

# São Tomé Project

## Information Packet

**Location:** São Tomé and Príncipe

**Project Dates:** July 5- 14, 2018

**Optional Excursion:** July 14-17, 2018

**Total Participation Fee:** \$1,320

**Children 12 and under:** \$1,170

(Age determined on the start date of the project)

**Optional Excursion Fee:** \$345



*Flight to São Tomé is not included in the participation fee*

## Maranatha in São Tomé and Príncipe

According to local church leadership, the Adventist message first came to São Tomé and Príncipe in 1936 through the work of colporteurs. Today, the country is part of the West Central Africa Division. The island nation has a population of 198,000 people and an Adventist membership of just over 7,000. Maranatha received a request to build in São Tomé and Príncipe and will be responding in 2018 to their ever-growing need. Maranatha has committed to building a new primary school in the city of São Tomé as well as several churches throughout the island.

## Project Overview

In January 2017 Maranatha volunteers traveled to São Tomé for the first volunteer project on the island. During their time there, they built an eight-classroom elementary school. Their experience was so wonderful that Maranatha has felt the need to offer the experience to more volunteers!

When Adventism first came to São Tomé the members faced a lot of prejudice; but it has now grown to the second largest church in the country. However, of the 70 Adventist congregations meeting on the island, only 20 have permanent places of worship. The other 50 groups meet in borrowed or rented locations, most of which are too small for the people currently meeting there and much too small to invite new members to join. The groups meet in hot, leaky basements, abandoned disco clubs, church members' homes, and metal frameworks without floors or walls. The church members desperately want permanent churches that are reflective of the God they worship, but with 60% of São Tomé's population living below the poverty line and 85% of the Adventist church being made up of young adults, there simply is not enough money.

## Project Schedule

**Thursday, July 5**  
Arrival in São Tomé

**Friday, July 6**  
First work day

**Saturday, July 7**  
Worship with the local congregations

**Sunday - Friday, July 8 - 13**  
Work days

**Saturday, July 14**  
Worship with the local congregations.  
Evening departures from São Tomé

### OPTIONAL EXCURSION

**Sunday - Monday, July 15 - 16**  
Excursion on Ilhéu das Rolas

**Tuesday, July 17**  
Evening departures from São Tomé

Volunteers on this project will be part of the answer to their prayers. Volunteers will construct One Day Church frames for several of the eight churches that Maranatha has committed to building. If enough volunteers join the project, there may be the opportunity to reach out to the local community through activities such as health education or children's ministry programs.

## Accommodations

During the project, volunteers will stay at the Agosto Neto Hotel in the city of São Tomé. The hotel is basic and ranges between a 1- and 2- star hotel.

You can expect double occupancy rooms with private bathrooms. Bedding and towels are provided, although washcloths are not commonly provided in São Tomé, so you should plan on bringing your own. The hotel has hot water, AC, Wi-Fi, and mosquito nets. The group will have meals at the hotel and will meet in one of the conference rooms for worship. Together the group will travel to the construction sites each day which range from 5-30 minutes away depending on the church site.



For more information about the Agosto Neto Hotel, visit: [www.hotelagostoneto.com/novo/](http://www.hotelagostoneto.com/novo/)

Volunteers should plan on staying in double occupancy rooms with a roommate. If you would like to room with someone in particular, please let us know prior to the final deadline for the project (June 4, 2018). During the trip, there may be some single occupancy rooms available for an extra cost of \$510 per person for the project. If you are interested in a single occupancy room, please let us know as soon as possible via email at [volunteer@maranatha.org](mailto:volunteer@maranatha.org) or call (916) 774-7700. The additional payment will be due by the final deadline.

## Optional Excursion

### Ilhéu das Rolas: \$345

At the end of the project, volunteers can choose to join the optional excursion and travel to the southern part of the island of São Tomé and take a boat to a smaller island off the tip called Ilhéu das Rolas.

Once on the island, the group will stay at a resort hotel located right on the beach with a pool overlooking the ocean. The group will visit a monument that is built on the equator line and will have the opportunity to relax at the resort or enjoy other activities such as snorkeling, scuba diving, or spa appointments at an additional price. This is a two-night trip and the group will be taking a boat to the island. We recommend that volunteers pack for this excursion in a carry-on and leave their larger luggage at the hotel in São Tomé.

During the excursion, the group will stay at a resort hotel called the Pestana Equador Ilhéu das Rolas. For more information and photos, visit: [www.pestana.com/en/hotel/pestana-equador](http://www.pestana.com/en/hotel/pestana-equador)

Volunteers should plan on staying in double occupancy rooms with a roommate. There may be some single occupancy rooms available for an extra cost of \$130 per person for the excursion. If you are interested in a single occupancy room, please let us know as soon as possible via email at [volunteer@maranatha.org](mailto:volunteer@maranatha.org) or call (916) 774-7700. The additional payment will be due by the final deadline.

## Leadership

### Phil Becker | Project Coordinator

Phil and Virginia Becker join the group from Washington state. Phil has lived his entire life in Washington where he worked as a logger for many years. He first joined Maranatha in 1992 when he traveled to the Dominican Republic. Since then he has led Maranatha groups to various parts of Central and South America. This will be his first project on the continent of Africa, and he is looking forward to sharing this experience with the rest of the volunteers. When not on a Maranatha project, Phil and Virginia enjoy spending time with their three grown children and their four grandchildren and helping out at their local church.



