

# 2023 Nicaragua Info for our Cornerstone Mission Team

## Basics:

We will be traveling to Somotillo, Nicaragua for a week long mission trip with Because We Care Ministries ([www.bwcm.org](http://www.bwcm.org)) from June 17-24, 2023. They have a great video on their homepage showing some of the sights and sounds in Nicaragua.

## First Steps:

- Please let Mike or Larry know as soon as possible if you know you are going (or if you have decided you are not going).
- Begin saving and raising funds. First deposit of \$750 is due by **March** 15th. You will also need to turn in the BWCM forms at this time too (they are attached to this packet). This payment will need to be made to Cornerstone Community Church (your name and mission trip in the memo line of the check). If you are struggling with raising funds, We have some ideas that can help. Please let us know if this is a need. Final deposit will be due May 7th. The amount of the final deposit will depend on the cost of the airline tickets, how many people go, and how much we fundraise. It could be between \$0 - \$800, depending on all these factors.
- Social Media Sharing and Fundraising - We ask that you if you use GoFundMe or YouCaring to raise funds, please specify what you will do with the money raised if you don't go. People can also donate directly to your trip through our online giving option at Cornerstone. Just make sure that they choose the category of mission trip support and message the church to let us know who the donation is for.
- If you don't have your passport yet, you will need to get it as soon as possible. It typically takes 4 to 6 weeks to get your passport. Also, if you have a passport make sure it is current and has not expired (Please ensure that it is good for at least 90 days after the end of the trip)
- Start collecting supplies for the trip. We can use coloring books and crayons, hot wheel cars, toys, t-shirts, hats, hair bows, kid's bracelets, flip flops (children's sizes and small adult sizes), nail polish, deflated soccer balls, ball pumps, and small stuffed animals and dolls. We are also collecting school supplies for the school that Because We Care Ministries has started supporting. We need dry-erase markers, pencils, paper, and crayons.

## Background

We have sent numerous teams from Cornerstone to Nicaragua over the past 15 years and this is a great opportunity to truly make a difference for the Kingdom. We will be doing pastor training, medical and food ministry, and children's ministry in the schools and the villages. We

will fly out of Charlotte, Roanoke, Raleigh, Washington, or Greensboro (depending on who has the cheapest flight) into Managua, Nicaragua, and then travel about three and a half hours by bus to Somotillo, Nicaragua. We will stay at Casa de Shelly, our mission house for the week.

While we have not had any severe problems in the past, please know that we will be staying in a remote part of the country without access to modern hospitals. The country has also undergone recent protests against the government. We will be riding in the back of pickups and large dump trucks, and we may do some manual labor around the mission house and in local communities. The climate in this area is extremely hot, and you must stay hydrated and rested to stay healthy. We have access each morning to filtered water that is safe to drink and wonderful meals prepared by the staff at the mission house. If you have any medical conditions that might prevent you from this type of work or this climate, please talk to Mike or someone else that has been on the trip

## **What We Expect from you**

### **Flexibility**

As with any mission trip, expect many surprises and changes of plans. Flexibility is key as we make the best use of our time during the week. You will be stretched physically, mentally, and spiritually throughout the week. We typically don't know what we will be doing day to day, and weather and/or other things outside our control may change our plans suddenly.

### **Being Prepared**

Preparing before the trip is important. Preparing yourself physically, mentally, and spiritually is important. Each person will have an opportunity to share your personal testimony with others. If you have not shared your testimony or if you are unsure about how to share the Gospel, we will help you with this during our planning meetings. We will also be working through a mission trip journal during the week. We will have translators but learning some basic Spanish words will enhance your experience. One of the best ways to prepare is to start praying now that God will use our team for His Glory. The free app Duolingo is a great way to learn basic Spanish.

### **Fundraising**

Each person is responsible for raising their own funds. There is some money applied to the trip for each Cornerstone attendee from our mission fund at Cornerstone. That amount will be determined as we see how many people are going on the trip. Please consider sending out fundraising letters to family, friends, coworkers, or people in the church with whom you have connections. Make your letter personal. Include your excitement about the trip and personal feelings about why you want to be a part of this mission team.

Other fundraisers really depend on the group. These opportunities will need to be organized by the team. In the past, we have had group fund-raisers to help offset the cost of the trip for everyone or for extra money for our team to have for medical missions or to help someone on the team that is having trouble raising funds. If you have ideas that can be done as a group, please let us know. Also, in the past, we have held lunch fundraisers after church. If we do this, I will need team members to step up and help organize the fund-raisers.

