



# Support Raising Guide

**Before** you begin raising support, it is important to realize that prayer is the most essential part of the entire process. Start every day off with prayer. Admit your need before God and ask for His provision. God wants us to lean on Him for our needs, and He takes joy in meeting them.

Support Raising is a faith building experience and exercise in humility. Through this experience you will begin to understand the following:

1. What it truly means to rely on God.
2. God uses all people to fulfill His plans. (pre-christians included)
3. Appreciation for the Body of Christ.
4. How difficult the task of raising support can be for long-term missionaries.
5. That money should not be an obstacle to what God will do within this team.

It is important to realize that as you raise support you are not simply asking for someone's money—you are asking them to partner with you both financially and prayerfully. Developing a Support Team is essential to mission work. God calls us to walk with Him as part of a body of believers, each with a different role, each role having value and purpose. Some of us are pray-ers, some are senders, and some are goers. You, at least in this season of your life, are a goer!

Pray-ers and senders are people who are passionate about praying for and financially partnering with you as you go out to be the hands and feet of Christ. Many will be excited to be part of your journey in missions in one or both of these ways. This is an opportunity for them to have a hand in what God is doing around the world, to bless you and the people you serve, and to store up treasures in heaven! It is your goal to make them a part of your mission and directly involve them in how you are serving.

The support raising process is an important part of your GO! trip. Always be personal with your listeners and be excited about your mission. Your excitement will rub off and your listeners will be encouraged by what God is doing in your life.

## **IMPORTANT FINANCIAL GUIDELINES**

Online donations can be made by setting up your own “public profile” page on thecreek.managedmissions.com site. Visitors to your individual site will be able to read your personal support letter (instructions for writing are found later in this document), see your progress toward your financial goal, and donate to your account. *Your will receive an email invite to create your managed missions account after your acceptance to the trip or previous to the first official trip meeting.*

**Important: In order to be tax-deductible, contributions toward your project MUST be handled as follows:**

**Checks should be made payable to: “The Creek” or “Indian Creek Christian Church” and sent to you.** We suggest that you keep a ledger or spreadsheet with the donor’s name, address, date of the check, check number, and the amount.

Drop off your checks in a sealed envelope with your name, team name, and dollar amount on it to: the church office during business hours, your team leader, or in the locked box in the GO! Prayer Room on the weekend. If necessary you can also mail to: The Creek Attn: Chris Cesnik 6430 S. Franklin Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46259

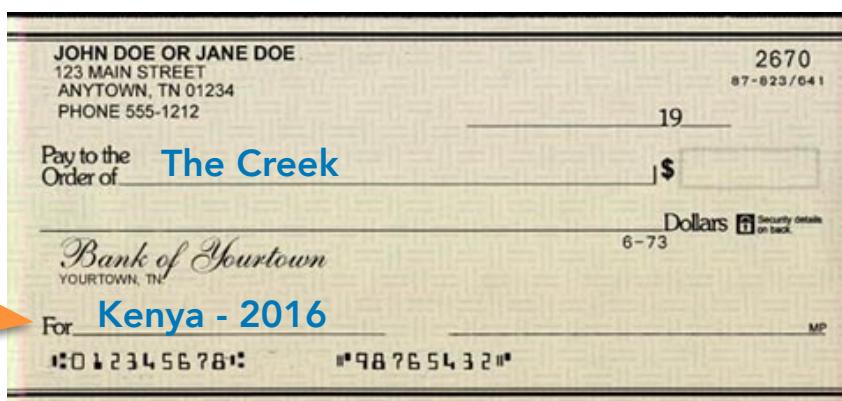
**Please instruct your donors to include the team name only on the memo line of the check so that it can be credited toward your project.** (Example: Kenya 2016)

**For tax exemption purposes, your name cannot be anywhere on the check!**

We will know who to credit that amount to because all of your donations will come from you in a sealed envelope with your name, team name, and dollar amount on it.

Indian Creek Christian Church must abide by many IRS guidelines due to our tax exempt status. Money donated to The Creek by your donors are applied toward your specific mission trip. Should reasons beyond your control prevent you from going, donated funds will still be used for GO! projects. To maintain tax exempt status and standards as a charitable organization, all donations are non-refundable. Financial support received in excess of your project will be used at The Creek’s discretion. The Creek honors preference of gifts solicited and, in accordance with IRS regulations, retains discretion and control over their use.

