

## **Global Urban Trek Student Manual**

### **Introduction**

Welcome to the Global Urban Trek! We have all taken different paths to get to this point. Some of you knew God was calling you to a specific city, others saw God work through a change of plans. However, you are on a great team and we can be sure that the Spirit has guided each of us to come together as a team that will serve God, our placement communities, and each other this summer.

You have all heeded God's call to leave behind family, friends, summer jobs, and vacation time to allow him to mold and shape you on the Global Urban Trek. This summer will be intense, heart-wrenching, uplifting, frustrating, encouraging, fun, hard work and, if we are open to God's leading, a life-changing experience.

This manual will include information you will need as you dive into trip preparation over the next several weeks. Please ensure that you read each section carefully and contact your director if you have any questions.

### **The Global Urban Trek Vision – by Scott Bessenecker**

**The Global Urban Trek calls students to commit to using their gifts and vocation to live and serve the urban poor beginning with at least two years after graduation.**

When Jesus sent out the disciples in Luke 9 he said some interesting things. He commanded them not to take basic things they would need like extra clothes and money. Apparently he wanted them to be desperately dependent upon God and the kindness of the people whom they were called to serve. Jesus also said not to move around from house to house but to stay in one home and eat whatever was set before them. He seems to have wanted them to connect as deeply as possible to one family. Finally, Jesus said to cure the sick people in the household and tell them that the Kingdom of God had come near to them -- the Kingdom had come near to them -- what an interesting phrase. It is my conviction that the Kingdom of God came near to the people to whom Jesus sent the disciples because the disciples had come near to them. The Kingdom was present in her citizens.

The Global Urban Trek was borne out of one overriding conviction - to raise up flesh and blood followers of Jesus to incarnate the gospel to the urban poor. The problems of poverty are not essentially economic ones though wealth and business and banking are aspects that need careful attention. The problems of poverty are not essentially educational although creating learning opportunities may be vitally important. The central problem isn't even the government or multi-national corporations although the misuse of power is something the Church ought to be addressing vigorously. The primary issue is one of despair. Despair is an unmerciful tyrant, and I am convinced that Jesus Christ is the only satisfying answer to the question of despair. The arrival of God's Kingdom is good news. It is full of hope, and that kind of hope is not conveyed very well through a program, it is conveyed through living creatures. People to take up residence alongside the despairing.

The Trek is essentially about opening up an opportunity for God to call some of us to go and spend our lives among the poor as his couriers of hope. This summer we may simply be able to offer a cup of cold water to those in need. We may also have the privilege of solidarity with the poor. But most importantly, we can lean into Christ as he speaks to us on how he wants us to spend the remainder of our lives. Each summer about 30 - 40% of the participants respond by pledging at least two years to serve the urban poor. Many will go on to spend their lives among them. As you check out this website, pray for the mobilization of 1000 Mother Teresas. Perhaps you are one of them!

*Scott Bessenecker,  
Global Urban Trek Director*

## **Primary objectives of the Global Urban Trek**

The primary objective of the Global Urban Trek, as you can discern in Scott's vision for the Trek, is to provide students with an opportunity to respond to God's call to long-term ministry among the urban poor. Even though God may not call all of you to specifically live and serve among with the urban poor, it is our belief that God, through scripture, calls all Christians to a life work of caring for the "least of these". Your career may not allow you to work directly with the urban poor – but your finances, volunteer time, prayer life, and advocacy abilities enable you to engage in life-long ministry serving the poor and marginalized. Therefore, the Trek is about calling each of us to long-term ministry to the urban poor as an essential part of their Christian life. For some of us as their primary vocation and location.

The core objective of the Trek is achieved through two secondary objectives. 1. To give students an experience of working with ministry partners who are dedicated to serving people suffering in poverty, and the ability to work directly with and build relationships with people suffering in poverty. 2. To start students discussing and thinking about all of the issues surrounding poverty (urbanization, globalization, consumerism, foreign policy, etc.) and Christian responses to poverty and those issues.

