



# Family Project 2017 - Guyana

## Information Packet

**Location:** Georgetown, Guyana

**Project Dates:** June 14-25, 2017

**Participation Fee:** \$895 (\$745 for children 12 and younger)

*Age determined on start date of the project*

*Flight to Georgetown is not included in the participation fee*



## Maranatha in Guyana

In 2017, the Seventh-day Adventist Church will commemorate 130 years of activity in Guyana. Their work over the years has resulted in over 62,000 members and more than 200 congregations meeting each Sabbath. Church leadership has requested help from Maranatha to build churches and schools in the country.

At one time, the Adventist Church operated several schools in Guyana, but in 1976, ten years after the country gained its independence from Great Britain, the new government eliminated all private schools, thereby closing all Adventist schools as well. In the 1990's the government eased that position and opened the door for private schools once again. However, the Adventist Church has not yet re-started any schools in the country. Seeking to change this, church leadership has made a commitment to start a new primary school (grades 1-6) in the capital city of Georgetown.

Several Maranatha groups are scheduled to go to Guyana in the Spring and Summer of 2017 to begin work on a collection of eight, one-day school buildings, plus block walls. The school hopes to begin their first school year in September of 2017.

The current scope of Maranatha's involvement will begin with the school campus and a few church buildings and will be fully defined as the project evolves.

## Project Overview

Our major "work" for this Maranatha project will be the completion of the school. We expect to paint all eight new buildings, inside and outside. After the two groups that precede us complete their work, Maranatha will make an assessment and that will inform us of whether or not we will have some block to lay in addition to the painting. We won't know that until April or May. We plan to complete the work on the school so they can begin their first school year in September 2017.

## Project Schedule

**Wednesday, June 14**  
Arrive in Georgetown, Guyana

**Thursday and Friday, June 15-16**  
Work Days

**Sabbath, June 17**  
Split into groups and participate in churches, including lunch at the churches. Then all rendezvous at the little zoo and park for the afternoon and supper.

**Sunday-Friday, June 18-23**  
Work days

**Tuesday or Thursday, June 20 or 22**  
Excursion day—half of our group on one day and half on the other day

**Sabbath, June 24**  
Education Sabbath with area-wide gathering for the new school

**Sunday, June 25**  
Fly home

In addition to the school construction, we'll also have a medical and dental team that will work in conjunction with the Adventist hospital located right across the street from the construction site.

We'll also do some community service activities with a senior citizens' home in the same neighborhood, as well as a Red Cross sponsored orphanage for children up to the age of five.

We'll need a kitchen crew to help with three meals a day. Some will want to volunteer to be on the kitchen crew a day or two, and some may want to make this their primary ministry—keeping the entire group going.

Because this is Maranatha's "family" project, there will be a Day Camp each day for children ages 12 and younger. For Day Camp, expect a component of work for a few hours, a component for play, another component for outreach, and a final component of discovery of Guyana with cultural experiences.

## About the Family Project

Each year, Maranatha offers at least two mission projects specifically for families. One takes place in the summer, and the other is during Christmas. In 2017, there will be two Maranatha Family Projects in the summer—one to Kenya and one to Guyana. Designed to accommodate volunteers of any age—from two to 82—the project is an excellent alternative to a theme-park family vacation or gift-centered holiday. Volunteers who participate say the experience has not only broadened their perspective on the world and missions, but it's brought them closer together as a family. Families of all types and sizes are welcome, and individuals are also welcome to join. Family projects fill up very quickly, so register early if you are interested in joining this mission trip!

## Children at the Project Site

We have different expectations for young volunteers, depending on their age and maturity. We expect children ages 13 or older to put in a full day of work, whether it's on the construction site, in the kitchen, or with outreach activities. Children 12 years and under may help with construction, but they must work under the supervision of a parent or designated adult unless the child is participating in the Day Camp work at the construction site.

For younger volunteers, Maranatha will have a Day Camp with different activities organized during work hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m.), which could include the following:

**Work** | We'll plan simple tasks so kids can put in a few hours on the construction site.

**Play** | We'll schedule time for kids to let loose and have fun, because playtime is an important part of being a kid. Children's activities will include swimming one or two days during the project.

**Cultural Experiences** | We'll introduce kids to local customs, such as visiting a marketplace or checking out the big wooden cathedral.

**Outreach** | We'll encourage kids to help with children's ministry programs and other service activities, such as singing at the senior citizen home or playing with the young preschoolers at the orphanage.