If you need to make payments or if you can pay more to help others, please let us know. We have had former mission team members provide partial scholarships to help pay for the trip.

## A Typical Day

- Wake up early
- Eat Breakfast
- Share Testimonies at the Local Radio Station
- Morning projects including Pastor Training/Food Preparation/Construction Ministry/Farm Ministry
- Lunch
- Travel to remote villages to share Christ, feed hot meals, and provide medical care
- Supper back at the Mission House
- Evening Devotions and Share Time

## Packing Info

We ask that you pack all your clothes for the week in a single carryon bag. This allows us to use our checked baggage to take ministry supplies. Here's a description of what you can pack

**Carryon Suitcase** - Your carryon suitcase must be no larger than 9 inches x 14 inches x 22 inches. This will be used for all your clothes, snacks, and personal supplies. The TSA limits you on liquids that you can carry on a plane. All your liquids must fit in a single quart size zip-lock bag and must be less than 3.4 ozs per item. Details are at <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/liquids-rule>. Remember that we will only be gone for a week. No need for industrial size shampoo or conditioner bottles. You may want to pack swimwear, we may have an opportunity to use the pool at the Hotel on Friday afternoon/evening depending on our flight schedule.

**Personal Bag** - On the flight, you can also bring one additional personal bag. It must be small enough to stow under the seat in front of you. Most people will bring a small backpack

with them. This is usually where you will pack books, snacks, and other small items that won't fit in the carryon suitcase.

**Checked Bag** - Each person is allowed one 50-lb. checked bag. The church has numerous duffle bags that we will use for this. We will use these to pack ministry supplies, school supplies, clothing to giveaway, Bibles, and anything else we need to transport for BWCM. If you have larger liquid containers or if you have something that cannot be carried on in your baggage (i.e. a pocketknife or multitool), then please place it in a bag with your name and pack it with our ministry supplies. All liquids will need to be sealed in a leakproof bag. We have had several spills over the years from shampoo, bug spray, etc. All aerosol cans must also be checked.

**Protect Your Passport** - First, make sure you have signed your passport. You will need to always keep your passport with you. When we are traveling to and from villages, we may be required to show our passports to the local authorities. There are several types of passport holders available. Some are worn around your neck and some are belts. Whatever you use, make sure that your passport is secure and discrete. If you use a pocket, make sure that it will not fall out. I have used a running belt that is made for my iPhone and it works great (a large SPIBelt from Amazon)

**Money** - You will need some money to take with you, but not a lot. Everywhere will accept American dollars, so you won't need to convert currency when we get there. Once we arrive, BWCM will provide all meals and hotel costs for us. Here is what you will need money for

- a \$10 bill to enter the country. You have to pay this at immigration at the airport. It needs to be a \$10 bill in good condition with no tears or no markings on it. (Most places in Nicaragua will not accept money that is wrinkled or torn)
- meals at the airport while traveling
- snacks in Nicaragua - we may stop at a gas station or ice cream stand during the week
- souvenirs - they have a bunch at the airport, and several smaller crafts are available at the mission house. They have great pine needle baskets for around \$30 that are very similar to the sweet grass baskets from Charleston
- BWCM will also pass around an offering plate a couple of times during the week. He does take up a special offering at the end of the week for the staff at Casa de Shelley.
- Also, please bring \$20 for our meal on Friday night. If possible, we will eat at a Nicaraguan restaurant
- Typically \$100 would be enough. Make sure to bring mostly smaller bills, mostly 1's, 5's, and 10's.

**Have Your Testimony Prepared** - What is your testimony? It is how Christ has changed your life. Think about it in three parts. Your life before Christ, how you put your faith in Christ as your Lord and Savior, and the difference it has made in your life. We will talk about this in our group, but you need to be confident in your faith as we get opportunities to share on the radio and in the villages.

**Don't Drink the Water!** - Unless we tell you it is safe. At the hotel in Managua, only drink water from a bottle. Don't even brush your teeth with the water from the sink. Everyone will have a bottle of water in their room that they can use for brushing their teeth. At the mission house in Somotillo, the water has been filtered in our room area, so it is safe to drink. Do not under any circumstances drink water from any of the villages. Most of their wells are very shallow and have many parasites and are contaminated with sewage as well.

