



Relieving Disaster, Promoting Community

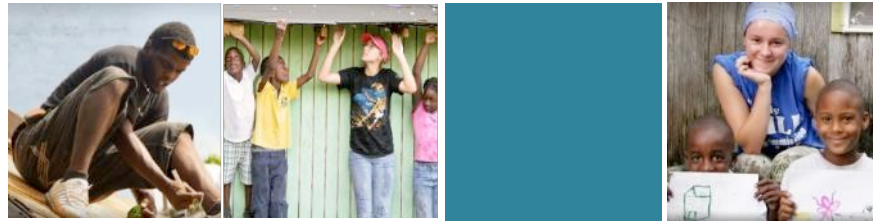
2021-2022

Group Leader Packet

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Group Leader General Information



Contact Info:

Website: www.MethodistHabitat.org

Email: MethodistHabitat@gmail.com

Skype: MethodistHabitat

Bahamas Mailing Address*
Bahamas Methodist Habitat
c/o Sonic Express
2780 SW 3rd Ave
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33315

**Please use this address to mail packages*

Phone:

Director's Line: 1-242-823-6891

Grand Bahama Line: 1-242-823-6893

Abaco Line: 1-242-823-6894

Bahamas Main Office Address:

Bahamas Methodist Habitat - Camp Symonette
Symonette Road
P.O. Box # EL-25803
James' Cistern, Eleuthera, The Bahamas

Grand Bahama Host Address:

New Hope Methodist Church
Sandcombe Rd
P.O. Box F40881
Freeport, Grand Bahama, Bahamas
Church Phone: 242-351-9401

Abaco Host Address:

St. Andrews Methodist Church
Dundas Town
Marsh Harbour, Abaco, The Bahamas

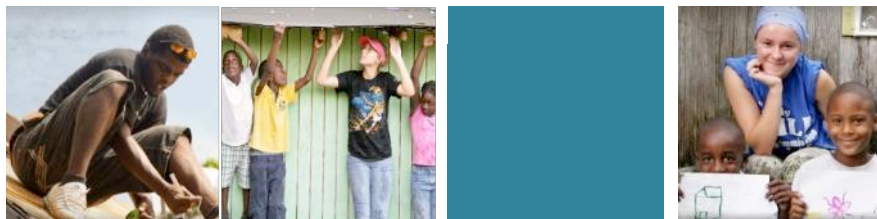
We are a ministry under the umbrella of
The Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church
www.bahamasmethodist.org

Supportive and Partner Organizations

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission
United Methodist Committee on Relief
UMC Global Ministries
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance
Mennonite Disaster Services
Cooperative Baptist Fellowship

Ministry of Social Services, The Bahamas
National Emergency Management Agency
Disaster Reconstruction Authority
Bahamas Red Cross
One Eleuthera Foundation
Civil Society Bahamas

Frequently Asked Questions



Who is the project sponsor? BMH is an Outreach Ministry supported by the **Bahamas Conference of the Methodist Church** and their associated churches along with local and international supporters who care deeply about serving others. BMH is also supported by the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM) and has received UMCOR grants and support.

Who can participate? BMH is designed to host young and old alike. We host service organizations, church youth groups, Sunday school classes, groups of friends, corporate teams, and anyone else that has a passion for service. We are able to accommodate 50 volunteers at one time at Camp Symonette and can host smaller groups, up to 20-30, at other locations throughout the Family Islands. Graduated 8th graders and above are welcome and younger youth need parents or guardians to accompany them on their week of service.

Who supervises participants? Each group participating in BMH is required to have at least one adult for every six youth (17 and under). **When possible, groups should include experienced leaders to aid in the construction projects.** Adult group leaders are directly responsible for their group and must adhere to BMH policies.

How much does it cost? The cost is **\$800 per person per week**. Your travel to the Island and obtaining health visa, travel medical or UMVIM insurance is a separate cost. Those serving on Dorian-affected Islands to consider extra fundraising.

What does BMH provide?

- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and filtered drinking water
- Skilled local Site Leaders
- Excursion Day, to see and experience the beauty of the
- Bahamas Construction prep & sourcing materials/ tools for work
- projects (You may bring your own tools or ones to donate.)
- BMH Mask
- On-Island transportation
- Lodging at local facility & utilities
- The opportunity to serve & grow in God's grace!

What does BMH expect? Volunteers must come with a servant's heart and mind that is flexible to change. God may surprise us with new opportunities to serve and we must be willing to follow that calling. Prepare yourself for conditions that do not include all the comforts of home. Respectfully interact with people who are different from you within your group and the community.