Additionally, there are many other objectives that are a part of any short-term mission trip. These include – emphasizing the importance of Christian community, encouraging students to think critically about their own culture from a vantage point that is "outside the fishbowl", developing a larger vision of the Church, developing a reliance on God through prayer and scripture, etc.

## **Program Overview**

The Global Urban Trek program consists of four main components – Orientation, Ministry Placements, Mid-project Retreat, and Debriefing.

1. Orientation – The Global Urban Trek begins at your launch site. Teams going to Bangkok, Kolkata, and Manila will launch from Bangkok. Teams going to Cairo and Mexico City will launch from Mexico City. Orientation will start the discussion about poverty and provide you tools for making your placement experience a fruitful one. There will also be lots of logistical matters taken care of during orientation. All Trek participants will be commissioned and sent. You will be asked to consider a long term vocational calling to serve among the urban poor, and at debriefing you will have the opportunity to make a commitment to begin this process by serving at least 2 years after graduation. Once you arrive at your Trek city you will have a two-day orientation that will include items that are Trek city specific as well as continued orientation to the city itself. If you tune out during orientation or do not take it seriously your experience on the Global Urban Trek will suffer.
2. Ministry Placements – The majority of your time during the Global Urban Trek will be spent at your placement sites. At these sites you will have the opportunity to learn about urban poverty and ministry from our ministry partners who have years experience working with people and communities living in poverty. It is your opportunity to build relationships with the people you are serving and learn directly from them about their experiences. It is here, in the encounter between students and the urban poor, where God will work at shaping your heart. Remember that the ultimate purpose of your being on the Global Urban Trek is to experience ministry in a setting of urban poverty, to learn what God is doing in that context, and to discern how God is calling you to minister to the urban poor. In that sense, being is more important than doing, and building relationships with the people you meet in the community and sharing the love of Christ with them is more important than completing tasks.
3. Mid-project Retreat – Midway through the summer, the team will get back together for a couple of days for a team retreat. We will have an opportunity to spend a bit of time just hanging out and exploring the retreat location. The main focus of the time will be to process the summer. These days will accomplish three main objectives.
  - Continued discussion of poverty and Christian response. We will do this through scripture

study and some teaching time/discussion.

- There will be time for debriefing the first half of the trip. This time will be for you to share your praises and struggles, and highs and lows within a caring community. The retreat will give you an opportunity to talk with other students and leaders about your experience and discern how you can go into the second half of the trip better able to experience working with ministry partners who are dedicated to serving people suffering in poverty, and able to work directly with and build relationships with people suffering in poverty.
  - The team retreat gives you a chance to rest and refresh for the second half of the trip. The placement can be an intense experience (and so can the constant work of speaking a foreign language and building relationships) and the retreat gives you an opportunity to be spiritually refreshed through worship and prayer in the team community.
4. Debriefing – Debriefing in marks an important point in the Global Urban Trek There will be regular debriefing times during the project as well as on the mid-project retreat. You will also have a city specific debrief before you re-join the other Trek teams at your launch point. It is a time to reflect on your journey and to ask tough questions about how to integrate what you have learned into your life. It is a time to seek God’s call on your life and discern if he may be calling you to a particular vocation among marginalized people. It is a time for the speakers and leaders to give you tools for processing the Trek and integrating the things you learned into your life back on campus and your home. It is a time for praise and thanksgiving to God, and for goodbyes to friends. There will also be a specific opportunity to respond to God’s calling in your life to serve the poor by pledging at least two years to serve the urban poor.

## **Schedule**

Here is a tentative schedule for the summer. “Tentative” because this is if everything goes according to plan – and things tend to change more frequently and with less notice during the project. If you are a very flexible, “take it as it comes” type of person then you will feel right at home on the Global Urban Trek. However, if you are a person who really needs to stick with a set plan you will probably be challenged this summer. So, view this schedule, and every other schedule you see this summer, as tentative. Of course the orientation and debrief and the flights are pretty firm.