For Tax purposes:  
Do not put a  
individual’s name on  
the memo line.



## **CREATING A 4-TIERED SUPPORT RAISING STRATEGY**

These guidelines will help you raise your prayer and financial support.

Historically, all who have faithfully prayed, built a team around them, and engaged the The Creek's support raising system have seen God provide the funds needed. Involving others prayerfully and financially encourages them to connect with the trip. It also gives you an open door to share how God has worked in you and through you during the trip. Begin now by praying!

### **TIER 1. PERSONAL FUNDS**

May I use personal funds for the trip cost? Yes, you may use personal funds. However we ask that you use personal funds for only up to 50% of the trip cost. Remember that you are required to donate at least 10% and may have additional expenses included, but not limited to:

- Passport fee (*your passport must be valid for more than six months after you return*)
- Immunizations you need for your destination
- Meals while enroute to your destination
- Souvenirs
- "Offering" while at a church on the trip

Why not self support the full amount? An important part of this spiritual experience is walking in humility and depending on God and others. While each person is 100% responsible for his or her final cost of the trip, each team will pool their resources together. You are raising funds for the team.

When beginning to raise support for a GO! trip it is important to ask, "what am I going to sacrifice in order to participate in this trip?" **You cannot expect other people to sacrifice their finances if you are not willing to make a sacrifice.** The amount you are prepared to sacrifice and the hard work you are willing to endure, will often represent the level of personal commitment and responsibility to this trip.

Consider what changes you can make in your life to provide money for the project.

Suggested items to give up or cut back:

- Eating out
- Going to the movies
- Buying new clothes, items
- Coffees

### Other ideas:

- Ask for money towards your trip for birthday or christmas gifts.
- Use money that you have been saving
- Work another job for a short time to earn extra money
- Sell something that you no longer use
- Offer a service: babysitting, yard work, haircuts, photo shoots, car fixes, whatever your good at!
- Host a dinner party. Take time to share your desire, have a handout of the mission, and put out a "donation box" or send everyone home with a support letter and GO! Trip Donor Support form.

### TIER 2. CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS

Some companies are willing to donate money to charitable activities. Check with local companies, especially those owned or operated by Christian leaders, and those with whom you have personal relationships or previous work experience and ask about this possibility. Keep in mind that when approaching a corporation you should dress and act more professional than when you are talking with your grandmother. Be prepared to explain the details of the trip, the reason for the trip, and the costs involved.

### TIER 3. CREATING AND MAINTAINING A SUPPORT TEAM

Individual financial supporters are the primary source of funding for GO! trips. The following steps describe a detailed outline for developing a support team of dozens of individuals who will support you through prayer and funds.

#### Step 1: Create a Contact List

- Pray for God's guidance in creating a list of 50-100 names.  
"How many letters should I send out?" Think about it this way: if your trip costs \$1000 and you send out 10 letters, you are planning that each person sends in \$100. Is that reasonable for the people you have on your list?
- Write down **EVERY** name the Lord brings to mind without judgments about who you should or should not contact and who will or will not give. When brainstorming names it can be helpful to use categories to trigger your mind. This is a good exercise to do with your family or spouse. Here are some categories to get started.

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas card list | <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers/faculty at school | <input type="checkbox"/> Coaches                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended Family     | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend's parents           | <input type="checkbox"/> Class at church/small group         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Friends             | <input type="checkbox"/> Co-workers (former...)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends from where you used to live |
| <input type="checkbox"/> College friends     | <input type="checkbox"/> Employers (former...)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends from a previous church      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family friends      | <input type="checkbox"/> Classmates/Teammates       |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church friends      | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctors/Dentist            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High School friends | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media friends       |  |

**Please consider that support from outside The Creek church family will help eliminate the potential of Creek members being overwhelmed with requests for donations.**

Add some new categories of your own and write down every person you can think of within each one. Pray over each category and person and let the spirit guide you and don't allow fear to distract you. We often find that some of the people you least expected to partner with you are the most enthusiastic about it. Keep these tips in mind:

- Do not say "no" for someone, you will be surprised who says yes. You are not hounding them, you are not selling them anything. You are simply informing them of what's going on in your life and allowing them to make a decision to be a part of it.
- Do not neglect people just because you haven't stayed in touch. Oftentimes this is a great way to re-connect with them which can be a great result even if they don't support you at this time.
- Do allow non-christian co-workers and friends the opportunity to be personally touched, inspired, and maybe spiritually awakened by being informed about what God is doing in your life and through the mission partnership.

