

# Dominican Republic Open Team

## Information Packet

**Location: San Cristobal, Dominican Republic**

**Project Dates: February 10-21, 2016**

**Participation Fee: \$915**

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



## 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 when a devastating hurricane hit the island in 1979.

Then in 1992, Maranatha embarked on an ambitious project to build 25 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. 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 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, 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

A lot of preparation has to be done in order for a volunteer group to construct a Maranatha church building. The property must be cleared and leveled, floors must be poured, and many other steps must be already completed when a group of volunteers arrives. On this project, volunteers will help complete those very important jobs so that a group of volunteers in March can get right to work on the structure and walls.

### Project Schedule

**Wednesday, February 10**  
**Arrival in Santo Domingo (SDQ)**

**Thursday, February 11 – Friday, February 12**  
**Orientation and work days**

**Saturday, February 13**  
**Worship with the local congregation**

**Sunday, February 14 – Friday, February 19**  
**Work days with midweek excursion**

**Saturday, February 20**  
**Worship with the local congregation**

**Sunday, February 21**  
**Departure from Santo Domingo (SDQ)**

On this project, volunteers will be pouring the foundation and floor for a large church building for the Conastica II congregation. They have been anxiously awaiting their new church for several months. They currently have 150 members meeting faithfully each week, but they are bursting at the seams of their current building. They are working actively in their community with evangelism efforts, but they lack the room to invite those people to church on Sabbath morning. Having a new, larger building will allow the current members to continue ministering to their community while having a place representative of the God they serve—with plenty of space to add new members!

In addition to the preparation work for a new church, volunteers will also help to paint and put the final touches on a building previously constructed by Maranatha volunteers. There are also many families in the community and volunteers will have a chance to offer children's ministry programs and other outreach opportunities.

## Accommodations

Volunteers will stay at a large Adventist summer camp located about 20 minutes outside of San Cristobal. The camp is set in a beautiful countryside with walking access to a beach. Each day the group will travel by private bus to the project location about 45 minutes away.

The group will stay in shared dormitory rooms. Each room has six beds; some are bunk beds and some are freestanding single beds. The rooms are not air-conditioned, so you might consider bringing a battery-operated fan to use at night. Bathrooms and showers are located down the hall. There is no warm water, so be prepared for cold water showers, which will probably feel nice in the humid weather. Volunteers will need to bring their own bedding.

Each morning and evening the group will meet in one of the meeting halls for worship. We will use the kitchen and dining room for meals.

## Excursions

During the project, the group will take a trip to Isla Catalina, a beautiful island located about 1.5 miles from mainland Dominican Republic. The picturesque island has white sand beaches, warm clear waters, and palm trees. The tour includes snorkeling equipment. There will also be opportunities to purchase souvenirs in the colonial district of Santo Domingo.



## Expenses

The participation fee covers housing for eleven nights at the Adventist Summer Camp, 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 January 11 due to application processing time. Wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

If you are fundraising or receiving donations please either 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 your participation fee to Maranatha.

## Estimate of Additional Costs

**Flight to Santo Domingo** \$700-\$1,000

**Passport** \$130 or \$110 for renewal

**Entrance Tax** \$10 (paid upon arrival in Santo Domingo)

## Leadership

**Loretta Spivey, Project Coordinator** | Loretta has been involved with Maranatha since 2003. Throughout the years she has served as an Insight magazine reporter, as well as an outreach coordinator, spiritual coordinator, and project coordinator on several Maranatha projects, including the Ultimate Workout, Multiple Group Project, and several Open Team projects. In each role, she has focused on connecting participants with Christ. Although the Pittsburgh Steelers still hold her allegiance, her family now calls Kernersville, North Carolina, home. She and her husband have five amazing children, most of whom have participated in mission trips. She looks forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit will work on this project.



## Facts and Figures

**Capital:**  
Santo Domingo

**Population:**  
10.5 million

**Language:**  
Spanish

**Climate:**  
Tropical maritime. Little seasonal temperature variation  
**Religion: 95% Roman Catholic**

**Currency:**  
Dominican Peso (approximately 45 pesos to \$1USD)

## 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. It is the second most popular destination in the Caribbean after Puerto Rico. Visitors flock to the island to indulge in fancy resorts and year-round golf courses.

Yet a look beyond the tourist attractions reveals 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 entire land mass was inhabited by the indigenous tribe of Taínos. 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 Information

### Flights

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 airfare to ensure there is still space on the project. Volunteers will travel together by bus to the project location.

#### Arrival:

Please plan to arrive in Santo Domingo (airport code SDQ) in the afternoon on Wednesday, February 10.

#### Departure:

Please plan to depart from Santo Domingo (SDQ) in the morning on Sunday, February 21.

## 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 Nathanael at [nathan@butlertravel.com](mailto:nathan@butlertravel.com) or with Ellen at [ellen@butlertravel.com](mailto:ellen@butlertravel.com).

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

When contacting the Azumano or Butler travel agencies, make sure you mention Maranatha to receive a discounted service charge.

## Entry Requirements

All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (August 22, 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.

## Medical Requirements & Precautions

Maranatha requires that every volunteer have a current tetanus vaccine (within the last 10 years). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommends vaccines for hepatitis A and B, typhoid, and an anti-malarial medication.

The CDC states a risk of malaria for the entire island; however, it is not common in the Santo Domingo area. Mosquitos are prevalent throughout the island, and even though the locals say that they don't carry malaria, Maranatha suggests that you speak with a medical professional about malaria prevention and follow their recommendation. Mosquitos are also known for carrying other diseases such as dengue and the Caribbean disease, chikungunya, which cannot be prevented with a vaccine. We recommend that you take personal precautions such as wearing long pants and using insect repellent to avoid being bitten.

Some of these vaccines you may already have and some of them you may deem unnecessary for this trip. You should 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 or 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 our 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 the 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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### HARD HAT \$11



This MSA V-Gard hard hat, with Staz-On suspension, ensures excellent shock absorption on the job site.



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