We won't necessarily have all of these components every day, but these categories will make up the activities available for young volunteers. Parents can drop their child off with the program leaders, stay with their child, or keep their child with them.

## Why This Maranatha Project?

Short-term mission trips have become a popular way for people to serve others, make a difference, challenge themselves, grow spiritually, and see unique parts of the world. Most people have several reasons for participating, some stronger than others.

It's important for all Maranatha participants to be clear on the purpose(s) for this Maranatha short-term mission trip. Maranatha's mission statement gives the focus, which is "Maranatha spreads the Gospel throughout the world by building people through the construction of urgently needed buildings." If you wanted to put this as bullet points, three items jump out, namely, Maranatha:

- Spreads the Gospel throughout the world
- By building people
- Through the construction of urgently needed buildings

Notice that “taking a family vacation to a new country” or “posting cool pictures” or “donating to a worthy cause” aren’t part of the mission statement, even though each one of these may happen on your Maranatha project. In fact, many other things will happen, too. But Maranatha’s three broad, but clear, purposes will guide the planning of this project. People say, “This is what it’s all about.”

While Maranatha will do 30-50 short-term mission trips in 2017, this particular project, the Family Project 2017 - Guyana, will emphasize the following primary purposes under the overall mission statement of Maranatha. These are what will shape what we plan, what we do, and how we evaluate this particular Maranatha mission project:

1. Service opportunities to develop faith in God and shape our values
2. Challenges and bonding for individuals, families, and the entire group
3. Be part of what God is already doing to spread the Gospel in Guyana

Please take some time to reflect on the reason(s) why you are going on this Maranatha mission trip. Talk about it in your family. Some might be more enthusiastic about this trip than others. How do your purposes match what you can expect for this project? What adjustments might you need to make?

## Flexibility

“FLEXIBILITY” is the one key word that will be necessary in all that we do on this mission trip. It’s not the purpose of the mission trip, but it will be necessary to achieve our purposes. While we make plans, we can pretty much guarantee that there will be surprises that will force us to adapt. If we aren’t flexible, we’ll have plenty to feel miserable about and will lose out on multiple opportunities to serve others and to grow ourselves.

Your flexibility will be tested by things like the heat and humidity, the living conditions, strange food, and even jet lag. Some will see how much flexibility they possess when they are put on a job they don’t like, when they can’t get away from people who bug them, or when the nationals don’t seem “normal” like we are. Those accustomed to being online whenever they want might feel like they are fasting from the internet—can someone actually survive without access 24/7?

By going on a Maranatha mission trip, you are putting yourself into a great environment for growth, but that means changes in your life. Are you ready for that? Are you hoping for that? Are others hoping for that in you? Have you already started to pray for this to be a reality? FLEXIBILITY enables you to grow without breaking. By all means, bring FLEXIBILITY with you because you’ll need it just about every day.

## Accommodations

Our group will stay at the Ocean Spray International Hotel, just a bit outside of the center of Georgetown, and close to the “seawall”—the literal wall that protects Georgetown from the Caribbean since the city is six feet below sea level.

The hotel ranges between a 1-star and a 2-star hotel; this keeps the participation fee manageable for families. The hotel is clean, provides bedding and towels, private bathrooms, hot water, and air conditioning. We recommend that you bring your own pillow and washcloths though. A small air freshener might be good to bring as well as some of the rooms can be musty due to the proximity to the ocean and the age of the building. Wi-Fi is available, but slow and does not work consistently. There is also a simple swimming pool at the hotel.

Our group will be using the kitchen and dining room for our meals, plus there is a meeting room for our evening worships and play time together, or just to hang out and relax in the evening. The drive from the hotel to the work site will be only about 10 minutes by the coaster bus that will shuttle our group in a couple of trips.

For more information about the Ocean Spray International Hotel visit [www.oceanspray.co.gy/index.html](http://www.oceanspray.co.gy/index.html)

## Excursions

The main excursion will be a one-day getaway up the Essequibo River. We’ll visit “Fort Island,” which has two historical buildings that serve as museums for the history of Guyana. The museums outline the struggle between the Dutch, French, Spanish, and British to colonize this area in hopes of taking gold back to Europe. The history includes slave trading with African slaves. After a short stop on the island, we’ll go upriver to another island that is the Aruwai Resort, where there is a swimming pool, beach volleyball, kayaks, paddle boats, a nice vegetarian lunch, and more. We’ll take families with Day Camp age children on Tuesday (no Day Camp on Tuesday) and families without Day Camp age children on Thursday.