June 16th – 20th – Launch Site Orientation

June 21st -23rd – Orientation to Trek city

June 24th – July 8th – students at placement sites

July 8th – July 11th – Mid-project Retreat

July 11th – July 25th – students at placement sites

July 25th – July 26th – Debriefing in Trek city

July 27th – July 31st – Launch Site Debriefing

## **Accommodation**

Where ever it is safe and possible to do so, students will be housed with host families that live in the community being served by the ministry site. Housing will vary according to country and community. It has taken years of partnership to develop trust with families who are willing to open their home to us. We take every invitation seriously and want to honor our hosts. All of our hosts live in situations where the standard of comfort is well below what most citizens of the United States are accustomed to. There will be

no air conditioning, and in most places, limited or not access to running water. It should be noted that we will be treated as guests while we are staying with our hosts. For this reason, we may be offered comforts that are not usually afforded to the families themselves. Please know that we have developed understandings with our hosts and our ministry partners and have had lengthy conversations about this. You will receive very strict guidelines from your director regarding all of the protocols around housing, food, gifts, etc.

## **Communication**

This section details the Trek policy for students contacting home during the Trek. Understand that these policies are not designed to restrict your freedom, but primarily to facilitate better relationships with your placement sites and the team. We are only serving at our sites for a short time and our focus should be on building relationships with the people we are serving and the team. Spending time and energy in constant communication with people back home draws us away from the task at hand.

**Telephone** - The Trek policy is that no team members are to make phone calls home during the Trek. There are two main reasons for this:

Allowing phoning would enable students to focus on their already established relationships with family and friends instead of doing the hard work of building relationships with the team and nationals. Additionally, the mere task of planning the phone call takes focus away from the Trek – organizing when to call, buying phone cards, encountering frustration when the time you planned to call is not possible because of a change of plans.

Your director will have a cell phone during the Trek and will be able to contact the United States in case of emergency. If there is an emergency back home, they should call the InterVarsity office during office hours at 608-274-9001. If it is after hours, they can call the emergency phone number 608-213-4823. Please note that the emergency number should only be used for emergency communication.

**Email** - The Trek policy is that no team members are to use email during the course of the Trek. Email poses the same problem as the phone in that it can become a way to escape from the hard work of adjusting to the culture and building relationships.

There will be 2 or 3 times during the summer when students will be allowed access to email. One may be when you first arrive. You will be able to email home during the mid project retreat. Finally, during the last week of the Trek you will be able to email in order to confirm transportation back home. All email will depend on access to a connection. Please direct your family, friends, and supporters to Track the Trek at [www.globalurbantrek.org](http://www.globalurbantrek.org).

You should NOT be emailing while you are at placement, focus on your commitment to serve and build relationships instead. Save the emailing for the retreat.

**Letters and Postcards** - If your family or friends want to send you a letter let them know that they should send it before July if they want to have a good chance of it getting to your site before we leave. In previous years we have had a lot of mail come in after we left. Please note that only letters or post cards may be sent. No packages can be sent. They cost money to be received at customs and are packed with non-essentials that do not conform to the Trek packing list.

If this is a possibility, your director will give you the mailing address.

**Webpage** - Encourage your family and friends to Track the Trek at [www.globalurbantrek.org](http://www.globalurbantrek.org) during the summer. All projects will be posting a regular blog with photos and video of the teams.

**Prayer/Update Email List** - Hopefully you are collecting the email addresses of your prayer and financial supporters (obviously many people are in both groups) so you can send them updates during orientation/mid-project retreat/debrief. You will have very limited access to the web, as it is usually very slow and does not upload data at the speeds you are used to in the United States. For this reason, we encourage you to give your email list to a friend or relative who can forward any emails they receive which you may not have been able to send to your entire list.

### **Emergency communication**

The InterVarsity Global Projects Office in Madison, WI will know how to get in touch with your team at all times. During Central time business hours they can be reached at 608-274-9001. There is also a cell phone number for emergencies if something should happen during off hours (608-213-4823). Your parents will be notified in case of an emergency.