**Drink a Lot of Water!** - It's not unusual for the temperature to be 90 degrees at night and 105 degrees during the day. You will need to drink several quarts a day to stay hydrated. Please bring two water bottles with you. The nalgene-type wide mouth bottles work well, but make sure that the lid or cap you drink from is covered. Flies can transmit disease and could land on flip-top lids. We will put them in the freezer each night so they will be cold for the next morning. If we are working outside, take plenty of breaks and drink more than you think you need. Over the years, we have had many people who are accustomed to hard work outside struggle with the heat. Heat stroke is a very real possibility and it can happen very quickly. You will get sick if you don't drink enough water. Start hydrating before the trip so you are accustomed to drinking water. If you are not "peeing" you are not drinking enough! We will keep a close eye on everyone but drinking plenty of water is non-negotiable.

**Always Wear Shoes** - you can wear flip-flops around the mission house, but any time we go out you must wear closed shoes. There are no exceptions for this. We also recommend bringing a cheap pair of flip-flops to use in the shower. Several types of parasites can be picked up from walking barefoot, so this just another way we try to keep you safe.

**Electronics** - We will have limited opportunities to call back home. You may have wifi access at the hotel in Managua. We will also have a few cell phones that can be used to call home while in Somotillo. You probably won't be able to call every day, so let your families know in advance. If you take a phone for photos, it is best to place it in airplane mode while in Nicaragua to avoid roaming fees. Use the trip as a time to unplug from technology so you can experience everything God has in store for you.

**Use Bug Spray and Sunscreen** - We are not here to get a tan. You are much closer to the equator and you will burn much faster than at home. Please remind each other to use

sunscreen. You will need bug spray as well, especially during the evenings. Mosquitos and flies can be bad at times.

**Wear Appropriate Clothes** - What is appropriate and normal in our culture is not always appropriate for the mission field. Think long and loose. No tight fitting clothes please. You will have a farmer's tan by the time we are done for the week. Shorts need to be long. No "short-shorts" and even most running shorts would be unacceptable. If you have to ask if it is too short, then it is. Also, no tank-tops, sleeveless shirts, or spaghetti strap type tops. We are to set an example, and we want to do everything we can to keep the attention off of us and on Christ. For church on Sunday night, you will need to wear church clothes. long pants and a golf shirt for guys and skirts or dresses for the ladies are appropriate. These are rules that have been set by the ministry, and we want to honor them and help them instead of being a hindrance.

**Keep Your Hands Clean** - Use hand sanitizer throughout the day, and do not put your fingers in your mouth! If you are a nail-biter, you will need to stop before the trip. This is one of the biggest reasons people get sick on mission trips. Be careful to prevent germs by washing your hands and watching what you touch.

**Protect Your Stomach** - Only Eat What We Provide or What You Bring. It's fine to eat anything from a restaurant or anything that Mama Maria prepares for our meals. But don't pick any fruit off trees to eat unless we tell you it is safe. And do not eat any food that is offered to you in the villages. If you are a picky eater, we recommend that you bring protein bars or other healthy high calorie snacks.

**Communicate!** - Please let us know if you start feeling sick or start having any stomach problems. Also, please tell us if you are struggling with the heat. We've been here many times and we know how to get you help and relief.

**Take Time to Pray and Journal** - You will receive a mission trip journal for the trip. Use it each day to record your thoughts and prayers. Believe us, you will forget details if you don't write them down. Also, don't underestimate the Spiritual Warfare you will experience on the mission field. We are in a battle that requires prayer.

**Get Plenty of Rest** - You might be tempted to stay up late. Don't do it. You will need plenty of rest. We wake up early and have full days of working and playing outside in the heat.

**Be Flexible** - In other words, don't ask what we are going to do every 15 minutes. You will find out as soon as we know the plan for the day. The work we do each day will depend on

what the Holy Spirit leads us to do, what the local pastors need for the day, and the weather for the day. Often plans will change at the last minute. Be flexible and be cheerful.

**Be Ready** - You never know when you will be asked to share, help, or give your testimony. In other words, do what we ask! You will be blessed if you do.