On our first Sabbath afternoon in Georgetown, following Sabbath School and Church services at different churches, our groups will eat lunch with the Guyanese nationals at their respective churches, and then all groups will rendezvous at the city park that includes a small zoo where we can see some of the animals that are native to Guyana. There is plenty of room in the park for people to relax or to play. We'll have our supper in the park and head back to the hotel after sundown.

### **Additional Excursion Options**

Guyana doesn't have a highly developed tourist industry. You won't find very many souvenirs, but you can take photos to record memories. Perhaps the best-known spot for tourists is the Kaieteur Falls in the middle of the country, far from Georgetown. Due to the cost for this trip, this excursion is not provided or coordinated by Maranatha. Families interested in this excursion will want to make plans to arrive early or stay a few days later to take the plane ride to the falls and back. The cost for the flight is approximately \$150/person.

### **Leadership**

#### **Steve Case | Project Coordinator and Spiritual Coordinator**

Each Summer Family Project has been unique even though Steve Case continues to serve as the project coordinator and pastor. And this one promises to be no exception to unique surprises. Making the most of whatever comes to the group and getting back to basic values and faith are qualities Steve desires for every family on this project.



#### **Danny Poljak | Construction Superintendent**

Someone highly involved in Maranatha projects, Danny has served as the construction superintendent on multiple family projects as well as other Maranatha trips. His daughter has been growing up on these. Danny works in construction in the Sacramento area and absolutely loves these projects.



#### **Maggie Petersen | Head Cook**

Ever since her retirement, Maggie has been cooking for all kinds of groups in all kinds of places, including Maranatha family projects and other short-term mission trips. She's amazing in demonstrating flexibility whatever her circumstances, equipment, staffing, and food availability. Don't plan on losing weight with Maggie's tasty cooking, but expect familiar as well as local flavors and treats.



#### **Steven Kim | Medical Team Coordinator**

The Kim family came on the Maranatha Family Project a few years ago, along with several relatives. This year, they are returning with Steven as our medical team coordinator. This is a golden opportunity for young people with an interest in medicine to shadow a medical professional. Steven is an emergency room doc as well as an innovator in the medical field.



#### **Mary Johnson | Children's Ministry Leader**

Mary has led children's programs on multiple Maranatha projects. Her bilingual skills have been extremely useful in Spanish-speaking countries. But English is her first language, and she will certainly be using that in Guyana. She's a middle school teacher and will be taking a leave of absence this next school year so she can devote more time to Maranatha projects.



### **Expenses**

The participation fee of \$895 covers housing for 11 nights at the Ocean Spray International Hotel, 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 May 15 due to application processing time. Wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

Maranatha participation fees are tax-deductible. For Canadian tax-deductible receipts, payments must be made by check to the Maranatha Association (address located at the end of this information packet). For U.S. tax-deductible receipts, payments can be made by cash, check, or credit/debit cards.



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 your participation fee to Maranatha.

### Estimate of Additional Costs

- **Flight to Georgetown:** \$1,000
- **Passport:** \$130 or \$110 for renewal
- **Exit Tax:** \$21/person

## About Guyana

This South American country, with Venezuela to the west and Suriname (formerly Dutch Guyana) to the east, has a northern border on the Caribbean Sea. The majority of the country, which is about the size of Idaho, is covered in thick jungle and is mostly undeveloped. In fact, 90% of the population lives on 10% of the land in Guyana, with most people living in the capital city of Georgetown.

Although Guyana borders the Caribbean, don't expect to see white sandy beaches with palm trees like you see on post cards. Georgetown is six feet below sea level. When the Dutch ruled this area before the British, they built a seawall to keep the sea away. So instead of a beach, the coastline is composed of a lengthy seawall.

Ever since Europeans started establishing colonies in the Western World in the 1500s, the Dutch, French, Spanish, and English have sought Guyana. This involved wars, skirmishes, sales, and negotiations as Guyana passed from one European rule to another. Under the British, agriculture and trade expansion introduced Africans and East Indians into the population. Then in 1966, Guyana achieved a peaceful independence from Great Britain, changing the name from British Guyana to simply Guyana.

Guyana citizens have a low expectation that the government will ever provide the kinds of opportunities expected in other countries. Because of this, the population has never exceeded 750,000 because a steady stream of Guyanese move to other countries each year. Queens, a suburb of New York City, is purported to have more than 200,000 Guyanese inhabitants.