What about Insurance? Due to the nature and location of our ministry, and in case of an unforeseen emergency, we **require** EACH VOLUNTEER to have traveler's medical insurance (suggested through the United Methodist Volunteers in Mission progra.) This policy reimburses for medical treatment and transportation cost while abroad (where most US insurance doesn't work.) Access to cash up to \$500 and credit cards up to \$10,000 may be needed as the Bahamas requires up front payment. Other insurances are accepted as long as they include coverage in the Bahamas and medical evacuation costs.

**You do not have to be a member of the United Methodist Church to obtain UMVIM Insurance.*

When can we Serve? Year-Round. Summer and Spring Break are our busiest seasons but we have wonderful Fall and Winter opportunities which are great ways to beat the cold back home. Work commitments average one week in length. Long weekend or extended period trips are available as well. Volunteer groups arrive **Sunday afternoon** and depart **Saturday morning**. Reserve your dates early to ensure your desired trip.

Do I need to bring tools? No, we provide tools and materials for you while you are here serving. However, if you have tools that you would like to bring, we encourage you to bring them. We are in constant need of new or good used tools and accept donations with open arms. We will be in contact with your group within one week of your arrival to tell you about your projects and a suggested tools list. Past groups have transported them in Rubbermaid containers or an extra suitcase.

Team Leader Timeline

Begin the Reservation process early ... the sooner the better!

- Download "Volunteer Application" from website
- Complete the **Volunteer Application** and email to: **MethodistHabitat@gmail.com**
 - **Send in Non-Refundable Registration Fee with Application of \$500 per team**
 - Your week is not reserved until we receive your registration fee.

3-4 Months Prior to Arrival

- **Send 1st Payment (\$400 per person)**
- **Confirm destination and book travel to and from your destination.**
 - *Send travel info including airlines, flight numbers and times.
- Obtain travel medical insurance /UMVIM insurance for your group based on travel dates plus 1-2 days at the end for unforeseen travel changes. Sports level insurance suggested.
- Travel interruption insurance is strongly recommended as well.
- Schedule team meetings

1 Month Prior to Arrival

- **Email BMH with the following information:**
 - Completed **Volunteer Information Spreadsheet**
 - Available from our website under the Service with Us > Plan Your Trip
- Assess special needs of your group (medical, allergy or otherwise) and inform BMH.
- Fill out the paper Missioner Profiles to submit to the BMH staff.
- Host a BMH Prep meeting with your team to prepare for the trip and collect all necessary forms (See suggested format in this packet)

1 Week Prior to Arrival

- Create a profile on travel.bahamas.gov.bs and upload passport and travel documents
- Arrange for RT-PCR test within 5 days of arrival in Bahamas (test day is day Zero (0))
- Upload test results to travel.bahamas.gov.bs . Submit Health Visa application and pay fee online
- Visa should be processed between one hour to 48 hours after submission,
- Print two copies of Travel Health Visa and one copy of RT-PCR Test Results

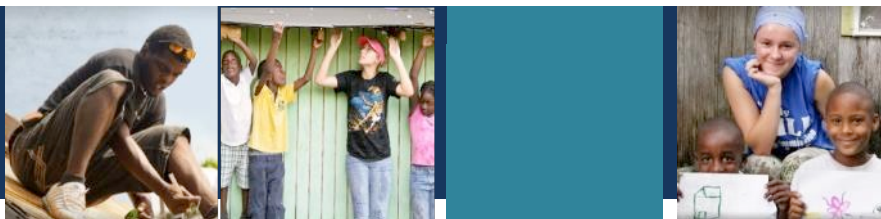
Due On or Before Arrival

- **Pay Final Payment (\$400 per person + any remaining balance)**
 - Please bring the final payment with you or pay online ahead of time. You may mail final payment if it can be postmarked one month prior to arrival.
- ALL team members completed **Missioner Profile and Release of Claim.**
 - Bring a copy with you for BMH
- **Parental Consent Form** for team members under the age of 18.
 - Bring a copy with you for BMH.

Suggestions Before Arrival

- Record prescription and allergy information for all team members.
- Plan devotionals that meet the spiritual needs of your group.
- Review **all items** from the "**Pre-Trip Planning Meeting**" agenda.
 - Help get them in the appropriate mindset for Christian service in the Bahamas.
- Establish a way of communicating updates with folks back home (email chain, church staff.)
- Hold a weigh-in for luggage to make sure team is under the airline weight limit (including Bahamian airline limits if connecting) and remember to save room for sheets and any donated supplies.
- Hold a Commissioning Service for team in local church.