### **Packing and Health Concerns**

#### **Packing**

As you know from reading about the Global Urban Trek on the website, we have several packing restrictions to which not all mission trips ascribe. There is a temptation to take these restrictions personally as an infringement on one's individual liberty. However, challenging individual freedom is not the reason for the restrictions. Through experience the Trek directors have learned that allowing students to bring certain items can cause difficulties between placement ministries and students, result in barriers to building relationships with the urban poor, and defeat the purpose and uniqueness of the Trek experience. The following sections will outline what to bring and what not to bring – and give explanation when necessary.

#### **Baggage**

Like the disciples in Luke 9 we will be packing very light (though not as light as they did). We pack light because we want to rely on the hospitality of our hosts and not arrive at their doorstep with two huge bags full of stuff for every eventuality – which would only emphasize the gulf between our financial capacities. Additionally, we are not going out to the bush, but to one of the largest cities in the world – if something breaks, tears, runs out, etc. we can easily replace it.

The airline allows a carry-on bag and a purse/satchel/small over-the-shoulder bag into the cabin – and that is what we will be taking. Please fit all that you're bringing in a carry-on bag. You will need to be able to carry this around with you on public transportation in the city. Your "purse" should be an over-the-shoulder bag that you can use to carry what you need for the day – sunscreen, water bottle, etc. Please note that ideally, you would pack all of your summer belongings in a bag no bigger than your book bag (and it will make it much easier to carry, as rolling carry-ons do not roll on the unpaved streets and warrens of our hosts' neighborhoods). Also, please note that we do not mean for you to bring two book bags full of stuff.

#### **Passport**

Make THREE photocopies of your passport, leave one copy with your parents and bring the other copies and your actual passport to orientation. Your director will keep a copy, and you will keep a copy for yourself. Of course you need to have your actual passport to get into your country. Once we start Orientation, your director will likely collect your passports and lock them up in a secure location.

#### **Clothing and Clothing Restrictions**

There are two main restrictions on clothing. The first is – only bring the clothing outlined on the packing list. If you wear a new outfit for ten straight days you will not impress anyone, only emphasizing your own personal wealth to the people you are serving. A lot of the people we will be ministering to and with do not have closets stuffed with clothing as many of us do. It is best to bring 2-3 shirts and pairs of pants which you can wear multiple times before washing (and you will be hand washing your own clothes), but enough underwear and socks so you always smell decent. Even though you are bringing a small amount of clothing, that does not mean it has to be extremely casual clothing – i.e. ripped jeans and an old camp T-shirt. For example, many of the men in the communities you will be living in typically wear short sleeve collared shirts (golf shirts or button-up). Think casual day at an office.

The second clothing restriction is on revealing and/or provocative clothing, and shirts with overtly Christian messages. Our ministry partners have emphasized this restriction and it is non-negotiable. The citizens of the cities we travel to wear pants and capris – mostly tourists wear shorts. We will be wearing pants – women can wear long skirts (to the ankle/calf) depending on the country. No tank-tops, no shirts that show cleavage, no shirts that bare the midriff, no excessively tight shirts, no shirts with obscene, vulgar, or offensive language or images, no really tight pants. Christian communities in the vast majority of other countries dress very conservatively. Also, be aware that you will be hand washing and line drying the clothing you bring – clothing will get stretched out and not shrink back the way it would in a dryer. You may want to leave V-neck shirts at home and bring a belt.

### **The Packing List – What to Bring.**

This list contains the essentials and you should be able to fit it all into your carry-on and “purse”. This is not a starting point, but an exhaustive list of items to bring. You may bring less, but not more.

