



International **TRIP GUIDE**



Mission Trip Guide

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Important: You will need this address and phone number for the online customs form:

Dominican Republic ONLY:

Calle 13 #21
Urb. Vista Bella
Villa Mella, Santo Domingo
(809)569-1239

El Salvador ONLY:

Hotel information will be provided to trip leader

Other Important Information

Please copy the address above and the numbers below on a small card to carry with you at all times to ensure good coordination and communication in all events. These numbers may also be given to family members to reach you in case of emergency.

- Russell Jerez:
rjerez@stchm.org
829-917-2660
- Joanna Berry:
jberry@stchm.org
361-290-6733
(please text; calls will be returned, if needed)
- Mark Lozuk:
mlozuk@stchm.org
361-944-4413

El Salvador: Tourist fee is \$12.00 per person.

Dear Team Member,

We are so glad that God has led you to join a mission team with us. Since 1952 God has called STCH Ministries to minister to the needs of children and strengthen families. Through a unique process, God has now chosen you to partner with our International ministry to carry this mission beyond our borders. You will work with established local congregations, Christian schools and childcare facilities so that the seeds of your ministry will continue to be nurtured long after the trip is over.

We encourage you to individually listen for God's voice on this trip, as you offer your gifts (your loaves and fishes) to meet the needs of children and families. We go with the Gospel message, but we also go to be the hands and feet of Christ as we personally demonstrate God's love. Be prepared to offer Christ your tired body and maybe a backache or a blister. Be prepared to offer Christ your heart...and know God will fill it up to overflowing. For all of this and more, together we will offer our praise. We will worship Him who is above all names and unites us beyond all barriers of custom, culture or language.

Enclosed you will find information that will help you prepare for this trip. You will also find additional information online at **www.STCHM.org/international**. If you have additional questions please do not hesitate to call us at 361-994-0940.

STCH Ministries International Staff

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Trip Preparation



What to Pack

Because the culture of the Dominican Republic and El Salvador is radically different from that of the United States and we travel to both countries to serve Christ, sometimes we must adjust our behavior for the sake of our testimony in their culture. Be aware that we dress and conduct ourselves in a pretty conservative manner on the mission field and we ask you do so as well.

Packing Checklist

- Travel Documents (Passport or Visa)
- One-week supply of clothing; remember your swim suit (ladies, a one-piece), extra undergarments for frequent showers, work clothes, jeans, **5"** shorts or longer, knee length or longer dresses and sleepwear (**no** spaghetti straps, halter tops or crop tops)



- Church clothes for ministry and evening services: skirts for ladies and long pants and collared shirts for men (no shorts at church)
- Clothing for activities with children: athletic or longer shorts (like basketball shorts) for recreation
- Closed-toe shoes for work projects, good walking shoes for uneven terrain
- Towels, washcloths, soap, deodorant, shampoo, comb or brush and sun protection (i.e. sunscreen lotion, hat, sunglasses) Bible and reading material and writing materials as desired
- Light-weight cover for sleeping: Sheets and pillows are provided.
- Earplugs, iPod/iPad with white noise app for sleeping
- A small flashlight or night light for reading
- Insect repellent
- Hand sanitizer
- Electrolyte Packets

- Any prescription drugs you are taking
- Personal first aid kit (band-aids, aspirin, Pepto-Bismol, etc.)
- Personal snacks
- Water shoes for swimming or wading
- Refillable water bottle provided by STCH Ministries

Carry-on Baggage Recommendations

- Change of clothes
- Toiletries
- Prescription medications
- Electronics or jewelry
- Snacks for flight
- Bible and other reading materials
- This Trip Guide
- Required Documents (and passport)

Please check with your airline for rules on size and weight limitations and extra charges for your luggage, including both checked luggage and carry-ons. We ask that you reserve space for supplies (like crafts, medicine and school supplies) depending on the focus of your mission trip.

Never pack jewelry, cameras and other electronic equipment in your checked bags.

Four Things to Keep in Mind as You Pack

1. Bring clothing you can wear comfortably for long hours in potentially hot weather.
2. Prepare to dress in layers, as some locations get chilly in the evenings.
3. No flashy costume or expensive jewelry.
4. Make sure your clothing will be considered modest among Christians in the culture we are visiting as an indication of our respect and regard to them.

