

# Dominican Republic Painting Open Team



**Location:** Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic

**Project Dates:** September 10-20, 2015

**Project Participation:** \$950

*Flight to Santo Domingo is not included in the participation fee*

## Information Packet

### Maranatha In The Dominican Republic

Maranatha's history with the Dominican Republic stretches back over three decades. The first contact with the country was made when Maranatha volunteers helped to construct churches and homes that were destroyed during the devastating hurricane David in 1979.

Then in 1992, Maranatha embarked on an ambitious project to build multiple churches in Santo Domingo. Called Santo Domingo '92, more than 1,200 volunteers flew to the Dominican Republic in a period of three months to build 25 churches. It was a watershed moment, and it changed how Maranatha operated as an organization. Santo Domingo '92 was also a significant moment in the Dominican Republic's Seventh-day Adventist history as the project resulted in a membership surge. The churches sprouted daughter congregations, and then those groups needed buildings too.

Maranatha returned in 2002 for another effort, this time building 50 churches. Once again, construction generated another growth in membership. Today the Adventist Church in the Dominican Republic has requested Maranatha's help in providing more places of worship for new congregations.

### Project Overview

Throughout the last two years, Maranatha volunteers have been helping to answer prayers by constructing churches in the suburbs of Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Many congregations were meeting under trees and in rented buildings and churches on the verge of collapse. Now each of these groups have churches that are fully blocked and stuccoed, but the buildings still need a coat of paint to be fully completed.

#### Project Schedule

**Thursday, Sept. 10**  
Arrival in Santo Domingo

**Friday, Sept. 11**  
Orientation and first work day

**Saturday, Sept. 12**  
Worship with the local congregation

**Sunday, Sept. 13 –  
Friday, Sept. 18**  
Work days with midweek excursion

**Saturday, Sept. 19**  
Worship with the local congregation

**Sunday, Sept. 20**  
Departure from Santo Domingo

Volunteers on this project will have the opportunity to paint four churches that have been recently completed by Maranatha teams. The churches are as follows: Luz Resplandeciente 2, Tercer Angel, Luz de Salvación, and Fe y Amor. There will also be several community outreach projects, including children's ministry programs. We will be asking volunteers to help bring supplies such as crayons and stickers to help with these programs. More information will be given in your final information packet. If you are interested in helping to lead these outreach programs, please contact Maranatha.

## Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at the Tabernacle Church in the suburbs of Santo Domingo. The large facility, located in a residential neighborhood, is similar to a camp meeting-type space, and it supports groups for church rallies and seminars. We have reserved 18 regular rooms and two family rooms. All rooms have private bathrooms. The facility does not provide bedding, so please bring your own sleeping bags or sheets and blankets, as well as towels and washcloths. Each regular room can accommodate two individuals and has two twin beds or one double bed.

Meals will be served in the spacious dining room. The camp does not provide silverware, plates, cups, and bowls, so plan to bring these as well. Each morning and evening, the volunteer group will meet at the chapel for worship.

## Excursion

The Dominican Republic is known for white sand beaches and beautiful Caribbean weather. During the project, the group will take a trip to Isla Catalina. The beaches are quintessential Caribbean shores, complete with white sand, warm water, and palm trees. The tour includes snorkeling equipment. There will also be opportunities to purchase souvenirs in the colonial district of Santo Domingo.

## Leadership

### Ray and Elizabeth Rengifo | Project Coordinator and Spiritual Coordinator

Ray and Elizabeth join the group from Sacramento, California, where they are both active members of the Sacramento Central Adventist Church. Ray is a retired Army Nurse Officer who served for more than 25 years in the U.S. Army. He now works as a registered nurse and a health facilities inspector for the California Department of Public Health. Elizabeth has worked in a variety of ministry roles as a Bible instructor, volunteer, and currently writes Christian children's stories for her ministry "Tiny Embrace Media." They have both served with Maranatha in Ecuador and Mexico. When not serving at the church and volunteering Ray and Elizabeth enjoy being grandparents of six lovely grandchildren.



## Expenses

The participation fee covers housing for ten nights, three vegetarian meals a day, ground transportation to and from the airport and project site, local excursions, secondary accident insurance, a Maranatha t-shirt, and luggage tags.

Maranatha must receive all funds and forms by **August 10, 2015**. Please wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

If you are fundraising or receiving donations, please have them sent directly to you or work with your local church treasurer to collect funds and issue tax-deductible receipts, since it is difficult for Maranatha to track individual small checks. If your church will not work with you, please wait until you have collected the full amount of your participation fee before submitting it to Maranatha.

## Estimate of Additional Costs

- Flight to Santo Domingo \$700 – 1,000
- Passport \$130 new or \$110 for renewal
- Tourist Card \$10 (paid upon arrival in Santo Domingo)

# About The Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is a beautiful tropical country, located on the island of Hispaniola. The landscape boasts sandy, white beaches and lush green mountains that make it the second most popular destination in the Caribbean after Puerto Rico. Visitors flock to the country to indulge in fancy resorts and year-round golf courses.