Travel Tips



Important Immigration & Customs Notes

- Check with airlines (both US & Bahamian airlines) for allowed number of bags and weight limits.
- Remember to pack necessities (change of clothes, some toiletries, medications, etc.) in a carry-on bag in case luggage gets delayed or lost in transit.
- When entering the Bahamas and filling out forms or if asked, inform **Bahamas Immigration** that you **are entering on Tourist status** (not Missionary) and will be staying with BMH at:
 - Eleuthera - Camp Symonette, James Cistern, Eleuthera, The Bahamas
 - Grand Bahama - New Hope Methodist, Sandcombe Road, Freeport, Grand Bahama, The Bahamas,
 - Abaco - St. Andrews Methodist, Dundastown, Abaco, The Bahamas
 - Nassau - various sites (check your specific email confirmation) Nassau, New Providence, The Bahamas
- Make a Team Leader binder/folder with copies of the Parental Consent, your health forms, insurance cards, copy of passport. Put the copies in a plastic sheet protector for each participant. It is a good idea to scan all documents onto a CD and have a back-up copy.
- Be sure that you have a health form with each participant's medication listed, allergies, and immunization records with you & copies of each person's health insurance registration

Share Space

The following items may be carried in bulk for use by the whole team, instead of each team member bringing his/her own. Some teams check only the bag with these items to save on baggage fees.

- Basic First Aid Supplies (Band-Aids, antibiotic ointment, anti-itch ointment, Benadryl, etc.)
- Sunscreen and Insect Repellent (Deet repel mosquitoes, Skin-So-Soft & Baby Oil repel sand fleas)
- Towels, Linens, or heavy items

Tools and Donated Goods

We are always in need of tools and other supplies. If you would like to help us by bringing donated supplies in your bag please see the **Needs List** (p. 12) or look for our Amazon Wish Lists online (linked from our website). If you have personal tools you would like to bring and use you are welcome to do that. If you have a specialty skill (mechanic, plumber, electrician, etc.) please bring those tools with you.

Airports:

Additional Travel Tips with links to airlines that come to the islands are updated on our website under Serve With Us > Travel Arrangements. Because direct flight prices can fluctuate a lot, we suggest checking multiple times and always comparing rates.

Before booking final arrangements, email MethodistHabitat@gmail.com to confirm plans.

ELEUTHERA (2022): First choice is Governor's Harbour Airport (GHB) Second Choice is North Eleuthera (ELH). Direct flights are recommended where affordable while COVID-19 restrictions apply to domestic connections.

GRAND BAHAMA: Freeport (FPO) has direct flights from Florida (recommended) or you can connect thru Nassau.

ABACO: Marsh Harbour (MHH) is the airport to use. There are direct flights although more options will be available connecting through Nassau (NAS.) Direct flights are recommended where possible to avoid complications with domestic travel protocols in the Bahamas.

What to Expect: Daily Schedule, Group Chores and Conservation Guidelines



Daily Schedule

SUNDAY – BMH staff will meet you at the airport wearing a BMH T-shirt. You can't miss them! You will head back to our facility and get settled-in. There will be an Orientation after dinner at 5:00pm. The rest of the evening will be relaxed with group mixers, group devotions (led by your own group) and early lights out to get rest for the Big Week.

MONDAY–THURSDAY: Daily Work Schedule

6:30 am	Wake Up
7:00 am	Breakfast Bell / Morning Devotion
7:10 am	Breakfast & Make Lunches
8:00 am	Leave for Work Site
Noon	Eat lunch at site
4:00 pm	Leave Work Site for Beach
5:30 pm	Showers
6:30 pm	Dinner
7:30 pm	Evening Activity/Free Time Group
9:00pm	Devotions
10:00 pm	Quiet Time
10:30 pm	Lights Out

***Evening Activities options** – Each week there are different options and opportunities for evening activities. They can include Worship and Bible Study at local church, Bahamas Trivia Contest, local music, devotions & worship, informal games, etc. Dorian islands may have different activities with Abaco being most limited.

***Group Devotions**–We offer to provide the opening and closing devotions (Sunday & Friday nights. The rest of the week there is an opportunity to meet with your teams for your own evening devotions or worship. You may want to assign devotion leaders before arrival.

***Worksites** - Many variables will affect your project assignment, including the size and skills of your team, the speed of the teams that come before you, hurricanes, and other unforeseen disasters or blessings. We will likely not be able to assign your project as soon as you commit. Projects include general house and building repairs such as siding, roofing, flooring, concrete, wood structures, basic electrical, painting, etc. We have local on-site leaders to help train, teach, and support you at each worksite.