The major people groups include East Indians, Africans, and Amerindians (indigenous), and now an emerging mixed population. This also means there is no major religion with plenty of Hindu, Muslim, and a variety of Christian denominations. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has approximately 62,000 members, with about one-third of them active in the church currently.



### Facts and Figures

**Capital:**  
Georgetown

**Population:**  
736,000

**Language:**  
English

**Climate:**  
Hot and humid; tropical

**Religion:**  
Protestant 31%, Hindu 28%,  
Catholic 8%, Muslim 7%

**Currency:**  
Guyanese Dollar

# Travel Information

Volunteers will purchase their own plane tickets to the city of Georgetown, Guyana (see below). Please wait for confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your airfare to ensure there is still space on the project. Together volunteers will travel by bus to the project location.

## Flights

**Arrival** | Please plan to arrive in Georgetown (airport code GEO) on Wednesday, June 14, 2017.

**Departure** | Please plan to depart from Georgetown in the morning or afternoon of Sunday, June 25, 2017.

Flights to Georgetown can be limited, and you might find yourself flying on a smaller, little known airline. Recommended connections will probably route you through New York (JFK) or Miami (MIA) which usually have lower fares than through other airports.

## Arriving Early or Staying Late

Some of you may choose to arrive earlier than June 14 or stay beyond June 25 to explore the country on your own. Please make your own hotel and transportation plans for days outside of the Maranatha project dates. If you have any questions, feel free to call Maranatha at (916) 774-7700.

## Travel Resources

- **Azumano Travel:** 800-777-5149 or by email with Erle or Azumano Team at [corporatetravel@ciazumano.com](mailto:corporatetravel@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

**Passport** | All passports must be valid for at least six months from the dates of intended travel (valid until December 25, 2017). 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.

**Exit Tax** | No visa is required for the country of Guyana. However, there is an exit tax of \$21 USD (or 4,000 Guyanese Dollars). This tax is NOT typically included in your airfare to Guyana like it is for many other countries. Plan to have this available in cash to pay as you leave the country.

Citizens of countries other than the U.S. or Canada, please consult the Guyana embassy or consulate in your home country for entrance requirements.

## Traveling With Minors

If you are traveling with a legal minor (under the age of 18 on the date you depart), both parents or legal guardians must travel with the minor. Otherwise, you must have two parental consent forms notarized. This provides government entities with evidence that both guardians have consented to their child leaving the country with the other guardian and Maranatha. One original must be mailed to Maranatha, and the other original must stay with you while you travel. If a parent is divorced, the missing parent still needs to sign the form unless the parent traveling with the minor has sole legal custody. In that case, a copy of the divorce paperwork, indicating sole custody, must also be included. If a parent has died, a copy of the death certificate must be included. You can download a PDF of the Parental Consent Form at <http://www.maranatha.org/resources>. This form will ask for two people as appointees of the minor. The first appointee will be the guardian traveling with the child. The other will be Steve Case, Maranatha's project coordinator for the Summer Family Project to Guyana.

## Staying Healthy

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

Some of these you may already have and some you may deem unnecessary for this trip. You should schedule a consultation with a travel clinic doctor to talk about the medical risks in Guyana and the ways to minimize them.

### Zika

Recently the Zika virus has been spreading around Central America and the Caribbean. This mosquito-borne disease acts very similar to a hard-hitting flu with symptoms lasting about two weeks. There is currently no vaccine or treatment for the disease, and the CDC has issued a Level 2 warning. This warning does not suggest that you postpone all travel, but it does urge travelers to take heightened precautions to avoid being bitten (see recommendations above). This virus is still being studied, and information is continuing to be released. There are currently no known long-term effects; however, there does seem to be a link between the virus and possible birth defects in babies born from women who were infected during their pregnancy. The virus can remain in a woman's body for approximately eight weeks and in a man's body for approximately six months, and it can be spread through physical contact. If you or your partner is pregnant, think you might be pregnant, or trying to get pregnant in the next six months, Maranatha recommends speaking with your doctor to determine if you should travel.

## Giving Opportunity

With the start of a brand new school, there will be many start-up costs such as books, desks, school uniforms, classroom supplies, and even scholarships for students with financial needs. We don't have specific information on any of these items at this time, but we expect those needs will become more evident as we get closer to the project time.

## 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 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 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:** [www.maranatha.org](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

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\*All confirmed volunteers on an International Maranatha Open Team receive a Maranatha t-shirt as part of their participation fee.

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