General Information

Food and Water

We drink only bottled water and STCH Ministries will provide bottled water for brushing your teeth. Each participant is also provided with a STCH Ministries water bottle for use at all other times. There are thermoses available to refill these bottles. It is important to drink plenty of water to keep your body hydrated in the warm weather. Safe alternatives to bottled water include drinks made out of boiled water (coffee, tea, soup), as well as canned or bottled carbonated drinks.

STCH Ministries policy is that you take all that you want to eat, but that you eat all that you take. STCH Ministries has also carefully chosen other eating locations that prepare foods safely. However, as a precaution, we recommend that you not eat fresh fruits or vegetables that cannot be peeled. **Do not eat foods purchased from street vendors.**

Illness

In case of illness, or even a mild case of diarrhea, please let us know immediately. We have been through this many times and feel that we can get you back on your feet and enjoying the trip in short order. Be careful of getting too much sun, of getting overheated or of becoming dehydrated. The sun in the tropics is more intense and can do more damage than you might think. Always wear sunscreen, and seek the shade from time to time to avoid overheating. If you have had trouble with this before, be twice as cautious. Take a short rest from time to time and drink plenty of liquids to keep up body fluids. It is a good thing to wear a hat, as too much direct sun exposure can cause illness.

Symptoms of Dehydration

1. Cotton Mouth
2. Extreme thirst
3. Muscles begin to get tired
4. Legs may get cramped
5. You may feel faint

Giving of Money or Goods

It is not beneficial to the ministry to give money or goods without the input of the STCH Ministries staff. Please consult with leadership who know where the greatest needs are and have the experience to facilitate giving in a manner which does not take away from dependence on God. If given through STCH Ministries, tax-deductible receipts can also be given. Again, please consult with staff to determine needs and procedures.

Security Measures

The Dominican Republic and El Salvador have all the problems of a metropolitan area, including crime. **Please observe the following safety measures at all times:**

1. **Never** go off alone, whether in ministry, sightseeing or at lodging accommodations...no exceptions.
2. **Always** communicate with a staff leader before leaving. For your safety and coordination with others we must know where you are at all times.
3. **Keep your room locked and do not leave valuables lying around out in the open**, even in your room or dorm. Keep phones, cameras, purses, wallets, etc. attached to your body at all times when you are out of your room and generally keep them out of sight.
4. **Do not bring expensive jewelry to the field** or even costume jewelry that would attract attention and label us as "rich" Americans.
5. **If you leave the compound**, leave your passport behind in your room.

Bathroom Procedure

Put nothing but human waste in the toilet. This means that all tissue paper, sanitary napkins and anything made out of cloth or paper must be placed in the lined wastebasket that is located beside the toilet. Because of the small size of pipe used in Latin America, failure to do this will result in a clogged sewer line and toilets that do not function at all.

Money Info

Pesos for the DR and Dollars for El Salvador.

Laundering Clothes

Laundry services are not available, except on a limited basis. It is more convenient to bring enough clothes for the entire trip.

Picture Taking

Take all the pictures you want, except of uniformed persons. This is especially important of immigration and customs officials. **Do not take their picture.** Also, those people who are police, military or armed guards do not want their pictures taken.

Help us share photos from your trip and spread the word about mission trips to the Dominican Republic and El Salvador. Our Facebook page can be found at facebook.com/stchm.international. We love getting tagged on social media! Limited Internet service and Wi-Fi is available at IBQ – STCH Ministries Compound and at most resorts and hotels.

Guy-Girl Relationships

Due to cultural customs and to avoid any misunderstandings, please observe the following rules:

1. We encourage you to be friendly with everyone and not with just one particular person. In showing that friendship, it is best to do so in groups and out in the open.
2. We do not allow unmarried couples to go off alone.

Because our focus is ministry we ask that you limit phone communication with others to non-ministry times. We especially request that cell phones not be used when we are involved in ministry events, except for pictures.

Travel Insurance

It is the policy of STCH Ministries that every traveler should verify that they have emergency medical insurance coverage for the Dominican Republic and El Salvador either through their personal insurance policy or their church.

If you do not have this coverage we can refer you to a medical insurance provider. For more information, contact the International office 361.994.0940.