FRIDAY – Excursion Day

On excursion day we will spend the day of Sabbath by enjoying God's Creation. We will tour go to a 1-3 beaches, check out local landmarks, stop by a local Gift Store, and have a picnic on the beach. There is a **\$12 -\$18 per person** option to eat lunch from a local restaurant on Friday. Please tell your group to bring extra money if you would like to eat out. Regular sandwich lunch will be provided by BMH for those who do not want to order from the restaurant.

SATURDAY – Departure Day

Packing, cleaning, group pictures, prayer, and head to the airport for your departure.

Schedule Reminder – “Blessed are the Flexible, for They will Not be Bent Out of Shape.”

Note: We are getting more and more requests for Saturday arrivals and an extra day. While we appreciate the desire to worship on Sunday, we will consider these on a case by case basis. It is difficult for us to do a proper cleaning between groups if we don't have at least 12 hours. We also try to be aware that our hospitality staff and volunteers need Sabbath and family time between groups in order to avoid burning out in busy seasons.

Tips from other Team Leaders:

- Distribute forms to team members in a plastic sheet protector made for a 3-ring binder. After collecting completed forms, carry them with you in a binder, so information is together. Have back up copies with you or scanned and saved somewhere accessible.
- Passports, copies of passports, birth certificates, and photo ID's and immigration cards can also be stored in the binder during your travel. When you arrive at BMH you are welcome to store important documents in our safe.
- Minors are not allowed to fill out Bahamas Immigration Cards.
Store minor's information on a spreadsheet and carry onto the plane to fill out their forms: Full Name, Gender, Country of Birth, Country of Citizenship, Country of Residence, Birth date, Passport Number, Home Address
- Make a small card for each team member, with flight info, immigration card info, work team assignments, and responsibilities such as day/time to lead devotionals.

Emergency Medical Care on the Islands

There are local medical clinics & facilities on each island but the only full-service hospitals are in Nassau. Grand Bahamas has a community hospital and Abaco has a larger clinic. The local nurses and doctors can do basic procedures and diagnosis but you will likely be sent to Nassau for anything that requires major testing. See our Covid 19 page. Please help keep safety a priority at all times!

- Watch your step - Our islands have hidden holes and rocks that vary from slippery to sharp.
- Stay aware on work sites - know what / who is in front, behind and next to you.
- No jumping in water unless w/o permission from staff. When jumping, always enter feet first - no diving!

Travel Insurance

All teams are **required** to have international medical and medical evacuation insurance. We highly recommend United Methodist Volunteers in Mission International Travel Insurance which is available to non-Methodist groups as well. More information is on your jurisdiction's UMVIM website. Please note that this insurance functions as a reimbursement and you should have access to a credit card with min limit \$5,000 and up to \$10,000 for potential emergency expenses.

Housing

Each of our sites are unique in their housing. Facilities can range from dorm rooms with bunk-beds to air mattresses on the floor. Most, not all, sleeping rooms have air conditioning. (Additional details can be found on website.) Due to conservation and costly price of electricity the air conditioning is typically only used during sleeping hours & worship.

Meals

Each day, meals are prepared from scratch by our staff and/or local caterers. Morning and evening meals consist of a hot breakfast, and homemade dinner. Lunch consists of a sandwich, fruit and chips at your worksite. Please make sure to contact BMH with any food allergies, concerns, or questions at least one month before arriving. It is advisable to bring snacks if your team members need extra caloric intake or have big appetites. BMH provides water throughout the week and other beverages at meals. If your team would like flavored drinks on site, we suggest you bring powder mixes.

Internet Access

Please take this opportunity to "unplug" and connect to the Bahamian community. We strongly discourage participants from bringing laptops, or tablets and smart phone unless placed in airplane mode and protected in some way. There is Internet access to which team leaders will have access.

Forms Checklist (all forms are available at: www.MethodistHabitat.org under "Serve With Us > Plan Your Trip") Please print and have each participant complete the following forms:

- + Missioner Profile Form
- + Fill in "Volunteer Information" Spreadsheet
- + Covenant Sheet (1 per group)
- + Parental Consent Forms for those under 18

Group Daily Chores

Our Expectations: Everyone will help with daily chores around host sites. We are a community living and sharing the same space. Each person needs to contribute to taking care of our common space and cleaning up after themselves.



