

# Son Servants Yucatan 2024



Yucatan, Mexico July 16 - 13



*"Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me."*

John 12:26

# Yucatan, Mexico



*According to legend, when Francisco Hernández de Córdoba arrived on the coast of Yucatán, he asked the natives where he was. They replied in their native tongue that they didn't understand what he was saying. Because Córdoba thought their answer sounded like the word Yucatán, he gave that name to the region.*

# Hey Group Leader!

Thank you for registering for a Son Servants trip for the summer of 2024. I thank you for your confidence in us and for giving me the privilege of serving you through missions. I am committed to providing your group with a quality mission trip, and my goal is to provide you with the very best experience possible so that you, your youth and your church will be strengthened and challenged as we work and serve together. It is also my hope and prayer that this mission experience will bring your students closer to Jesus.

I will communicate with you periodically in the months leading up to the trip. I am also available to answer your questions or concerns, or just to chat about the trip and how I can make it a meaningful and challenging experience for your group. Please feel free to contact me at any time during the preparation process if you have questions.

DANNY

# Quick Reference Guide



**Danny Dotson**

**(423) 400-8197**

**danny@sonservants.com**



**Location** - Yucatan, Mexico

**Ministry Partner** - Gaby Morales/Shalom Church in Merida

**FOR: Son Servants Trip Info**

**Son Servants Downloads**

**Son Servants Medical/Permission Forms**

**GO TO [sonservants.com](https://www.sonservants.com)**

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# Yucatan Basics

<b>Location</b>	Yucatan, Mexico
<b>Dates</b>	July 6 - 13, 2024 (Monday - Tuesday)
<b>Cost</b>	\$1200 per person (both leader and student)

## **Accommodations**

Housing will be at Shalom PC and participants will sleep in hammocks.

## **Ministry Partnership**

Gaby Morales/Shalom Church in Merida

## **Possible Work Projects**

To be determined.

## **Evening Program**

Each evening of the trip, everyone gathers together to fellowship, sing, worship, pray, and receive a message brought from God's Word by the evening speaker.

## **Transportation**

You are responsible for your own travel arrangements to and from Mexico. Once you arrive, the Son Servant staff will meet you at the airport and transport you to camp. You can either fly in to Merida or Cancun. From Merida, there will be a 2 hour bus drive to camp, which is included in the cost of the trip. From Cancun, there will be a 5 hour drive to camp, which will necessitate an additional \$100 per person.

**Please send your travel itinerary to the Son Servants office as soon as possible.** We need the airline name, flight number, time of arrival in Montego Bay, as well as this same information on your departure.

## **Passports**

Please be sure that everyone in your group has a passport valid through August. If they do not currently have a passport, they should start that process right away, as it can take 12 weeks or more to get one.

## **Children's Ministry**

Our children's ministry is also known as "SGO" (Summer's Greatest Outreach). We will partner with local church and give your students a chance to volunteer with this children's ministry.

## **Work Groups**

All participants will be assigned work groups. Work groups are made up of people from all of the church groups at the camp. Everyone will have at least one person from their church group with them, but this is also a great time to meet new people!



# Adult Leader Policies / Expectations

## Adult to Student Ratio

For reasons of safety, supervision and support, each group attending a Son Servants trip should be prepared to meet the Son Servants requirement of one adult leader for every six students in your group in relation to gender. If you are unable to meet this ratio, please contact our office to discuss possible solutions.

## Expectations for Adult Leaders

- ➡ Son Servants classifies all adults accompanying their church youth group (including both paid church staff and volunteers) as adult leaders and has certain expectations for them. It is our strong belief that adult leaders play an important role on Son Servant mission trips.
- ➡ Adult leaders are asked to set an example that is pleasing and glorifying to Christ before all participants, not just those from their own churches.
- ➡ It is our hope and expectation that in all areas (including dress code compliance, meeting attendance, work site conduct, bedtime and wake-up, as well as any unexpected situations) adult leaders would set an example of love, service and cooperation and would encourage their students by word and deed to do the same.
- ➡ Please be aware that our Son Servants Staff will be leading the worksites. Adult leaders are asked to be encouragers and teachers on the worksites and to lead the worksite if a Son Servants staff member is not available (or if an adult has construction experience that he or she is willing to share).
- ➡ Adult leaders are also asked to:
  - ➔ Attend counselor meetings
  - ➔ Enforce the rules and discipline when necessary
  - ➔ Help with wake-up and bedtime
  - ➔ Be alert to student behavior during Quiet Time, always setting the example and encouraging students to use that time well.