### **Step 2: Write your personalized support letter**

Support letters invite family and friends to join your team through prayer and funding. A sample support letter has been provided in this section. Your letter should be personalized to fit your trip purposes and should communicate your heart! People will be excited to give because of their relationship with you and your vision to see God work. Remember, the hard work you are willing to endure will often represent your level of personal commitment and responsibility to this trip.

#### **What do I include in my Support Letter?**

- Dates of trip
- Location
- Purpose
- Financial paragraph as approved by the GO! team
- Cost of trip
- Date that funds are due
- Appreciation of friendship, prayer support, and financial support
- Enclose a copy of the "GO! Donor Support Form."
- Provide a self addressed return envelope

The letter should not exceed one page. Keep the letter clear and concise in communicating the purpose of your trip. Remember that people like stories and they give to a vision. Sending so many letters will likely mean typing a general letter then editing each one to personalize it. Your supporters want to know they are important to you individually, so be sure to include some information specific only to the recipient. Personalizing each letter, perhaps adding a handwritten "P.S." at the bottom of each one, will be worth your time and effort as it usually results in a higher number of responses than non-personalized letters. Here are a few other suggestions to keep in mind:

- Use proper grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- Keep it positive, joyful and enthusiastic.
- Be clear and concise. Letters should be no more than one page and should be easy to read. Use the fewest number of words necessary to share the most important message. Be sure to use a legible font.
- Make it easy for people to respond. Once again, include a GO! Trip Donor Support form along with a self-addressed envelope
- Edit! Get at least two other people to read your letter and share their feedback before you print it.
- Remember that you are not trying to persuade people to give, you are simply sharing your need for support.

### **GENERAL LETTER OUTLINE:**

- 1. Introduction** – Begin with a good opening sentence that catches their attention, then share one or two sentences of brief personal information.
- 2. Share a brief personal story** about what God is doing in your life and/or what has inspired you to participate in the mission project, and state the purpose of your project.
- 3. Be personal** and adjust to the different people you are writing to. If you know certain people better than others you can change your letter to better fit the individual. Help the person or family realize that they are a part of your team. If they can sense that they are truly a support to you and a part of a bigger team they will be more willing to support you with prayers and funds.
- 4. Present Your Mission** – Share specific details about the project (location, dates, etc.), emphasize your spiritual calling (why you want to go), and explain what you hope to accomplish during the project. Communicate your excitement and share specific things you will be involved in on the field.

**5. Present Your Need** – Do not be timid, but be tactful. Explain your need for both financial and prayer support. Explain that you need to get 20 people to commit to praying for you everyday while you are on your trip and 10 people to pray for you for each day from this day until two weeks after you return. Be sure they feel like a partner in your mission, not just a contributor to it. Always be specific about the amount you need and when you need it. Make sure this is 2-3 weeks before your airfare deadline. You may also want to suggest specific amounts for them to give. (Ex. if 50 people give \$80 I will meet my goal of \$4,000. If 75 people give 53.33 I will meet my goal. If 15 people give \$100, 25 people give \$50, and 50 people give \$25 I will meet my goal of \$4,000.)

**6. Communication Plan** – Let them know how they can communicate with you through email, phone, and text with questions about the trip. You will also want to tell them about your plans for communication while you are on your trip. If applicable, some teams send emails to their support team giving them an update of what has happened each day on the trip. Communicate your follow-up plans. These will always include writing a follow-up letter after the project but may include an open-house or dinner party to celebrate. This makes it personal and again helps them understand they are a very real part of your team and experience.

**7. Closing** – In the closing of your letter be personal in expressing your appreciation of their consideration and, if applicable, their friendship. You may also thank them ahead of time for their prayer and financial support.

**8. Personal Signature:** – Be sure to personally sign each letter.

**9. Handwritten P.S.** – This should always be included if you are using any type of a form letter. It should be brief and personal.

**10. Sending the Letter** - Seriously consider hand delivering your letter to some of your recipients. That personal face-to-face contact can be highly effective in communicating your desire and mission. Once again, make sure you include a self-addressed return envelope and a copy of the GO! Trip Donor Support form.

**11. Personalize the GO! Trip Donor Support Form** - You need to fill in your name, team name, and address on the form so that your donor doesn't get confused.

## **READY TO SEND YOUR LETTER?**

Here is a quick checklist of important items needed in your support letter.