Resources Needed

Many times when churches, families and friends hear that you are going on a mission trip, they will ask how they might be able to help. These are some examples of continuing needs for children, schools and orphanages. For questions about additional needs for the ministries that your mission trip is planning, please contact us.

School Supplies

- Erasers (small)
- Pencils
- Colored pencils
- Markers - wide and medium
- Small individual pencil sharpeners
- Ballpoint pens or extra fine rolling pens
- Foam craft paper
- Glue
- Block letters
- Spanish children books for all ages

Clothes

Boys Sizes 2-12 yrs. old

- T-shirts
- Polo shirts
- Pants/jeans
- Shoes
- Socks & underwear

Girls Sizes 3-12 yrs. old

- Shirts
- Skirts
- Shoes
- Sandals
- Socks & underwear

Medicines

- Children's chewable multivitamins (no gummies)
- Prenatal and adult vitamins
- Children's and adult Tylenol
- Children's and adult Ibuprofen
- Cold and Flu medications (over the counter)
- Antacids
- Skin creams

Culture Shock

Who decides what is normal or weird, friendly or rude, important or without value? Is respect earned or is it dependent on position? What is most important—the task or the relationship? The answers to these questions will depend on the beliefs and values shared by a group of people—their culture.

The Apostle Paul is recognized as the first missionary, after Christ. He must have experienced significant “culture-shock” as he carried the message of God’s love and grace to formerly outcast Gentiles in other countries. His advice? Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other... and don't think you know it all!

For a successful mission trip in terms of relating to persons of another culture, take some time to learn about the history, culture and values of the country you will be visiting. For instance, in the Dominican Republic, did you know that twice in their history they were conquered by the Haitians.

Americans we have all studied our Civil War and have read about the long-lasting scars of prejudice and injustice, so we might have some empathy for the results of the Haitian occupation. We might also be able to admire the way the Dominican church has overcome prejudice through Christ's love. (You will find a brief history of the DR in the next section).

The effects of poverty on the culture are often criticized, sometimes ridiculed, by Americans who rarely have been exposed to the entrenched poverty in which the majority of people live. When the most important goal every day is to find enough food to feed your family, how important is picking up trash? If you did pick it up, where would you put it if there were no trash receptacles, and no regular trash pickup? If existence depended on a job (no unemployment compensation exists), would you mind riding in over-crowded transportation or driving cars that look worse than those in U.S. junkyards?

If home construction loans were inaccessible, would you live in half-finished rooms with dirt floors and build one cement block at a time as you could spare a few pesos? Their ingenuity and their positive attitude while overcoming obstacles, is quite remarkable.

Two values are often misunderstood by Americans. First is the value of time. Americans value efficiency and are task-oriented. “On-time” is no more than five minutes late and the important thing is to accomplish the task. In Latin culture, relationships are the most important thing and the task is best accomplished when all are included, greeted and hugged. “On-time” is a relative term, depending on traffic, weather and other responsibilities (like feeding your family)!

The second value is the concept of respect. Americans believe respect must be earned. In these cultures, respect is often granted due to position—pastor, teacher, doctor, parent or an elderly person. People are often addressed by their title—Pastor, Doctor, Professor, Hermano or Hermana (brother, sister).

Respect also influences how one dresses. When attending church, a concert or a wedding, dressing more formally is considered respectful—that means modest dresses with heels, long pants, knit polo or button-down dress shirt with tie and dress shoes (not flip-flops and tennis shoes)!

The following Christian virtues will go a long way in helping us represent Christ in a different culture:

Honor—Treat people with respect rather than pity; view people as Christ would.

Patience—Time is valued differently; be flexible.

Humility—Realize that you have more to learn than you do to offer; adapt yourself to the leadership of the Christians who are hosting you.

Kindness—Always greet each person with a handshake or a little hug, even if you've met them before.

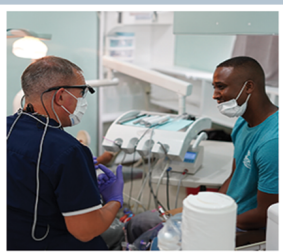
Respect—Avoid comparisons with our American ways. Be sensitive about comments or jokes that may seem critical. Don't just huddle with your own team members. Try to communicate—with hand gestures, learn their name, practice a basic question and smile!