## We Need Your Help

The team is looking for a children's ministry coordinator. If you would be interested in leading out in this area, please contact Maranatha at (916) 774-7799 and join the São Tomé Project.

## Expenses

The participation fee of \$1,320 covers housing, three vegetarian meals a day, ground transportation to and from the airport and project site, short-term travel insurance, a Maranatha t-shirt, and luggage tags. This excursion has an additional fee of \$345 per person, which includes housing, food, transportation, and insurance. The participation fee is tax-deductible; the excursion fee is not tax-deductible.

Maranatha must receive all funds and forms by June 4, 2018 due to application processing time. Wait for confirmation of acceptance on the project before purchasing your airfare.

All prices are listed in U.S. dollars. Payments can be made by cash or check sent to the Maranatha office in California (please include your name and "São Tomé Project – July 2018") or by credit or debit card online or over the phone.

For Canadian tax-deductible receipts, payments must be made by check to the Maranatha Volunteers International (Canada) Association (address located at the end of this information packet). At this time Maranatha cannot issue tax-deductible receipts for credit card payments.

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 São Tomé:** \$1,600 - \$2,200
- **Passport:** \$130 or \$110 for renewal

## About São Tomé and Príncipe

São Tomé and Príncipe is a Portuguese-speaking island nation located off the west coast of Africa in the Gulf of Guinea, due south of Nigeria. The country consists of several island groups surrounding the two larger main islands. It is the second smallest African country after the country of Seychelles, an island group off the eastern coast of Africa.

The islands were uninhabited until they were discovered by the Portuguese and colonized in the 15th century. The warm equatorial climate and rich soil made it an ideal location for sugar, coffee, and cocoa cultivation. It also became a vital trade depot for the Atlantic slave trade. In 1975 the country achieved independence, and in 1990 São Tomé and Príncipe became one of the first African countries to initiate democratic reform; it has remained one of the most stable and democratic countries of Africa. Its economy is dependent on its agriculture because, due to its island location, the country has to import all fuel, most manufactured goods, and food.

The islands of São Tomé and Príncipe are both part of the Cameroon volcanic mountain line. São Tomé is the larger of the two main islands and is more mountainous with lush forest and cropland surrounding the mountain ranges and ultimately turning into beautiful beaches as



### Facts and Figures

**Capital:** São Tomé

**Population:** 197,541

**Language:** Portuguese and Forro

**Climate:** Tropical, hot and humid

**Religion:** Catholic 56%, Adventist 4%, Assembly of God 3%

**Currency:** Dobra and Euro

it reaches the coastline. The equator runs through the small islet of Ilhéu das Rolas, just south of São Tomé island. This tropical location creates a hot and humid climate year-round.

The culture of São Tomé and Príncipe is a mixture of African and Portuguese influences, as evident in the cultural dances and music. Staple foods include a lot of fish and other forms of seafood as well as beans, corn, and cooked plantains.

## Travel Information

Volunteers will purchase their own plane tickets to the city of São Tomé. Maranatha representatives will meet volunteers upon arrival and escort the group to the hotel.

São Tomé is a little more difficult to reach than other African countries as the airport is only open on certain days. Looking online for tickets can result in extremely high fares. We have learned that the best prices are found by working through a travel agent and doing two round trip tickets: one to and from Lisbon, Portugal and one from Lisbon to São Tomé and back. Nathanael at Butler Travel is prepared to help volunteers with this flight.

Please wait for confirmation from Maranatha before purchasing your airfare to ensure there is still space on the project.

### Flights

**Arrival** | Please plan to arrive in São Tomé (airport code TMS) in the evening of Thursday, July 5.

**Departure (project only)** | Please plan to depart from São Tomé (TMS) in the evening of Saturday, July 14.

**Departure (optional excursion)** | Please plan to depart from São Tomé (TMS) in the evening of Tuesday, July 17.

### Arriving Early or Staying Late?

São Tomé and Príncipe has some beautiful travel destinations. Some of you may choose to arrive earlier than July 5 or stay beyond July 17 to explore the country on your own. The Maranatha dates are firm and any extra travel must coincide with the arrival and departure windows above. Please make your own hotel and transportation plans for any days outside of the Maranatha project dates. If you have any questions, feel free to call Maranatha at (916) 774-7700.

### Travel Resources

**CI Azumano Travel:** 800-454-4099 or by email with Erle Dpenha 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 (January 18, 2019). 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.

Citizens of the United States, Canada, and most European countries do not need a visa to enter São Tomé as long as they are staying 15 days or less. Upon entering the country, each person will be given a free 15-day entry, which should cover the dates of the Maranatha project.

Citizens of other countries, please consult the São Tomé and Príncipe 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 10 years). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also recommends vaccines for hepatitis A, typhoid, and an antimalarial medication other than chloroquine. Locals in São Tomé tell us that malaria is not a big risk on the island; however, the CDC is recommending malaria preventative medication as a precaution. Maranatha recommends speaking with a travel clinic doctor to talk about the medical risks in São Tomé 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 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

Vancouver, BC V6B 6R3



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[MARANATHA.ORG](http://MARANATHA.ORG)

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



TO ORDER, VISIT [MARANATHA.ORG/STORE](http://MARANATHA.ORG/STORE) OR CALL (916) 774-7700

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