- Your personal info written on GO! Trip Donor Support Form
- Personalized Greeting
- Identify yourself to reader
- Give a quick life update
- General Trip information
- God's influence regarding your trip decision
- Include a few personal goals
- Edit! Get at least two other people to read your letter and share their feedback before you print it.
- Submit finished letter to [ChrisCesnik@TheCreek.org](mailto:ChrisCesnik@TheCreek.org) for approval before distribution.
- Inform reader of planned activities
- Explain need (prayer & financial) & fundraising deadline
- Thank the reader for joining your team
- Salutation and signature
- Enclose GO! Trip Donor Support Form
- Enclose self- addressed envelope

## **FOLLOW UP**

Because life happens, mail gets lost, your letter might be sitting in their home office for six weeks. Be sure to follow up your letter recipients about 10 days after you sent them with a phone call, text, or email. It ensures they received your letter, have reviewed it, and it gives them a chance to ask questions and hear directly from you.

## **SPECIAL NOTE REGARDING ONLINE LETTERS AND DONATIONS.**

You may not have current addresses for all of the names on your Contact List. In this case you could send them a link to your Managed Missions "Personal Profile" web page. You may send the link via Facebook using a direct message or in a text message. You may also consider doing this for anyone on your list who uses technology on a regular basis. Many people no longer have checks and their best option may be to give using an digital method which is available via your "Personal Profile" page at [TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com](http://TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com)

## SAMPLE SUPPORT LETTER

February 12, 2014

Dear (Type in their name here)

“Every moment in every event in every man’s life on earth plants something in his soul” (Thomas Merton). For the last several years I have experienced many moments and events that have planted and grown a seed in my heart for the victims of human trafficking. I am writing to inform you of an exciting opportunity I have to participate in a mission trip this summer to Cambodia to see first-hand how God is using Rapha House in the midst of this horrific global epidemic. I will be traveling with a group of nine from Indian Creek Christian Church (“The Creek”). Our team is scheduled to depart on July 13 and return on July 26. We are excited for the opportunity to come alongside of Rapha House as we share Jesus and His compassion in a tangible way.

Rapha House is an organization that works with girls that have been rescued from human trafficking. Their goal is to help girls achieve lasting freedom from a desperate future by providing education, vocational training, care, and counseling. Rapha House currently has a success rate of 95%, with success rate being defined as girls not returning to exploitation. If you would like to know more information on this organization, please check out their website at [www.raphahouse.org](http://www.raphahouse.org).

As I prepare for this trip, there are two requests for which I am seeking your partnership.

**First**, I need to secure the names of at least 25 people who will support me and the entire team in prayer leading up to and during this trip. Some specific ways you can support me and the team include praying that God will prepare our hearts for what we will see and experience, that He will keep us safe and healthy before and during the trip, and that I would be open to God’s leading in my life as I seek His direction.

**Secondly**, I am asking that you prayerfully consider supporting this effort with a tax-deductible gift. I have committed to raise \$3,200 or more towards the total cost of my team’s expenses and/or supplies. If you feel led to participate financially in this effort, please note that tax-deductible gifts must be made out to “The Creek.” Please put Cambodia/Rapha House 2014 in the memo line and mail to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. **DO NOT PUT MY NAME ON THE CHECK.**

My goal is to have the necessary prayer partners and donations by March 16, 2014. Thank you for prayerfully considering my request.

Much Love,

Thank you for considering being a part of my support team. With your prayer support I have confidence that God will move in incredible ways in my spiritual journey. As a member of my team you are intrical in the ministry that is being done through Rapha House. **Please follow the instructions on the enclosed GO! Trip Support Form and return it to me as soon as possible.** My mailing address is:

RAPHA HOUSE - 2014

Love • Rescue • Heal



## GO! TRIP DONOR SUPPORT FORM

GO! Trip Support Form  
Thank you for being generous!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I will support Scott Heller in the following ways:

- I/We will pray for Scott Heller and the Kenya 2015 team.  
[participant name] [team name]
- I/We will contribute to the Kenya 2015 team with a donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.  
[team name]