### **How to Start Preparing**

As a group, we need to prepare a Lesson for the Village

Collect Supplies

Start Packing

Work on Your Testimony

Memorize the Romans Road (Romans 3:23, 6:23, 5:8, 10:9-10, 10:13)

Drink Plenty of Water in advance

### **Here is a sample fund raising letter (you can use this as a template, but please personalize this!)**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I will be going on a Missions trip with Because We Care Ministries along with about 15 others from Cornerstone Community Church. Our team will be traveling to the country of Nicaragua from June 17th to June 24th, 2023. While we are there we will be ministering to the people of northern Nicaragua. Each morning we will be doing construction work and farm ministry, and each evening we will travel to remote villages to help with food, medical needs, and spiritual needs. We will also be helping the missionaries in any way that we are needed. Through this, we hope to share the love of Christ with many people.

As you can imagine a trip like this takes money. I am looking for 20 people to sponsor me for \$\_\_\_\_\_ toward this once in a lifetime experience. I realize that this amount may not be possible, so any amount that you might be able to give would be greatly appreciated. If you are sending a check, please make it out to Cornerstone Community Church and put my name in the memo field. I believe that with prayer and God's help my financial need will be met. Please pray for me as I prepare for this mission and while we are there. Pray that people will see the love of Jesus through us and will be touched in some way. My prayer is that this trip proves to be life changing for the people of Nicaragua even more than for myself.

Thank you for letting me share with you what will be one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. If you cannot help in a financial way, please help support me with your prayers.

In His service, Your name

**BECAUSE WE CARE  
MINISTRIES, INC.**  
PO BOX 14132  
ROANOKE, VA 24038

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY USING  
ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.  
NO SMALL PRINT PLEASE.**

## Passport Information Release Form

Gender Date Of Your Mission  
 Male Trip  
 Female \_\_\_\_\_

<b>First Name</b>	As it appears on your passport.
<b>Middle Name</b>	
<b>Last Name</b>	

<b>Passport Number</b>	
<b>Issue Date</b>	
<b>Expiration Date</b>	

<b>Date Of Birth</b>	DAY — Month — Year
<b>Phone #</b>	
<b>Email</b>	

<b>Emergency Contact Person</b>	
<b>Phone #</b>	
<b>Your Relation To Them</b>	

**DRESS CODE & HYDRATION**

- I have read and will abide by the guidelines set forth by BWCM for appropriate dress and will welcome any correction if my choices are not acceptable.
- I have read and will do my best to begin proper hydration before & during the mission.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**This consent form gives permission to seek whatever medical attention is deemed necessary, and releases Because We Care Ministries, Inc., of any liability against personal losses.**

**I understand that there are inherent risks involved in any ministry and hereby release Because We Care Ministries, Inc., from any and all liability for any injury, loss, or damage to person or property that may occur during the course of my involvement during the Term. In the event that I am injured and require the attention of a doctor, I agree to hold such person free and harmless of any claims, demands, or suits for damages arising from the giving of such consent. I acknowledge that I will be ultimately responsible for the cost of any medical care should the cost of that medical care not be reimbursed by the health insurance provider.**

Participant or Parent/Guardian  
(if under age 18)

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**BECAUSE WE CARE MINISTRIES, INC.**  
PO BOX 14132  
ROANOKE, VA 24038

<b>INFORMATION</b>
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**Emergency Numbers to reach the team in Nicaragua**

Pam Gillette Cell: 001-505-580-9183

**WHAT TO BRING LIST**

<input type="checkbox"/> Passport	<input type="checkbox"/> Bible — Journal—Pen
<input type="checkbox"/> \$10 Bill - to get into the country. Clean, unmarked with <u>NO Tears</u> around the edges.	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 Water Bottles — 32 oz. Must have crew top lid.
<input type="checkbox"/> Hand Sanitizer x2 - small bottle to carry with you and a refill bottle.	<input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight jacket or sweatshirt for use on the airplane.
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen	<input type="checkbox"/> Sweat Towel or Bandanna.
<input type="checkbox"/> Insect Repellant. EpiPen if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Hat
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed toed shoes must be worn at all times outside the Casa De Shelly.	<input type="checkbox"/> Sandals, crocks or flip-flops are fine at the Casa.

**APPROPRIATE CHURCH ATTIRE**

<b>Men:</b> Long Pants Please! Khaki's or Jeans are fine with a collared shirt. Sandals are fine to wear to church.	<b>Women:</b> Lightweight dress or skirt - Modest length please. Sandals are fine to wear to church.
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You DO NOT need an adapter for your curling iron or hair dryer.  
Bed linens, pillow, towel and washcloth are provided at the Casa.  
There is NO WIFI at the Casa.  
You'll have access to wash clothes—Authentically! Hand washing. Dry Lines provided.