And finally, follow the advice of missionary Paul, “In humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interest, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:3b-4, ESV)



Country Information

Dominican Republic & El Salvador



Overview of the Dominican Republic

WHEN ESTABLISHED	Explored and claimed by Columbus on his first voyage in 1492, the island of Hispaniola became a springboard for Spanish conquest of the Caribbean and the American mainland. In 1697, Spain recognized French dominion over the western third of the island, which became Haiti in 1804. The remainder of the island, by then known as Santo Domingo, sought to gain its own independence in 1821, but was conquered and ruled by the Haitians for 22 years. It finally attained independence as the Dominican Republic in 1844.
LOCATION	Caribbean, eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola, between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, east of Haiti.
CAPITOL	Santo Domingo
POPULATION	10.85 million (2020 estimate)
CLIMATE	Tropical maritime; little seasonal temperature variation; seasonal variation in rainfall. Average temperatures: highs in the mid-to-upper 80's; lows in the upper 60's to low 70's year-round. Average precipitation per year: 54.5 inches Average coolest month: January Average warmest month: July Average wettest month: September
ETHNIC GROUPS	White-16%; Black-11%; Mixed-73%
RELIGIONS	Roman Catholic-95%
LANGUAGES	Spanish
CURRENCY	Dominican Peso
TIME ZONE	UTC/GMT - 4 hours; no daylight saving time (at this moment)

History

The Dominican Republic is a nation on the island of Hispaniola, part of the Greater Antilles archipelago in the Caribbean region. The western third of the island is occupied by the nation of Haiti, making Hispaniola one of two Caribbean islands that are shared by two countries. Both by area and population, the Dominican Republic is the second largest Caribbean nation (after Cuba), with 48,442 square kilometers (18,704 sq. mi.) and an estimated 10.65 million people.

The Taínos

The Arawakan-speaking Taíno moved into Hispaniola, displacing earlier inhabitants, circa A.D. 650. The Taíno called the island Kiskeya or Quisqueya ("mother of the earth"). They engaged in farming and fishing, and hunting and gathering. The estimates of Hispaniola's population in 1492 vary widely, from one hundred thousand to two million. Due to intermarriage over the centuries many Dominicans have Taíno ancestry. Remnants of the Taíno culture include their cave paintings, as well as pottery designs.

The territory of the Dominican Republic was reached by Christopher Columbus in 1492 on the first of his four voyages to the New World. Columbus claimed the island for Spain and named it La Española. In 1496, Bartholomew Columbus, Christopher's brother, built the city of Santo Domingo, Europe's first permanent settlement in the "New World." Christopher was buried in Santo Domingo upon his death in 1506.

Spain ceded the colony to France in 1795, and Haitian blacks, under Toussaint L'Ouverture, conquered it in 1801. In 1808 the people revolted and captured Santo Domingo the next year, setting up the first republic. Spain regained the title to the colony in 1814. In 1821 Spanish rule was overthrown, but in 1822 the colony was re-conquered by the Haitians.

In 1838, Juan Pablo Duarte founded a secret society called La Trinitaria, which sought the complete independence of Santo Domingo without any foreign intervention. On February 27, 1844, the Trinitarios (Trinitarians), declared their independence from Haiti. They were backed by Pedro Santana, a wealthy cattle rancher from El Seibo, who became general of the army of the Nascent Republic. The Dominican Republic's first Constitution was

adopted on November 6, 1844, and was modeled after the United States Constitution. Faced with an economy in shambles, disorder continued. In 1916, the U. S. sent in a contingent of marines who remained until 1924.

A sergeant in the Dominican Army trained by the marines, Rafaél Leonides Trujillo Molina, established a dictatorship that lasted until his assassination in 1961, thirty-one years later. In 1962, Juan Bosch of the Dominican Revolutionary Party became the first democratically elected president in four decades.

In 1996, U.S. educated Leonel Fernandez secured more than 51% of the vote. Since then, the Dominican Republic has moved toward a representative democracy.

Dominican Republic Today



The Dominican Republic has adopted economic liberalism, and has the second largest economy in the Caribbean. Though long known for sugar production, the economy is now dominated by services. The country's economic progress is exemplified by its advanced telecommunication system and modern metro transportation system.

Nevertheless, unemployment, government corruption and inconsistent electric service remain major Dominican problems. The country also has "marked income inequality."