- **2-3 pairs of pants (women can substitute a long skirt for pants)**
- **3-4 shirts (collared shirt/blouse)**
- **1 light jacket or rain poncho or umbrella**
- **1 Modest set of pajamas**
- **1 Pair of modest shorts (For Mid-project and American Team time ONLY)**
- **1 one-piece swimsuit**
- **5 pairs of underwear (bras for women)**
- **3-5 undershirts**
- **1 pair of Sandals (to be determined by director)**
- **one pair of athletic shoes and socks (to be determined by director)**
- **Bedding: one SHEET, a sweatshirt that can double as a pillow**
- **Small towel or sarong**
- **soap**
- **shampoo (3 oz is all you can check, and will be plenty to get you by. The team will purchase larger bottles in country)**
- **toothpaste, toothbrush, floss**
- **deodorant**
- **Eye glasses, contacts (solution if needed)**
- **shaving gear**
- **feminine products**
- **sunscreen (bring a bottle, you can check your carry-on)**
- **Laundry detergent for hand washing**
- **Your Bible**
- **The Trek Journal (and if you write a lot, another small journal)**
- **The New Friars and another book of your choice**
- **a couple of pens or pencils (do not bring a ton of office supplies)**
- **Water bottle (to be determined by director)**
- **SMALL flashlight**
- **A few photos of your family, friends, city (make sure the photos do not show excessive wealth or people in revealing clothing)**

- **Passport and 3 copies of your passport and visa**
- **Emergency Credit Card (will be collected by your director at Orientation)**
- **Cell Phone for Domestic Travel only (will be collected by your director at Orientation)**
- **Insect Repellent (to be determined by director)**

### **Do NOT bring**

- walkmans, discmans, cell phones, mp3 players, iPods, portable video games, and all other similar electronic devices.
- curling irons, hair dryers, straightening irons, or other hair products other than shampoo/conditioner
- Alcohol, recreational drugs, firearms, and weapons of any sort.
- cameras
- Cosmetic make up

### **Gifts**

**Your director will give you more specific directions on what gifts to bring.**

Some of you know what it is like to be part of a gift-giving culture. Small gifts are a way of life, especially when you are a guest. You will want to bring some modest gifts for the journey.

You should bring a few small gifts for a family or ministry leader that you may get to know. Small inexpensive things from America like calendars, worship tapes/CDs, and small frames are great. This sounds self-glorifying, but nice framed pictures of yourself are also great gifts. Your director will give you more specific directions on what gifts to bring. You should not plan on bringing a ton of gifts to just hand out.

### **What You Do Not Need to Bring**

There are many things that you might think of bringing “just in case” – scissors, glue, sewing kit, etc. Please do not bother – if you really need these things your ministry site or host family probably has them.

We do not allow these items because they enable students to “escape” from building relationships with people and exploring the culture and/or reinforce the difference in wealth between the students and the urban poor and thereby become barriers to relationship. Additionally, many of these items were highlighted by our ministry partners as things students should leave at home.

### **Money**

The guideline for Trek teams is for students to bring \$30 maximum of spending money, and no credit cards, bankcards, traveller’s cheques, etc. We will be following that guideline – so bring \$30 maximum for spending money. In the past some students have embarked on the challenge to bring no personal money at all and I encourage you to think about doing that yourself.

### **Some comments on the spending money policy.**

The only thing your spending money is used for is souvenirs– everything else is covered by the Trek budget.

This is not a shopping trip - if you are buying souvenirs you will probably only get some for your immediate family. Although, in the past students have been creative with their resources and brought back more souvenirs. Personal souvenirs often end up being crafts made with children or gifts from people at your ministry site – and will hold more value than anything you buy in a store.

Part of the reason for the money policy is to bring you as close as possible to the experience of not having your own resources. Obviously you still have your own resources at home, but without your bank/credit cards you do not have access to them for a few weeks.

Another reason for this policy is that students can use money to subvert their relationship with their hosts.

A good example is the use of money for snacks. If students have a lot of money then they can eat most of their food through snacks and then avoid eating a lot of the food that their host family prepares if they do not find it as palatable as their snack food. This breaks down trust and relationship (if you refuse your host family's food you are refusing their hospitality). We want to eat what is set before us, as the disciples did in Luke 9.