Breakfast/Dinner Kitchen Clean-up

- Help passing out meals
- Ensure trash is gathered up & secured
- Wipe down or sanitize surfaces
- Put away any leftover meals

Bathroom Clean up

- Refill soap, TP, supplies as needed,
- Sweep or mop floor
- Take out trash to trash crew
- Wipe down counters & spray showers

Cooler Prep (Water and Lunch)

- Check Water Supply
- Fill water coolers each day with water & ice bottles
- Pack lunches into coolers & load coolers into vehicles
- Unload and sanitize chest coolers

Trash, Vehicles, and Grounds

- Receive trash from meals/ bathrooms
- Clean out vehicles
- Look for trash on grounds
- Take out all trash to outdoor area or unload at dump

Conservation Guidelines

Resources in the Bahamas are **limited!** Many of the things that you take for granted at home are scarce and expensive here. Some things cost 2-3 times the US price such as peanut butter or gallons of paint. Other considerations are availability of items. Supplies to Family Islands usually come once or twice a week by freighter. If supplies run out, you have to wait for stores to replenish from the next freighter. Please talk with your group before arriving about conservation and not wasting resources such as water, food, toilet paper and building materials



Water:

- **Drink plenty of water;** just please be careful not to waste any drinking water.
- Conserve tap water. We collect our rainwater from the cistern. Please use water **springly**.
 - Do not let sinks run excessively.
 - **Cowboy or Navy Showers:** Water ON to get wet & rinse, Water OFF to apply soap and shampoo!
 - Showers are to be used only **once a day**, and should be limited to **5 minutes**.
- Turn sink and shower handles gently. Check to make sure toilets have stopped running & faucets aren't dripping

Electricity:

- Turn lights and fans OFF when you leave a room.
- Do not leave cell phones, and computer chargers plugged once charged (this also protects devices)
- Make sure not to turn on your air conditioning until appropriate time (usually bedtime) and turn off when you first wake up in the morning.

Resources and Materials:

- Be mindful not to waste materials at the work sites. Measure twice – Cut once!
- Reuse what you can.
- Treat tools, BMH equipment and the host facility with care.
- Be good stewards of our, yours, and God's resources.

Food:

- **Portion Control:** There is enough food for everyone but be cautious to only take your fair share.
- We typically do a first round serving and offer seconds after everyone, often including staff or church members, has had first servings. Only take food that you will eat during your meal.

Hurricane Dorian Affected Islands - Grand Bahama and Abaco

Hurricane Dorian (tied for the strongest storm ever in the Atlantic Ocean) struck the islands of Grand Bahama and Abaco enduring three days, Sept. 1-3, 2019, and damaging the homes of thousands of people. BMH has assisted with the repair to church facilities where volunteers will be housed on the islands to serve those people who are recovering & displaced.

Expect rougher conditions in many respects than if you have stayed at Camp Symonette on Eleuthera. Housing will be inside a church and team members will sleep on air mattresses

Please be sure team members have updated Tetanus Shots.

Allow extra grace for the work site plans as coordination between with government, homeowners, and other NGOs remains fluid. The Pandemic has only added to complications with limiting hours, number of people served, communication methods, etc.

Bring twin-sized sheets, pillows, and your own bath towels with you.

Showers are inside the buildings although hot water may not be available 100% of the time on Abaco.

Be prepared for HOT, HUMID conditions.

Many people are still traumatized. We request that you have one person on each site team prepared to be a "listener" as the homeowner or neighbors may have a strong need to talk about their experience or life before the storm/s.

Bring any items you need for food allergies or special dietary needs with you in order to ensure that you have what you need. We cannot guarantee gluten-free, dairy-free or vegan meals on the disaster-affected islands. Vegetarians can usually get be accommodated but extra protein bars are suggested.

Transportation will be provided for group activities. Small trips for odds and ends should be limited or done during lunch.

Be prepared to entertain yourselves some evenings. Bring music, cards, games, devotions, etc.

Additional funds for materials are appreciated. We have not raised our per person cost but the need on these islands is very great and certain costs and labor rates are higher. The Pandemic has also decreased partner funding from groups like UMCOR. Any additional fundraising (suggestion of \$200/person) towards extra costs would be appreciated and go towards tool and building materials.

Please bring dust masks, goggles, and gloves with you for your own use. We will provide more specific gear or requests per group depending on your schedule and likely scope of work.

Worship space and sleeping space often overlap. If you are in place over a Sunday, please be prepared to help set up the space for worship.