International migration greatly affects the country, as it receives and sends large flows of migrants. (Haitian immigration and the integration of Dominicans of Haitian descent are major issues.) The total population of Haitian origin is estimated to be 800,000. A large Dominican diaspora exists, most of it in the United States, where it comprises 1.5 million. They aid national development as they send billions of dollars to their families, accounting for one tenth of the Dominican GDP.

The Dominican Republic has become the Caribbean's largest tourist destination, with the country's year-round golf courses among the top attractions. In this mountainous land is located the Caribbean's highest mountain, Pico Duarte, as is Lake Enriquillo, the Caribbean's largest lake and lowest elevation. Quisqueya, as Dominicans often call their country, has an average temperature of 26° C (79° F) and great biological diversity.

In Santo Domingo stands, among other firsts in the Americas, the first university, cathedral and castle, the latter two in the Ciudad Colonial area, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Unique Facts



The Dominican Flag: A Unique Symbol

The flag of the Dominican Republic has a large white cross that divides it into four quarters. Two quarters are red and two are blue. Red represents the blood shed by the liberators. Blue expresses God's protection over the nation. The white cross symbolizes the struggle of the liberators to bequeath future generations a free nation. An alternate interpretation is that blue represents the ideals of progress and liberty, whereas white symbolizes peace and unity amongst Dominicans. In the center of the cross is the Dominican coat of arms in the same colors as the national flag. The coat of arms pictures a red, white and blue flag-draped shield with a Bible and cross. The shield is surrounded by an olive branch (on the left) and a palm branch (on the right). A blue ribbon above the shield reads, "Dios, Patria, Libertad" (meaning God, Fatherland, Liberty). A red ribbon under the shield reads, "República Dominicana." Out of all the flags in the world, the depiction of a Bible is unique to the Dominican flag.

Sports

Baseball is by far the most popular sport in the Dominican Republic. The country has a baseball league of six teams. After the United States, the Dominican Republic has the second highest number of Major League Baseball (MLB) players. Some of these players have been regarded among

the best in the game. Ozzie Virgil, Sr. became the first Dominican to play in the league. A few of the others born in the Dominican Republic are: Julian Javier, Pedro Martinez, Manny Ramirez, David Ortiz, Albert Pujols, Juan Marichal and Sammy Sosa.

In boxing, the country has produced scores of world-class fighters and several world champions. Basketball also enjoys a relatively high level of popularity. Al Horford, Felipe Lopez and Francisco Garcia are among the Dominican born players currently or formerly, in the National Basketball Association (NBA). Olympic gold medalist and world champion over 400 m hurdles, Félix Sánchez, hails from the Dominican Republic, as does former defensive end for the San Diego Chargers (NFL), Luis Castillo.

Illegal Haitian Immigration

Haiti is much poorer than the Dominican Republic. In 2003, 80% of all Haitians were poor (54% in abject poverty) and 47.1% were illiterate. The country of ten million people has a fast growing population, but over two-thirds of the labor force lack formal jobs. Haiti's per capita GDP (PPP) was \$1,300 in 2008 or less than one-sixth of the Dominican figure. As a result, hundreds of thousands of Haitians have migrated to the Dominican Republic, with some estimates of 800,000 Haitians in the country, while others put the Haitian-born population as high as one million. They usually work at low-paying and unskilled jobs in building construction, household cleaning and in sugar plantations.

Children of illegal Haitian immigrants are often stateless and denied services, as their parents are denied Dominican nationality because they are deemed to be transient residents due to their illegal or undocumented status and the children, though often eligible for Haitian nationality, are denied it by Haiti because of a lack of proper documents or witnesses. A large number of Haitian women, often arriving with several health problems, cross the border to Dominican soil during their last weeks of pregnancy to obtain much needed medical attention for childbirth, since Dominican public hospitals do not refuse medical services based on nationality or legal status. Statistics from a hospital in Santo Domingo report that over 22% of childbirths are by Haitian mothers.

History of El Salvador

The Republic of El Salvador is the smallest and most densely populated Central American country. It is crossed by two volcanic mountain ranges and has a narrow coastal region. The capital city is San Salvador. It is the oldest and most long-standing capital in Central America. El Salvador is bounded by Honduras to the north and east, by the Pacific Ocean to the south and by Guatemala to the northwest. It is therefore the only Central American country that lacks a Caribbean coast.