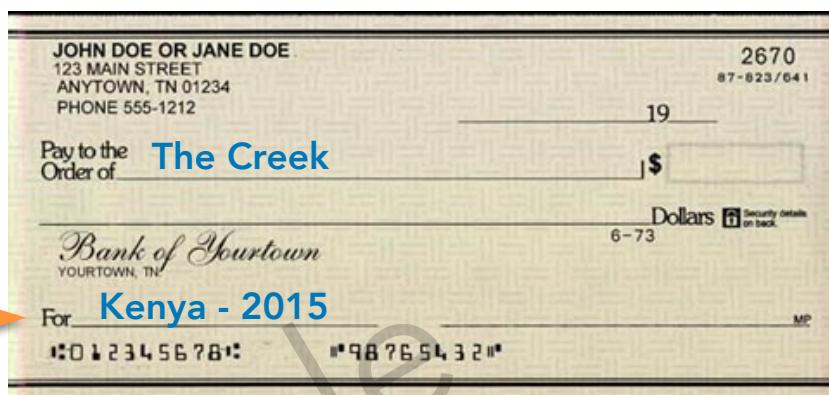
You can donate online at [TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com/mytrip/ScottHeller1](http://TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com/mytrip/ScottHeller1)

(Please make checks payable to "The Creek" and mail it to Scott Heller, please put the trip name in the memo line but **do not put Scott Heller on the check.**)

Send donations to:

Scott Heller  
6430 S. Franklin Rd  
Indianapolis, IN 46259

For Tax purposes:  
Do not put a individual's  
name on the memo line.



"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."  
Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

### IRS Guidelines

\*In order to receive a tax deduction for your donation, the IRS is very specific regarding sponsorship of a participant for trips. The Creek has complete discretion and control of all contributions intended exclusively for the pursuit of its exempt purposes and is committed to providing reasonable measures to ensure that donor-preference gifts are used for their intended exempt purposes and projects.

## **WHAT YOUR SUPPORT TEAM NEEDS FROM YOU**

### **1. To stay informed**

As you begin to share with family and friends about your upcoming GO! trip, many will ask, "What exactly will you be doing there?" This can be challenging to answer depending on the extent of your knowledge regarding the details of your project. Most people will be satisfied to hear a basic summary of the project you will be working on.

*The most important thing to remember is that your purpose is to bless the missionaries who are serving there long-term and to be an asset to their ministry in any way you can.*

Be sure to let your support team know how you plan to keep them informed during your trip. Keep in mind that you may have limited communication ability with people at home. Please check with your trip leader prior to making promises about communicating with your support team.

### **2. To feel like they are a vital part to your team**

You want to ensure that your support team realizes that they are more than just a one time pray-er or check writer. Below are some great ideas to engage your support team:

- Send them a prayer itinerary for the duration of your trip. (ex. Day 1 - pray that our team travels safely and all of our flight connections are on time... Day 3 - Pray that we really connect in our relationships with those we are serving today... Day 5 - pray that our team is encouraging each other, remaining unified, and taking care of each other.)
- Secretly obtain pictures of your support team (possibly from Facebook). Enlarge their face, cut it out, and glue the picture to a popsicle stick. Throughout your trip take pictures of you holding up a supporters "face" next to yours. Have some of the people you are serving take a picture with it. This allows people to know that you were thinking of them and they are important to you and were a very real part of your team and what you accomplished!
- Ask them to join you in accepting a challenge of eating "Rice and Beans" or some other low cost, minimal, or ethnically appropriate meal every "Wednesday" until you return from your trip. (Or for the month leading up to your trip or until your financial deadline, etc.) Ask them to specifically pray for you and your team during this meal.
- Any other creative ideas you can think of to make it personal for them.

### **3. To feel appreciated**

Who does not like to feel appreciated? If you meet with people to ask them to partner with you, send them a note afterward to thank them for their time. If someone sends a one-time donation, send them a thank-you note.

The following is an example of a thank you note written to someone who recently sent a donation:

*Dear Mr. Smith,*

*Thank you for your recent donation! I really appreciate your partnership with me on my mission project to Cambodia. It is an honor to have you as part of my support team! I pray that my service will be both honoring to your investment and to Christ. Please remember me in your prayers as they are also a crucial part of this mission. I look forward to following up with you about the great things that God does throughout the course of my mission trip. Again, thank you!*

*Sincerely,*

*John Doe*

### **4. To see the impact**

People love to be part of things when they can see how their role has influenced the lives of other people in positive ways. Those who are praying for you want to know how their prayers have been answered, and those who contribute financially want to see that their donations really made a difference in your life and the lives of those whom you serve. Take the time to contact and meet with your ministry partners after your trip to communicate their impact. You can host an open-house event or a dinner party and invite all of our local support team members.