GRAND BAHAMA SPECIFIC INFO

- *Preferred team size is 12. Maximum team size is 18.
- * Work sites may be approx. a 30 minute drive from New Hope host site
- * One team member may need drive a vehicle (on the left side of the road)

ABACO SPECIFIC INFO

- * ERT experience is a bonus. While the need is great, conditions are not as comfortable. Flexibility is a must.
- * Wi-fi and phone connection are more likely to be spotty and inconsistent on Abaco as the cleanup and recovery are moving slower than in Freeport.
- * We are still using generators for electricity at our host site on Abaco for part of the time. Conservation of electricity is paramount. Please bring a flashlight/lantern and phone battery backup (points for solar) for your phone. Keep phone on airplane mode to conserve power.
- * Space is tighter in Abaco housing - team size is limited to 8 persons maximum
- * No C-Pap or other electronic machines can be accommodated in Abaco at this time.
- * Daily schedule is much the same except that daily recreation is more limited at this time due to debris and beach access.
- * There is swimming accessible from the St. Andrews Church site that will be available each day and excursion day will include beaches outside Marsh Harbour.
- * One team member may need to drive a vehicle (on the left side of the road)



The Bahamas and COVID-19 Safety and Containment

Current Covid-19 Protocols for International Visitors were put in place in November 2020 It has flattened the curve in the Bahamas such that the average number of new Covid-19 cases has been below 20 total per day since January 2021 and only above that 3 times. Curfews and certain domestic policies are altered on some islands based on an increase in transmission but overall policies have remained stable since November 2020. The Travel Health Visa process is attached and also available on www.travel.bahamas.gov All applicants over 10 years are required to have negative RT-PCR test results from a test taken within 5 days of travel. Having had a vaccine does not change the testing requirement.

You can check recent case numbers by island at covid19.gov.bs

The Travel Health Visa includes the cost of a rapid antigen test on day 5 after arrival in the country. For our teams, this test will usually be on Thursday. This test will also meet the USA 3 day requirement to return to the US on Saturday at no additional expense. Results will be received Thursday and printed on Friday.

The Travel Health Visa fee also covers a short-term health insurance should you need to quarantine in the Bahamas or travel home to receive treatment.

BMH will assist with the team tests on Day 5 in country and with printing results as necessary.

In-country laws, preventative measures, and requirements (see attached):

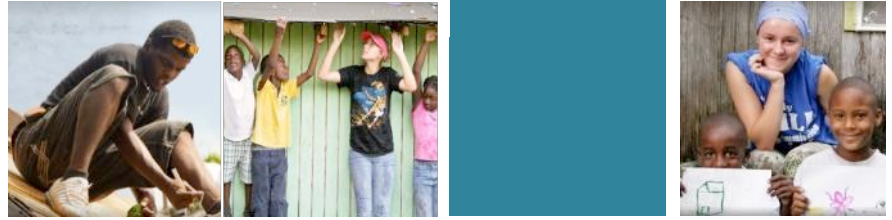
- Masks are required in public
- Social Distancing limits number of people in establishments
- Sanitizing or handwashing equipment must be provided and used when entering a space
- Plastic or glass shields have been installed in many establishments
- Curfews (no public travel) have been established ranging from 10pm -5am or 8pm-5am. This does not interfere with our normal daily schedule at all.

US requirements for persons entering or returning to the US were changed in January 2021. A rapid antigen test within 3 days of flight departure is required. They also recommend quarantining for two weeks upon return from all international destinations. Your work or school may have a different policy or way to accommodate common sense precautions.

UMVIM Guidelines for Hosts and Team Leaders was updated in February 2021. BMH is following these guidelines in this manner:

- No buffet style meals. Meals will be served and plated. Lunch will be made in shifts.
- Disposable eating and serving implements.
- Outdoor eating as much as possible using pavilions, picnic tables, and
- Limiting team size
- Daily cleaning, weekly deep cleaning
- Open windows and directed box fans for ventilation or AC units started prior to room use.
- Scheduled Bathroom breaks at specified locations to avoid using homeowner bathroom.
- Prioritizing exterior work and socially-distanced interior work.

Pre-Trip Planning Meeting (Group Preparation)



Where do groups stay? Groups will stay together at one of our host sites close to where your project is located. For 2021, this will either be on Grand Bahama or Abaco. In 2022 we plan to include Eleuthera too. We provide air mattresses or bunk beds at our facilities and at least two showers. For most sites, you will **need to bring** beach and bath towels, light twin-sized sheets in the spring, summer and fall and a light sleeping bag during the “winter”. Due to COVID-19 protocols, we ask you bring your Pillow as well.

Where do groups work? Groups will perform their service work at homes referred to BMH by community contacts and pre-selected by the staff from Social Services referrals or personal applicants. We are currently prioritizing Hurricane Dorian damage. Our criterion for home selection helps to ensure safe living conditions for homeowners and partner with local partners for appropriate assistance and good stewardship. Where affordable, we seek to improve construction methods to decrease the impact of future hurricanes and storms.