The pre-Columbian Maya ruins at Tazumal are the most important archaeology site in El Salvador. The occupation of Tazumal took place around 1200 B.C. The site offers a glimpse into what daily life was like for the Mayan people.

The Spanish arrived in the area in 1524 and subjugated the Pipil Indian kingdom of Cuzcatlán by 1539. When Spanish rule ended in 1821, the Salvadorans opposed incorporation into the Mexican Empire (confronting both Guatemalan and Mexican armies). The country attained independence in 1841.

The History of El Salvador can be divided into 4 eras:

- Pre-Colombian era
- Conquest, colonization and independence era
- Post-independence era
- 20th century era

The mixing of the Pipil and other tribes with European settlers is reflected in the modern-day ethnic composition of the country. El Salvadorans are known for their industriousness and the country has produced several internationally acclaimed artists, including poet Roque Dalton.

Government

From its founding, El Salvador has experienced a high degree of political turmoil; powerful economic interests controlled the country through most of the 19th and early 20th centuries but were replaced by military dictatorships that lasted from 1931 to 1979.

Elections held in 1982 set up a new government and though a new constitution was adopted in 1983, civil war continued throughout the 1980s. Following the United Nations-mediated 1992 peace accords, the country began to recover from years of political and economic turmoil, only to be devastated by Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and by a major earthquake in 2001.

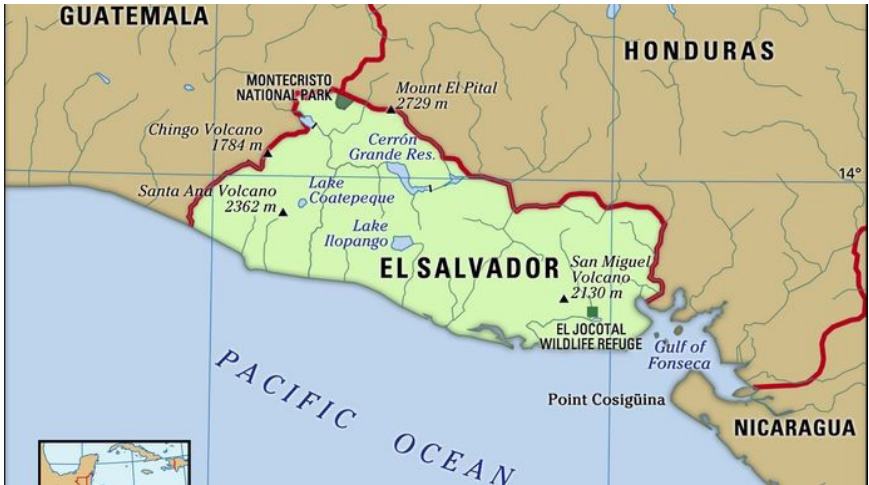
In February 2019, Nayib Bukele, was elected president of El Salvador. The new party, Nuevas Ideas, (New Ideas) was founded by President Bukele and won around two-thirds of votes with its allies. The supermajority enables President Bukele to appoint judges and pass laws, for instance to remove presidential term limits.

In September 2021, El Salvador's Supreme Court decided to allow Bukele to run for a second term in 2024. Although he has declared martial law and suspended due process, President Nayib Bukele has been exceptionally popular among the citizens. According to a report in 2020 by the International Crisis Group (ICG), the homicide rates had dropped by as much as 60 percent since Bukele became president in June 2019.

Economy

El Salvador has a developing economy based on services, trade, manufacturing and agriculture, with coffee, sugarcane and cotton as the major export crops. Coffee cultivated in the western part of El Salvador is famous world round. Commercial fishing, regulated by the government, has added to the country's export earnings. El Salvador is also a large producer and exporter of hammocks. By the end of the 20th century however, the service sector had come to dominate the economy.

Two other factors have played an important role in the Salvadoran economy. Remittances, from an estimated more than one million Salvadorans living in the United States, contribute heavily to the economy. Tourism has also become increasingly important. El Salvador is a surfer's Paradise and gets some of the biggest swells and longest waves offered by the Pacific Ocean. Tourists benefit from a protected status by the government.