Whether in person or through your follow-up letter make sure to discuss the long term change that has begun to take root in your life and the long term ministry that continues through the mission partner that you worked with.

It is important to remember that you and your support team, while taking on different roles, are **equal shareholders in the mission that is taking place**. They are your peers, your team. You have the opportunity to be an encouragement to them and vice versa. As you contact them throughout the course of your project, avoid speaking down to them. Keep in mind that you have the opportunity to inspire and spiritually awaken them to a God who rescues and redeems!

## AFTER YOUR TRIP

It is important to contact each of your support team members within two weeks after you return from your mission project. You may want to send them a letter or invite them to a gathering where you can recap your experience.

Whatever you do, be sure to include each of the following elements:

- Thank them again for their support
- Share how you were personally impacted and how you saw God at work
- Discuss the long term change that has begun to take root in your life and the long term ministry that continues through the mission partner that you worked with.
- Show pictures, choose a handful of your favorites to communicate the most important aspects of your experience
- Share stories. Keep them concise and stick to the focus of your project
- Tell them they should consider having a similar incredible experience by going on a future GO! trip! They can see upcoming trips by visiting [TheCreek.org/Global](http://TheCreek.org/Global)***

As you follow-up after your project, you have the opportunity to encourage your supporters and to give back to them by sharing the “God stories” from your experience. Emphasize that through their support they had a hand in the work that God did in your life and in the lives of the people you met.

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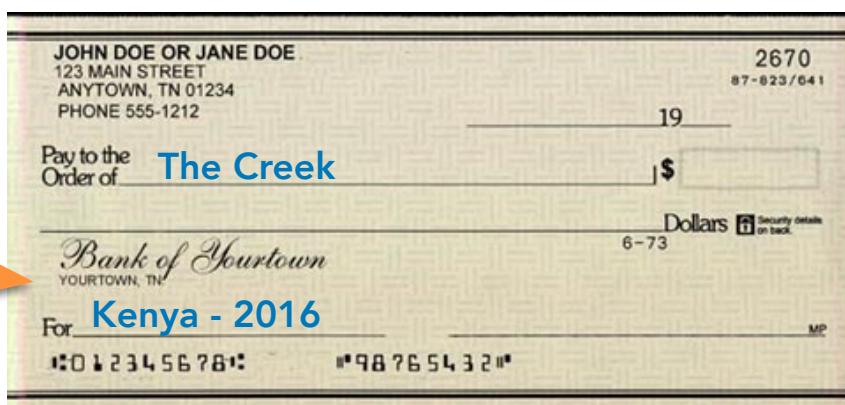
Drop off your checks in a sealed envelope with your name, team name, and dollar amount on it to: the church office during business hours, your team leader, or a GO! staff member during weekend services. If necessary you can also mail to:  
The Creek Attn: Chris Cesnik 6430 S. Franklin Rd, Indianapolis, IN 46259

**Please instruct your donors to include the team name only on the memo line of the check so that it can be credited toward your project.** (Example: Kenya 2016)  
**For tax exemption purposes, your name cannot be anywhere on the check!**

We will know who to credit that amount to because all of your donations will come from you in a sealed envelope with your name, team name, and dollar amount on it.

Indian Creek Christian Church must abide by many IRS guidelines due to our tax exempt status. Money donated to The Creek by your donors are applied toward your specific mission trip. Should reasons beyond your control prevent you from going, donated funds will still be used for GO! projects. To maintain tax exempt status and standards as a charitable organization, all donations are non-refundable. Financial support received in excess of your project will be used at The Creek's discretion. The Creek honors preference of gifts solicited and, in accordance with IRS regulations, retains discretion and control over their use.

For Tax purposes:  
Do not put a  
individual's name on  
the memo line.





## GO! Trip Support Form Thank you for being generous!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I will support \_\_\_\_\_ in the following ways:

I/We will pray for \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ team.

I/We will contribute to the \_\_\_\_\_ team with a check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

You can donate online at [TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com/mytrip/](http://TheCreek.ManagedMissions.com/mytrip/) \_\_\_\_\_

(Please make checks payable to "The Creek" and mail it back to me, please put the trip name in the memo line but **do not put my name anywhere on the check.**)

### Send donations to:

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For Tax purposes:  
Do not put a individual's  
name on the memo line.

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,  
and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

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