### **Final Thoughts on the Packing Policies**

Sometimes students see these policies as arbitrary impositions by Trek directors too focused on curtailing personal freedoms and expressions. However, there are two fallacies with that line of thinking. First, these policies are not abstract rules devised by the Trek leadership, but are based on the combined experience of all the Trek directors over the past nine years. The policies change and evolve as the Trek leadership discovers how trust with the ministries and the urban poor is built and how it is broken. Second, the directors are not focused on curtailing personal freedoms, but on maintaining good relationships with the ministry partners for future years and facilitating the best possible encounter between students and the people they will be serving. Ministry partners let us know that revealing clothing and displays of wealth through lots of clothes and make-up are barriers to building relationships and thereby barriers to serving people in poverty. Directors in past years have found that student withdrawal from the team and host families is enabled by iPods and mp3 players, and that when students have too much money they focus on finding all the perfect souvenirs for family and friends. The policies are rooted in reality and if our team follows them then we will be eliminating barriers to building great relationships at our ministry sites and ensuring that our ministry partners will want to partner with the Global Urban Trek in the future.

We find that most students see the value of these policies and why we have them and see it as a way for God to use the summer to challenge their dependence on certain things. However, there always seems to be one or two students per team that take the restrictions personally and either covertly or overtly disrespect the Trek leadership. E.g. – one year a young woman secretly went to Internet cafes to check email and check her Facebook– and would not stop even after the director asked. Please note that if a student is asked to return home because of continual violation of Trek policies, they will be responsible for all costs involved. Please also note that we have never had to send a student home for this reason. We pray that God would be encouraging and challenging us now to commit to the policies and that we would have a team in which everyone is on board with policies and in solidarity with each other for the summer.

Take some time to read through all the policies again and ask God to reveal what area you may be tempted to disobey. God desires us to build relationship and serve and love the people we work with this summer. Therefore, Satan will strike at those areas that will break down trust, and will use our weaknesses to do so. For some of you it may be personal appearance – you are concerned about the restrictions on clothing and make-up. For some it may be feeling secure with your resources and the fact that you will only have \$30 of your own money is disconcerting. For others you are worried you will have trouble without your music. Take the opportunity this summer to leave all that behind, all the things we often rely on for security and identity - clothing, music, money, appearance - and enter into solidarity with the poor. Let us put our trust completely in God, let Him provide our security and identity, and through our relationships with our brothers and sisters let the Spirit transform us.

### **Health Concerns**

This section contains a few health related items. Please read it carefully.

#### **Medical Insurance**

Double-check your medical insurance plan and confirm that you have at least \$50,000 of coverage for medical care. As part of the Trek budget you are covered for immediate emergency care insurance, which will cover small things like a visit to the doctor and also emergency evacuation to the United States. However, your own plan needs to be able to cover longer hospital stays and medical procedures. If you do not have medical insurance, you can purchase a short term policy at [www.ivglobalprojects.org](http://www.ivglobalprojects.org).

## **Immunizations**

The Global Urban Trek does not cover the costs for your immunizations. These may be covered by your health insurance. There are travel clinics that specialize in giving you all the info you would need for staying healthy overseas. You can also check into your campus health center or your family doctor to see about getting the proper immunizations. The Center for Disease Control suggests the following:

Available at the county health department (this is cheaper than the hospital/doctor):

Hepatitis A – If you get 2 doses you will have a life-long immunity.

Hepatitis B – If you get all 3 doses you will have life-long immunity.

Typhoid – A single dose will provide immunity for 2 years.

Yellow Fever (recommended by not required for North Africa)

## **Water bottles & dehydration**

Your water bottle should be sturdy, plastic or metal, and portable (camping bottle or Tupperware). A warning about dehydration: you should make sure that you drink 64 fluid ounces a day (8 8oz. Cups.) Dehydration can make you feel as if your energy is zapped out of you.