Salvadoran Sports, Cuisine and Customs

The national sport of El Salvador is football (known as soccer in the US). Like many other countries, Salvadorans are absolute fans of football. There are local teams and leagues throughout the country. The national professional league, is widely appreciated. In fact, it is so popular that it started a historic event: the Soccer War. There were already lots of tensions between Honduras and El Salvador and the bitterly contested World Cup qualification matches became a valid reason for each country to rise up in arms. The national football team qualified for the FIFA World Cup twice in their history, in 1970 and in 1982.

The traditional food consists of a mix of Native American cuisine from groups such as the Pipil and Mayan peoples. Many of the dishes are made with maize (corn). There is also heavy use of pork and seafood. El Salvador's most notable dish is the pupusa, a thick handmade corn or rice flatbread stuffed with cheese and a wide variety of meats, refried beans and loroco (a native vine flower).

Hammocks are a big part of Salvadoran culture and are often used for afternoon naps. Hammocks swing from doorways, inside living rooms, on porches, in outdoor courtyards and from trees. Between the first and second weekend of November, the "Festival of the Hammocks" is celebrated throughout the country.

El Salvador Flag



The Flag of El Salvador

With so many volcanos in the country, it is no wonder volcanos are represented on the El Salvador flag. The two blue stripes of the flag represent the Atlantic and Pacific oceans which border Central America. The white stripe symbolizes peace. Their motto is Dios, Unión, Libertad ("God, unity, liberty").

Religious Affiliation

About one-half of Salvadorans are Roman Catholics. Since the 1990s Evangelical Protestantism has made inroads, particularly among the poor and by the 2010s more than one-third of Salvadorans were Protestants. There are also smaller groups who practice other faiths.



STCH
MINISTRIES
heal • restore • transform



The STCH Ministries Mission

STCH Ministries has been caring for children and families since 1952. Our mission statement is to:

Honor God
Reach children and families with His love and truth
Enable others to join us in this ministry

STCH Ministries offers Christ-centered assistance through nine branches of our ministry:

- **Homes for Children** enables children to be cared for in a loving family home for as long or as short a time as needed.
- **Homes for Families** is a program for mothers and their children who are living in situations that threaten the stability and safety of the family.
- **Family Counseling** provides Christian-based counseling from Corpus Christi to San Antonio to Houston to the Rio Grand Valley and many locations in between.
- **International** gives opportunities for families, individuals and groups to minister internationally through mission trips and humanitarian aid sponsored by STCH Ministries.
- **Faith & Work** guides people to discover God's purpose for their lives and how to fulfill that purpose through their work.
- **Faith & Finances** teaches families and individuals how to overcome financial obstacles. Using biblical principles, we help people of all ages with the practical issues of money management.
- **Pastor Care** comes alongside pastors to provide a supportive community to help them not feel isolated in their ministry work. We also have ordained ministers on staff who are available for pulpit supply when a pastor just needs a break. Pastor Care is here to serve the ones who are always serving others.
- **Family Support** connects needs with resources. Whenever a family has needs that can be served by one or more of our ministries, Family Support helps them understand what we offer and how to begin. For needs that are beyond the scope of our ministries, we guide families to other services that are available in the community.

- **Ministry Consulting** shares expertise and resources with ministries that are closely aligned with our purpose and values. Sometimes the best way to help a child or family is by helping another organization that is already in a position to meet their needs. Working together, we accomplish more than either one could accomplish alone.

STCH Ministries is an affiliate of Texas Baptists (the Baptist General Convention of Texas).

We do not accept state or federal funds for operation but rely solely on the generosity of individuals, churches, businesses, organizations and foundations. All STCH Ministries services are made available to individuals and families regardless of their ability to pay. Contributions toward services are welcome and appreciated.

International

Our international work is a natural outgrowth of the STCH Ministries mission statement. First, it stretches us beyond our borders to minister to at-risk children and families. Second, it offers additional opportunities to strengthen families through a focus on family mission trips. Families are able to share a hands-on mission experience that will create memories and impact their lives forever.

STCH Ministries International is not a church-planting ministry. We partner with established churches and ministries that help children and families. One of our goals is to ensure that local Christians continue to minister to those reached by our short-term mission efforts.

