team will be responsible for additional costs. Do not include the tourism or day-trip activity fees with your advance team lodgings payment. Bring the cash amount with you to Belize to be paid once you arrive. Also, some airlines do not include the departure tax from Belize. When you make your flight reservations, please find out if it is included. If it is not, you will need to have cash (US dollars) to cover that tax when you check in for your departure at the Belize airport.

### **Additional information:**

Please ensure that you have completed the enclosed forms on pages 8-10 and have provided current medical information, especially information regarding food allergies. Updated tetanus and Hepatitis-A immunization are strongly advised.

If there are any changes with your team members, please notify us as soon as possible.

**Checkout our website for FAQ's**

**PLEASE do not hesitate to contact us with any questions!**

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BELMOPAN, CAYO DISTRICT  
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## BTG Release of Liability and Assumption of Risk Agreement

This is a release. Read it carefully before signing. This release essentially states that I know that I am going on a trip to a foreign country. If any sickness, injury, death, or loss/damage of belongings occurs, I understand that I cannot make a claim, sue, or expect Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. or anyone ministering with or supporting its ministries to be legally responsible or pay for any damages.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF RISKS:** I, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that I have voluntarily chosen to go to Belize to minister with Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc.. Ministry. Certain risks for injury, sickness, and loss/damage of personal belongings are possible in any ministry in a foreign country and cannot be eliminated, altered, or controlled.

My participation in this ministry is purely voluntary and I elect to do so at my own risk.

**Release:** In consideration for Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. allowing me to participate on this trip, I voluntarily agree to release, discharge, and hold harmless Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. and for any and all claims of liability arising out of their negligence, fault, recklessness, or any other act or omission which causes the undersigned illness, injury, disease, death, and damages of any nature in any way connected with my participation in this missions trip. I also expressly agree to release and discharge Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. from any act of omission of negligence in rendering or failing to render any type of rescue or medical services. In signing this document, I fully recognize and understand that if I (or any minor of whose behalf I am signing this release) am hurt, become sick, die, or my property is damaged, I am giving up my right to make a claim or file a lawsuit against Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. even if they negligently or by some other act of omission cause the injury or damage.

I further agree, to hold harmless, defend, and indemnify, Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. from all defense costs, including attorneys fees incurred in connection with claims for bodily injury, wrongful death, or property damage, sustained by any minor under 18 years of age on whose behalf I am signing, or which I may have caused to spectators or other third parties, whether negligent or not, in the course or my participation in this activity.

As a parent or legal guardian of a participant under 18 years of age, I have read and voluntarily agree that said minor may participate in this mission trip, and I sign this release on their behalf and on the behalf of the minor's parents and/or legal guardians. In addition, I give Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. permission to treat said minor in cause of illness, injury, emergency, or accident. Should emergency medical services become necessary, for the undersigned participant or minor, the expenses are the sole responsibility of the participant and not that of Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc..





I hereby agree to follow all rules, regulations, and the instructions of Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. while on this trip. I also certify that I and any minor on whose behalf I am signing, are physically and mentally capable of participating in these activities. I hereby represent that I have informed Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. of any pertinent medical conditions that may affect my or the minors participation in these ministry activities. I hereby agree that Bridge the Gap Ministries, Inc. may use film, voice, or photographic records of this mission trip for its promotional purposes.

I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT IN ITS ENTIRETY. I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM ASSUMING ALL THE RISKS INHERENT IN THIS MISSIONS TRIP. I UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS A RELEASE OF ANY AND ALL CLAIMS. I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS IS THE ENTIRE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNDERSIGNED AND BRIDGE THE GAP MINISTRIES, INC., AND THAT IT CANNOT BE MODIFIED OR CHANGED IN ANY WAY BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OR STATEMENTS BY BRIDGE THE GAP MINISTRIES, INC., OR BY THE UNDERSIGNED. I VOLUNTARILY SIGN MY NAME AS EVIDENCE OF MY ACCPETANCE OF ALL THE PROVISIONS IN THIS REALEASE AND MY AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND BY THEM.

ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST FILL OUT THIS ENIRE FORM.

All Trip Leaders with children 17 years and under must have a form signed by the minors' parent prior to participating in this mission trip. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY. Thank You!

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Trip \_\_\_\_\_

Church/Group Name  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
If under 18, Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



Participant's Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Information:**

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

**Medical Information:**

Please describe your general health:

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any physical condition which might affect your safety or health on the trip?

Yes  No

If yes, please explain:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any food allergies or dietary restrictions.

\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any medications you are presently taking (including regularly taken over-the-counter medication):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please note any history of serious illness (diabetes, epilepsy, or heart condition), previous injuries, or allergies (hay fever, bee stings, medications,)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry Medical Insurance? Yes  No

If so, Insurance Company or Provider:

\_\_\_\_\_

Policy Number

\_\_\_\_\_