How are work crews arranged? Groups will be divided into work crews by their group leaders, dependent on the size and difficulty of the project. Work teams range in size between 4-6 people per project. **Each work crew must have at least 1 adults (highly prefer 2 adults with one having construction skills)**

What is a typical day like? See the **Daily Schedule page**. Our program runs with minor changes by location.

What language do Bahamians speak? Bahamians speak English with local dialects/slang and British influence. You will be able to understand at least 80% of what is said here in the islands. The staff and community members will help you with the other 20%.

What kind of money is used? Bahamians have their own currency. Its exchange rate is .005 to the USA so they use it daily at a 1:1 ratio. This is a huge help to tourists and missionaries because there is no need to exchange money before or after you get here. There are ATM's available which dispense Bahamian currency with a fee (Note: these may be 30 min or more from your host facility.)

What type of electrical service do they have? We use 110V just like the USA. There is no need for special adapters.

Can we snorkel? Yes, there are quite a few good places to snorkel here. Feel free to bring your own and enjoy the gorgeous underwater world that is here.

How bad are the bugs? Depending on the time of year they can range from not too bad to annoying. Individuals reacts differently as well. We suggest cool long pants, socks, and shoes to keep them off your legs during the day and night. They are worse at sunrise and sunset. We have Mosquitoes and No-see-ums/Sandflies. The latter are more of a nuisance but guarded with plenty of bug spray you will be okay. It is highly recommended to bring an ample supply of bug spray per person, the more Deet or Picaridin, the better. You may also want to pre-treat your clothes with Permethrin (available at camping stores, Wal-mart, or Amazon) which will last several washes w/o order. While there are no documented cases of Zika or microcephaly or mosquito-born disease on the islands.

How safe are the islands? The Family Islands are extremely safe. As with any country, there is a need to be respectful of cultural differences. You must use common sense while here (don't walk around alone, don't leave valuables out, etc) but in everyday life there is nothing to be worried about. Crime is very low; there is little public drug use and very few acts of violence. Your group will be safe with BMH as long as proper precautions and our rules are followed. Nassau has a different reputation but the statistics there are concentrated at high tourist areas or related to high-risk activities that our volunteers do not engage in (drinking late at night in bars for instance.)

Team Meetings

We suggest one or two scheduled planning meeting with your group at least one month before arriving at BMH. This is a great time to get the team together, pray and prepare for the trip. You should invite your team, their parents, chaperones, and any prayer partners who want to know more about your trip. Also, we suggest find a notary who will be able to attend the meeting to help complete your Parental Consent Form although notarization requirements and legal necessity may vary by area.

Before the meeting please ask everyone to bring two copies of their passport and Photo ID.

Agenda for the Meeting:

- Welcome and Introductions
- Ask about expectations, questions, and fears that volunteers have about the Bahamas.
- Show the YouTube video to introduce BMH.
 - “Bahamas Methodist Habitat – The Power of Together”
 - Show Hurricane Dorian coverage videos
- Distribute Handouts (all can be found and printed from: www.MethodistHabitat.org)
 - Missioner Profile
 - Parental Consent Form
 - Expectations, Rules and Regulations (in Volunteer Application)
 - Individual Packing List
- Go over Travel Safety Basics
- Go over the Covenant, “What to Expect”: Daily Schedule (and flexibility), Group Chores and Conservation Guidelines (included in this packet) and Bahamian Covid Requirements
- Share about self-care with water breaks, sunscreen, and bug spray
- Explain any optional additional costs:
 - Lunch on Friday (\$15); ice cream/snacks (\$3-5)
 - Souvenirs and Merchandise (hats, shirts, waterbottles, stickers)
 - Church offering
- Play Bahamian music or worship music while team fills out some forms
- **Collect from EACH participant:**
 - Necessary medical information and list of food allergies from participants
 - Completed Missioner Profile
 - Completed Parental Consent Form (under 18 yrs)
 - Any final payments
 - Copy of passport and photo ID (for team leader to keep)
- Further Questions and Answers and Logistics
- End in Prayer

Note: If your team has not discussed the roles of service, dignity, and solidarity over saviorhood, consider adding that to the agenda or another meeting. Please prepare to meet all persons regardless of socio-economic status with dignity and to discuss our roles as partnering in service together. While welcoming help from brothers and sisters in Christ, there is not a sense of needing saving. Our staff are willing to have conversations with team leaders or teams as you strive to celebrate, serve and empower the Bahamas with love.

In this season of digital worship and gatherings, be mindful of information shared in public domains. If preparing for presentations to share with church, please be aware of tone and providing context before posting to YouTube or others public websites or social media platforms. We are aware of some video clips being shared around the Bahamas from former mission teams that have been taken out of context when posted publicly.