Yet a look beyond the tourist attractions reveals a nation with a rich history that is not so picturesque. The Dominican Republic lies on the eastern part of an island that it shares with Haiti. Originally, the indigenous tribe of Taínos inhabited the entire land mass. The Spanish colonized it in the late 1400s, making it the first permanent European settlement in the Americas. Hispaniola suffered centuries of a tug-of-war between the French and Spanish. In 1804, the Spanish ceded the western third of the island to the French, and that portion of the island became Haiti. The remaining land became the Dominican Republic, which gained independence in 1844.

Since then, the Dominican Republic has had a turbulent history with ownership returning to Spain only to have a war to regain independence. The country also fell into the hands of a dictator from 1930-1961. Today, the Dominican Republic is a democracy, working toward maintaining a stable and healthy country. Tourism fuels its economy, and it has the second largest economy in Central America and the Caribbean. However, in the rural areas of the country, poverty continues to be a problem, particularly near the Dominican-Haitian border.

Given its history with colonization, the country's culture is a blend of several influences. Spanish architecture is evident in areas of Santo Domingo, particularly in its cathedrals and cobblestone streets. Merengue, the national music and dance, is ubiquitous in the Dominican Republic, and it originated from slaves who worked in the sugar beet fields, their feet connected to each other by chains. Baseball, an American export, is an obsession for people of all ages and children can be seen playing games wherever there is space.

## Travel

Volunteers will purchase their own plane tickets to the capital city of Santo Domingo (see below). Please wait for confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your ticket to ensure there is still space on the project. Once in the Dominican Republic, volunteers will travel together by bus to the project location.

### Plane Tickets

Please wait until confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your airfare.

**Arrival** | Please plan to arrive in Santo Domingo (airport code SDQ) on Thursday, September 10.

**Departure** | Please plan to depart from Santo Domingo (SDQ) on Sunday, September 20.

### Travel Resources

**Azumano Travel:** 800-454-4099 or by email with Erle at [edpenha@ciazumano.com](mailto:edpenha@ciazumano.com)

**Butler Travel:** 503-879-5005 or by email with Ellen at [ellen@butlertravel.com](mailto:ellen@butlertravel.com) or Nathanael at [nathan@butlertravel.com](mailto:nathan@butlertravel.com)

**Kayak:** [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)

When contacting the Azumano or Butler travel agencies, be sure to mention Maranatha for the best fares.



## Facts and Figures

**Capital:**  
Santo Domingo

**Population:**  
10,088,598

**Language:**  
Spanish

**Climate:**  
Tropical maritime. Little seasonal temperature variation

**Religion:**  
95% Roman Catholic

**Currency:**  
Dominican Peso (approximately 41 pesos to \$1 USD)

## Entry Requirements

All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (March 21, 2016). If you do not have a passport, U.S. citizens can apply at any U.S. post office or online at <http://travel.state.gov>. Canadian citizens can apply online at [www.passport.gc.ca](http://www.passport.gc.ca). It can take up to two months to complete the entire process, so plan accordingly to give yourself enough time to receive your passport.

In addition to a passport, visitors must purchase a tourist card upon arrival in the country. There will be stations at the airport to make this purchase. The fee is \$10 and must be paid in U.S. currency. Please bring new, unmarked bills to make this transaction. This tourist card will act as your visa for up to 60 days in the country.

Citizens of other countries, please consult the Dominican embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

## Staying Healthy

Maranatha requires that every volunteer have a current **tetanus** vaccine (within the last ten years). The Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommend vaccines for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, and an anti-malarial medication.

There is a widespread risk of malaria for the entire island; however, it is not common in Santo Domingo. Mosquitos are prevalent throughout the island, and even though the locals say that they don't carry malaria, Maranatha recommends that you speak with a medical professional about options regarding malaria prevention. Mosquitos are also known for carrying the Caribbean disease, Chikungunya, so we recommend that you take personal precautions such as wearing long pants and using insect repellent to avoid being bitten.

Some vaccines you may already have and some you may deem unnecessary for this trip. Because Maranatha is not a medical organization, we recommend that you schedule a consultation with a travel clinic doctor to talk about the medical risks in the Dominican Republic and the ways to minimize them.

## How To Register

To register, please complete the online registration and pay the full participation fee or an initial deposit of at least half the total participation fee. You can make this payment by credit card online, over the phone, or with a check made out to Maranatha Volunteers International and sent to the address below. If for any reason you need to cancel your participation, Maranatha will do their best to refund your deposit up until one month before travel. After that point, \$150 is non-refundable, and the remainder will depend on the reservations and project arrangements already made.

Register online at [maranatha.org](http://maranatha.org) or over the phone.

## Contact Information

**Phone:** (916) 774-7700

**Fax:** (916) 774-7701

**Email:** [volunteer@maranatha.org](mailto:volunteer@maranatha.org)

**Website:** <http://www.maranatha.org>

**Mailing Address:**

Maranatha Volunteers International  
990 Reserve Drive  
Suite 100  
Roseville, CA 95678

**Canadian Payments Only:**

Maranatha Volunteers International  
Association  
c/o V06494C  
PO Box 6494, Station Terminal  
Vancouver, BC V6B 6R3



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