**\*\*\*Attention\*\*\*Very Important\*\*\***

**Please read the attached documents concerning  
DRESS CODE & HYDRATION.**

With integrity sign the BWCM Release waiver stating that you've read, understand and to the best of your ability plan to follow.

## BECAUSE WE CARE MINISTRIES, INC.

PO BOX 14132  
ROANOKE, VA 24038

Most all of the sickness we deal with in Nicaragua is from teams coming from the U.S. with **Hydration issues**. Please read carefully and sign the BWCM Release form stating that you understand will do your best to follow these simple steps towards appropriate Nicaragua Health.

**Studies indicate that the average American walks around on a daily basis in a mild state of dehydration. Regularly!**

**Did you know that the human body is composed of 60% life-giving water?**

Brain and heart	73% WATER
Lungs	83% WATER
Muscles & Kidneys	79% WATER
Skin	64% WATER
Even our Bones	31% WATER

### Doctors recommendation for adults:

— Males 3 Liters per day.

— Females 2 Liters per day.

**That's approximations** as height, weight and age will vary. This is **PER DAY in your normal USA rhythm of life.**



1 Liter is basically  
1 Nalgene Water Bottle.  
Which is approx.  
32 fl oz of water.

## HYDRATION

### **With that being said...**

traveling to the **HOT and DRY**  
climate of Nicaragua  
(close to the equator)  
you WONT BE in your normal  
U.S.A. Rhythm of life!



Therefore, it is **vital** that you begin to increase your water consumption **WEEKS before** your travel to Nicaragua. Give your body time to HYDRATE.

Lay off the sodas and sugary drinks. Many of which have the adverse effect upon the body and actually act as a diuretic — thus, causing you to loose the much needed water from within.

Plan to bring something that can be added to your water to make it more palatable for you. There are many options to choose from that are not filled with sugar.

Please plan to bring 2 Screw Cap bottles with you that are clearly marked. One can be in the freezer and one can be on your person — thus allowing you something cold to drink.

One of the best indicators of good WATER infused Hydration is clear urine. Darker than normal urine output is a sign of dehydration. Along with lightheadedness, dizziness, headache, fatigue and sleepiness.

**So... Hydrate...  
you'll be healthier because of it!**

**BECAUSE WE CARE MINISTRIES, INC.**  
PO BOX 14132  
ROANOKE, VA 24038

**DRESS CODE**

**Please read & with integrity sign the BWCM Release waiver.**

As vast as the miles between you and Nicaragua are, so it is with everyone's personal definition of modesty. Therefore, to help your packing process as well as to avoid awkward conversations *we've made it real simple.*

**Please wear T-Shirts, with sleeves — everyday!** Accept for Church Attire — see Information sheet for specific details on Church attire.

No low cut v-neck shirts, tank tops, spaghetti string or shirts without sleeves.

No exceptions. Collared shirts are certainly welcome but not necessary. Please don't bring shirts promoting alcohol, tobacco, or with obscene words or gestures.

Shorts should be worn at arms length. Please be aware that we are climbing in and out of a truck bed. Females: If your shorts are loose around your leg please wear something equivalent to a volleyball style spandex under your shorts. If you plan to wear yoga pants/leggings, please make sure your T-Shirt is long enough to cover your backside.

**Basic Options: (It's very simple)**

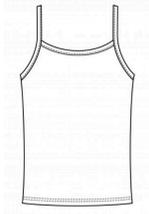


**T-Shirt.**

Yes, a *slight* V-Neck is acceptable.

**However,** be careful to maintain modesty with all of your shirt choices.

**Poor Options: (Not acceptable)**



Packing light and little is certainly doable. Many are able to come with only a small backpack and roller style carry-on. Feel free to bring T-Shirts that you wish to wear and leave in Nicaragua. We will wash them and give them away in our distribution ministry.

**Thank you so very much** for helping us stay appropriate with our dress as we share the gospel within our culture here in Nicaragua.

Cotton shirts are less desirable as they hold moisture and do not dry quick.

Dry-wick material is ideal but not necessary. Please do not bring your best clothing when coming to serve in Nicaragua. You will get dirty and hot and so will your clothes.