Individual Packing List

Things to Pack (EACH volunteer):

- Up to date PASSPORT
- Shower supplies/towel*/washcloth/shower shoes/flip flops
- WATER BOTTLE** You will need this during the day.
- Basic clothes – Underwear, socks, pajamas
- 1 outfit for Church
Men: Long pants and nice polo shirt for men. Women: knee length skirts or modest dress for ladies
- Work Clothes: 5 t-shirts, 2 pair of long pants, closed toed shoes such as tennis shoes.
 - ***NO SHORTS OR LEGGINGS** on the worksite for safety reasons.
- Casual Outfit for evening activities. Long pants /scrubs will protect you from hungry mosquitoes.
- Work Gloves, safety goggles, any personal tools
- Sun Protection: Sunglasses / Hat/Bandana/Sunscreen
- Swimsuit /Beach Towel: Girls need to have one-piece or tankini. If you have a two-piece please bring a T-shirt or full size tank top to wear over it.
- Bible/paper/pen/journal
- Camera or Phone set to airplane mode
- Tennis shoes or work shoes (you must have closed toe shoes); Hiking sandals for excursion day/beach
- Bug spray (It is hot and buggy - be prepared. Deet repels mosquitoes, Baby Oil or Skin-So-Soft keep sand fleas off the skin.
- Anti-itch Cream or Benadryl Cream
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Hand Sanitizer, antibacterial wipes, Aloe, Lotion

- Frisbee, lightweight hammock or other small recreation items.
- Small personal fan (battery operated) - Optional
- Personal Funds for: Snacks on island, Souvenirs, Excursion Day lunch (\$12-\$18), Love offerings at church and/or for BMH. (\$30 -\$100 should cover all depending on your shopping & snacking)

COVID Items to Pack:

- N95 Masks (or two cloth to wash and alternate or disposables)
- Pillow (consider inflatable pillows or carry it on)
- Sheets for single bed (Abaco and Grand Bahama)
- Lotion / Nasal spray as needed to counteract dry skin or nostrils
- Copies of Bahamas Travel Health Visa and RT-PCR results

Thing NOT to Pack:

- Video Games or other unnecessary electronics
- Nothing expensive that could get lost
- Very Nice clothes
- Hair Dryers or Curling Iron
- Nothing smelly like perfume, cologne, or scented lotions (attracts bugs)
- Excessive Hair Styling products

BMH Needs-list

Dorian Islands



Getting supplies in the Bahamas can be complicated and/or significantly more expensive. We stretch our resources as far as we can by God's grace and generous donations from our volunteers. If you have extra room in your luggage consider packing additional supplies for BMH. The list below explains the types of supplies we go through on a continual basis. Contact our office to determine suitability of donations.

Equipment

- Extension Cords (25', 30', 50')
- Measuring Tapes (30')
- Drill chargers and bits (check on brand)
- Drill Bit sets (wood and metal)
- Concrete Drill Bits all sizes
- Compressor Hose with Accessories
- Compressor staple nail gun with nails
- Level 2' & 4'
- Router Bits
- Pry bars 16" or Flat bars
- Utility knives and extra blades
- Paint brushes/rollers and covers- 9"
- Paint Pans (Disposable and regular)
- Tarps (all sizes)
- Hammers
- Duct Tape
- Packing Tape / Painters Tape
- WD-40 (not pressurized)
- Batteries

Kitchen Supplies

- Sandwich Bags
- Gallon size Ziploc bags
- Laundry Detergent Pods
- Dish Soap
- Eco-friendly disposable plates
- Eco-friendly disposable bowls
- Eco-friendly disposable utensils
- Eco-friendly hot liquid cups
- Ice Chests
- igloo 5 gallon water coolers
- 30+ Gallon Trash bags (heavy duty)
- Air-tight storage containers
- Reusable totes

Recreation Equipment

- Simple Board Games
- Cards
- Frisbees

Office Supplies

- File Folders and peel-to-seal envelopes
- Any old GSM unlocked Smart phones
- Sheet protectors
- Printe ink or toner
- Sharpies

Cleaning & Health Supplies

- Disinfecting wipes
- Shower Curtains/plastic Hooks
- Dish towels or Rags
- Large dust mop
- Wasp, ant and roach spray
- Disposable Masks

Car Parts

- Always needed – Ask for specific needs if you are willing to assist in procuring or donate.

Check out our website and Amazon Lists for the most up to date list and other items - all can be found at www.methodisthabitat.org/needs.html We have both a Current Needs for particularly urgent items and Wish List for specific things that would help us to improve our ministry.