

Team Gathering

Intro

Team Gathering is an essential part of mission trips with Experience Mission! Each day, volunteer teams take time to participate in **worship**, **debrief** the day and week so far, read **scripture**, and process **reflections** together.

EM field staff will lead this time if they are present on your trip. If not, the sessions are designed to be easily led by volunteer team leaders. An ideal outline and schedule are included in this packet, but sessions can be done at whatever times of day make sense for your trip.

Tips for Gathering

EM Team Gatherings are designed as time of reflection and growing together, as we consider what it means to follow Jesus and serve together in this new context. When gathering, we recommend these best practices:

Delegate leadership

Have one person facilitate group debrief questions, another facilitate the discussion (if in a large group), and others lead worship.

Let the group lead the conversation

It can be tempting to try to steer questions in a specific direction, but it's always more meaningful when discussions feel natural and unforced. As a leader, you have the ability to encourage people to keep sharing or shut it down by talking too much. Do what you can to make sure everyone gets a chance to answer and share who would like to.

Leave room for God to work

These outlines are simple. This is meant to leave space for what God is doing in a particular group in a particular place. Instead of speeding through the content or moving on after one answer, create space in your gathering time for everyone to consider their responses and share thoughtfully. This may look like having people journal ahead of time, share answers with the person next to them before large group sharing, or simply allowing for silence a few seconds longer than is comfortable after a question is asked. You never know what God is stirring in the hearts of team members or when people will feel emboldened to share.

Gathering Details

1. Corporate Worship

Ideal: Live musical worship led and organized by mission teams present in the community (Recommended 2-4 songs)

2nd option: Listen to worship music through the EM speaker available *chosen by volunteer teams*. Multiple teams can take turns choosing songs or collaborate on the playlist. (2-4 songs)

3rd option: If there are no musicians present on the team(s) and no desire to choose specific songs they already know, use the *Spotify worship playlist provided by EM* and listen to 2-3 songs each time to start the session.

2. Group Debrief — Follow the debrief questions provided at the beginning of each session (in this document).

3. Scripture Reading — Selected readings, spoken out loud to whole group by EM Field Staff, volunteer Team Leader, or Community Member.

4. Short reflection from EM field staff/team leader — Share a short reflection or story connecting the ideas in this scripture passage to your life and/or your experience serving others (ie. “*What does this passage mean to you? How has it applied to your life that may be helpful for those present to hear?*”)

5. Small Group Reflection / Prayer — End each night break into small groups to discuss the scripture and pray together. (Questions included here!)



Worship —

Volunteer groups are in charge of worship. For groups with no instruments, you can use an audio speaker to play music to sing along. If multiple teams are serving together, you can work together on this time or trade off nights leading.

Group Debrief —

Choose 2 questions from list below, have people write answers and then share with neighbor (ask a few people to share out loud what they talked about):

What surprised you the most today?

What did you learn today? (about this community, these people, each other)

Where did you see or experience God today? (His love, grace, beauty, peace)

How is God moving in your heart toward this community so far?

How is your view of the world being challenged, changed or broadened?

Scripture Reading (Matthew 5:1-16)

Read out loud to whole group by Summer Staff, Team Leader, or Community Member.

Reflection —

Share a short reflection/story (2-5 min.) connecting the ideas in this scripture passage to your life and/or your experience serving others (*ie. "What does this passage mean to you? How has it applied to your life that may be helpful for those present to hear?"*)

Small Group Q's —

Break into small groups (3-5 people) to discuss the scripture and pray together. Questions:

Consider those who Jesus called blessed (in Matthew 5). Where can you see yourself in these blessings? What about the people in this community?

What does it mean to be the "salt of the earth" / "light of the world"? What does it mean for you this week?

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

He said:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
Blessed are those who hunger and
thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are those who are perse-
cuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

MATTHEW 5:1-16 (NIV)



Scripture Reading —

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Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

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MATTHEW 5:1-16 (NIV)

Small Groups —

DISCUSS

Consider those who Jesus called blessed (in Matthew 5). Where can you see yourself in these blessings? What about the people in this community?

What does it mean to be the “salt of the earth” / “light of the world”? What does it mean for you this week?