As an extension of our mission, International will emphasize:

1. Opportunities for mission trips that strengthen families and marriages.
2. Mission opportunities for children in care at STCH Ministries, allowing them to experience ministry with other children beyond their borders.
3. Sponsorship of children through Samuel's Fund and college students through CLEP to help them receive an education and meet specific individual needs.
4. Ministry focus on orphans and at-risk children through loving interactions, as well as providing material resources, opportunities for education and preventive health and dental care.
5. Support for churches in their efforts to reach children and families for Christ through VBS, camps, schools, evangelistic outreach and discipleship classes, with a special emphasis on parenting and marriage issues.
6. Partnerships with Christian schools to enhance their resources and provide training for staff, so that children in their care can become skillful, independent adults prepared to make an impact in their culture for Christ.
7. Completing light construction projects and repair/maintenance to support orphanages and Christian schools.

Funds to help with international projects are greatly appreciated and may be donated online through our website (www.STCHM.org/give), or mailed to:

STCH Ministries International
4438 S. Staples St.
Corpus Christi, Texas 78411

Samuel's Fund

STCH Ministries is reaching beyond our borders to provide needed resources to Dominican and Salvadorean children through Samuel's Fund, a sponsorship program that matches a sponsor with an at-risk child to provide them an opportunity to get an education, to be nurtured spiritually and to have other critical needs met.

Every moment of every day in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and throughout the world, neglected children live and die without the hope of a better life. As of January 1, 2024 for \$40 a month, you can bring hope and help to a child who desperately needs it. The ultimate goal of this project is to provide the resources to help a child, age 4 through high school, develop into an independent young adult who can impact their culture for Christ and become a leader in their church.

Every sponsorship dollar goes directly to meet the needs of the sponsored child.

To sponsor a child, you may select a child from the available children listed on our website (www.STCHM.org/sponsor). You may also contact Victoria Orr at 361-994-0940 to request additional information or let us know your preference of the age and gender of the child you wish to sponsor. STCH Ministries will work to match you with a child that meets your desired specifications, when possible. Rebeca Dinzey, a Dominican school teacher and faithful Christian, serves as our Samuel's Fund Director and administers Samuel's Fund contributions. She also counsels caregivers and tutors and lovingly follows each child's progress.

As a sponsor, you will receive pictures, drawings and/or letters from your sponsored child. A yearly report on your child's progress in their educational, spiritual and physical growth will also be provided. One of the special joys for many sponsors is the opportunity to visit their sponsored child in the Dominican Republic or El Salvador, as part of a mission trip. STCH Ministries will be happy to assist you in making these arrangements.

CLEP Sponsorship Program

STCH Ministries also provides resources to young people in the Dominican Republic eager to continue their college education. We do this through the Christian Leadership and Education Project (CLEP), a sponsorship program that matches sponsors with DR college students. Each CLEP student is required to contribute a minimum of 10 hours a month in ministry to younger Samuel Fund's children as tutors and mentors.

As of January 1, 2024, the cost for a college education in the DR is surprisingly affordable. For \$120 a month, you may become a sponsor for this full amount or become a co-sponsor for \$60 a month. As a CLEP Sponsor, you can help develop independent young adults who can impact their culture for Christ. You may also choose to send one-time contributions of any amount to the CLEP fund to help the many CLEP students who are waiting by faith for the opportunity to get their college degree.

Every sponsorship dollar given goes directly to meet the educational needs of the sponsored student. Rebeca Dinzey, our Samuel's Fund Director in the Dominican Republic also administers all CLEP contributions and follows each student's progress.

How to Give

Sponsorship gifts can be made monthly, quarterly or annually. Contributions toward administrative costs, which make Samuel's Fund and CLEP possible, are also greatly appreciated.

To make your tax-deductible contributions online with a credit card through our website (www.STCHM.org/give) and be sure to designate that your gift is for sponsoring a Samuel's Fund/CLEP student.

Contributions may also be sent to:

STCH Ministries International
4438 S. Staples St.
Corpus Christi, Texas 78411

*Declare his
glory*

AMONG THE NATIONS,

his marvelous deeds

AMONG ALL PEOPLES.

1 CHRONICLES 16:24



Daily Journal

Please take every opportunity to record the ways in which the Lord has communicated with you, on your mission trip.



Journal

Journal

Journal

Journal

Journal

Journal



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