## **Note for vegetarians and/or vegans**

Please note that you may not be able to decide the type of food you will have access to. Many places where we will be eating do not offer vegetarian or vegan options. Eating what our hosts serve is a wonderful opportunity to be blessed by our hosts and to share in their culture and hospitality. Students and staff who participate on the Global Urban Trek are expected to eat everything that is served by our hosts unless there is a life threatening allergy.

## **Prescription Medication**

If you have prescription medication make sure to bring enough for the entire trip, and if possible bring extra and keep it in a different place than your primary container (in case you lose your medicine). Leave the medication in the original container (or at least have the prescription label) as the customs inspectors may not understand and could confiscate them if they are in an unmarked case. Please also bring a copy of your prescription.

## **Diarrhea**

To be quite frank – all of you can expect to have diarrhea at some point this summer. For most of us it will be triggered by a change in food (and also the change in bacteria that inhabits food and water – different ones than we are used to). You can prepare your digestive system by eating a lot of yogurt before we leave. If you are experiencing diarrhea than be sure to drink plenty of water – and we will get you some “Gatorade” type drink and/or re-hydration packages as well. Also, DO NOT take Imodium or any other medication designed to prevent diarrhea. When you get diarrhea, you need to allow your system to flush the bacteria out – preventing diarrhea will be worse in the long run.

## **Reading Assignments and Spiritual Disciplines**

### **Reading Assignments**

Hopefully most of you have finished (or are nearing the end) of your exams and have copious amounts of time with which to read Trek related material. We realize that you are all busy with fundraising, packing, the remains of school, work, etc. Therefore, we are giving you some reading that really needs to get done, but also some that is recommended, but optional – given that the next few weeks will be quite hectic.

With the Trek Reader you received a letter from Scott Bessenecker detailing the required reading. Please follow the instructions in that letter that outline the reading for Quest for Hope in the Slum Community. The New Friars was written specifically with the Global Urban Trek and your experience in mind. Please pack this book with you. It will be discussed throughout the course of the summer.

Finally, please read five articles based on personal interest. Feel free to look on the web or in your school's library for articles about poverty issues in your Trek country.

## **Spiritual Development**

### **Prayer and Contemplation**

During the Global Urban Trek you will have the opportunity to develop spiritual disciplines and habits that will enable you to sustain community and long term ministry. At Orientation and Debriefing, you will join in prayer using a traditional liturgical tradition along with contemporary styles of worship.

During the summer you will be given prayer resources to use along with the Trek Journal to give you opportunities to maintain a strong connection with God's heart for you and the community you will be living in.

Amidst all the details of packing, travel planning, intellectual reading, etc. it is easy to neglect our spiritual selves and our relationship with God. Ensure that you are spending time in prayer, scripture, meditation, and other ways that you connect with God in the last few weeks before the trip. A great resource for prayer and contemplation is [www.thebreviary.com](http://www.thebreviary.com).

Everything is built on top of our relationship with God. Of course be petitioning God on behalf of the team and the people we will work with, and be praying for provision – but above all, be building your relationship with God through communicating your hopes and fears to God in prayer and listening for his will for you this summer.

### **Scripture**

As you read scripture before the trip, focus on three areas – and specifically on three books.

As we embark on a ministry of incarnation, be reading the Gospels to see what it means to live as Jesus lived, and to love people as he loved them. Please read through Luke – as his gospel is attuned to Jesus' message of hope for the poor and oppressed, and to Jesus' warnings to the rich and powerful.

As we face issues of injustice, be reading the Prophets who spoke out against injustice on God's behalf. Consider reading Amos – as his message tells of the responsibility of God's people to protect the oppressed, and God's displeasure with Israel when they did not do so.

As we face issues of building community, be reading through Paul's letters to Christian communities offering wisdom on how to live together in love. Consider also reading through Colossians – Paul's letter to that community encourages them to live in Christ even as the powers around them tempt them to live in other ways.