PRAY TOGETHER

2.

Worship —

Volunteer groups are in charge of worship. For groups with no instruments, you can use an audio speaker to play music to sing along. If multiple teams are serving together, you can work together on this time or trade off nights leading.

Group Debrief —

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Where did you see or experience God today? (His love, grace, beauty, peace)

How is God moving in your heart toward this community so far?

How is your view of the world being challenged, changed or broadened?

Scripture Reading (Romans 12:1-21)

Read out loud to whole group by Summer Staff, Team Leader, or Community Member.

Reflection —

Share a short reflection/story (2-5 min.) connecting the ideas in this scripture passage to your life and/or your experience serving others (*ie. "What does this passage mean to you? How has it applied to your life that may be helpful for those present to hear?"*)

Small Group Q's —

Break into small groups (3-5 people) to discuss the scripture and pray together. Questions:

What does it mean to "offer your bodies (your whole selves) as a living sacrifice"? How does this compare to what you normally think of as "worship"?

Consider what Paul says about each person having different gifts. What gifts do you see present in the members of your team? In this small group? In this community?

As an act of love, how might you "rejoice with those who rejoice" and "mourn with those who mourn" this week?

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

ROMANS 12:1-16 (NIV)

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Small Groups —

DISCUSS

*What does it mean to “offer your bodies (your whole selves) as a living sacrifice”?
How does this compare to what you normally think of as “worship”?*

Consider what Paul says about each person having different gifts. What gifts do you see present in the members of your team? In this small group? In this community?

As an act of love, how might you “rejoice with those who rejoice” and “mourn with those who mourn” this week?

PRAY TOGETHER

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Worship —

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Group Debrief —

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What surprised you the most today?

What did you learn today? (about this community, these people, each other)

Where did you see or experience God today? (His love, grace, beauty, peace)

How is God moving in your heart toward this community so far?

How is your view of the world being challenged, changed or broadened?

Scripture Reading (Galatians 5:13-23)

Read out loud to whole group by Summer Staff, Team Leader, or Community Member.

Reflection —

Share a short reflection/story (2-5 min.) connecting the ideas in this scripture passage to your life and/or your experience serving others (ie. *“What does this passage mean to you? How has it applied to your life that may be helpful for those present to hear?”*)

Small Group Q’s —

Break into small groups (3-5 people) to discuss the scripture and pray together. Questions:

Consider how “the entire law is fulfilled” in keeping the command to “Love your neighbor as yourself”? Who is your neighbor? What does it look like to love them?

Have you ever felt “led by the Spirit” to love and serve others? How might you begin to be open to where the Spirit will lead you during this trip?

We can notice the work of the Spirit in our midst by the “fruit” we see. Where have you seen love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness or self-control so far during this trip?

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

GALATIANS 5:15-23 (NIV)

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Where did you see or experience God today? (His love, grace, beauty, peace)

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Scripture Reading (Colossians 3:12-17)

Read out loud to whole group by Summer Staff, Team Leader, or Community Member.

Reflection —

Share a short reflection/story (2-5 min.) connecting the ideas in this scripture passage to your life and/or your experience serving others (ie. *“What does this passage mean to you? How has it applied to your life that may be helpful for those present to hear?”*)

Small Group Q’s —

Break into small groups (3-5 people) to discuss the scripture and pray together. Questions:

A mission trip is great practice for “clothing yourself” with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. What experiences with these attitudes would you like to remember and bring into your everyday life back home?

In Colossians 3, Paul says two times to “be thankful” and “give thanks to God”. What experiences and relationships are you thankful for this week?

Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-17 (NIV)

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Scripture Reading —

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Scripture Reading (Philippians 2:1-11)

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Reflection —

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Small Group Q’s —

Break into small groups (3-5 people) to discuss the scripture and pray together. Questions:

What does it look like to “have the same love” and “be one in spirit and mind” as followers of Jesus? Where have you seen this at work on this trip and in this community?

Loving others well requires us to be humble and look to the interests of others above our own. Why is this often so hard for us? How can this mission trip experience help us as we head back home into our normal lives?

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place, and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11 (NIV)

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PRAY TOGETHER