**Questions? Let us know!**

[danny@sonservants.com](mailto:danny@sonservants.com)



# Behavior Contract

Because you are in another country with a different culture, it is very important to follow some general rules while on the trip. Remember that you are a visitor in **their** country. Also remember that the standards of the Christians here are often very different from those who work in the tourist industry. As representatives of your church and Ambassadors for Christ, you need to be willing to respect the standards of their Christian culture. Therefore, there are some general rules to follow while on this trip.

- Use or possession of alcohol, drugs and tobacco products is strictly prohibited.
- You may not go anywhere by yourself. If you are walking in the neighborhood or village where you are, you should go in a group with an adult.
- You should always follow the Son Servants staff or your counselor's instructions, even if you don't understand them.
- We ask that you limit the use of your cell phone for taking pictures and an alarm only. This is one week that you have to focus on serving God and others, so we ask that you can sacrifice for that period of time.
- You should dress modestly whether at the work site, the camp, or in town. This means AT LEAST finger-length shorts, knee-length skirts and modest swim wear. Girls may wear one-piece OR full coverage tankini swimsuits ONLY.
- Do not make fun of local people's manner of speaking, accent or way of doing things. Remember, you are visitors!
- Respect people's dignity and privacy by not taking pictures of houses and property. You can take pictures of the families, but only after you know them and ask them...then your pictures are of your friends, not some "poor people."
- Do not give away things to people and respond to requests for money without first checking with your leader or Son Servants staff. We prefer that be done through the local churches in order to avoid hard feelings or embarrassment.
- When you get frustrated with things like the pace of life, new kinds of food, heat, transportation problems, clothing regulations, etc., just remember that it is not necessarily right or wrong -- just different! Flexibility is the name of the game.

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Signature of Participant

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Date

# Yucatan Daily Schedule

Here are a few descriptions of the daily activities of a Son Servants trip. Remember, the daily schedule is an example only; it will be adjusted to fit our needs once we are together. We try to be flexible with the schedule and may make adjustments throughout the week to accommodate our plans and program.

The camp will be divided into **WORK GROUPS** of 8-12 people. The work group will remain together all week. Usually there is a project coordinator from our host agency or Son Servants staff with each work group. Adults with construction experience may be asked to help lead a work project.

**COUNSELOR MEETINGS** provide times for leaders to worship, fellowship and pray together. It is also a time to receive information and announcements and to express any concerns you have. We ask all groups to send at least one representative to each counselor meeting.

**Evening Program** consists of singing, skits, testimonies, speakers and other activities. It is designed to build group unity and encourage spiritual growth. Although the Son Servants staff will plan the meetings, input and involvement by groups and their leaders is desired and encouraged!

Son Servants provides a **QUIET TIME** guide for each participant. In the morning, right before or right after breakfast depending on your specific camp, the entire group will be still and individually spend time with the Lord. Please prepare your students before the trip for this time.

**FAMILY TIME** is time for your youth group to spend together playing, talking and growing closer through the shared experience. We provide some ideas and suggestions and really encourage you to use this time for processing the trip with your students, however, this time is yours to use as you wish!

*"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him my Father will honor". John 12:26*

**Rise and Shine**

**Quiet Time**

**Breakfast**

**Gather/Leave**

**with Work Groups**

**Work Day with  
Lunch**

**Shower / Free Time**

**Dinner**

**Counselor Meetings**

**Evening Program**

**Family Time**

**Head for Bed**

**Lights Out**

# Daily Transportation

## Daily Transportation for International Trips

You are responsible for your own travel arrangements to and from the trip location. The Son Servant staff will meet your group at the airport and transport you to camp. We ask that your group arrive as close to noon as possible and wear their Son Servant t-shirts (which will be mailed to you in the spring) to identify you as a group and make it easier for us to connect with you. We will send you information about customs and immigration closer to the departure date, and we will also discuss this on a conference call in May.

Please send a copy of your itinerary to the Son Servant office ASAP. We will need airline name, flight number and time of arrival, as well as this same information for your departure flight. Thank you!



## Passports & Other Documents for International Trips



Please be sure that everyone in your group has a valid passport valid **through August**. If they do not currently have a passport, they should start that process **right away**, as **it can take 12 weeks or more to get one**.

We suggest you bring a zippered moneybag or similar container in which you will collect passports, immigration forms and any extra money from your group once you arrive at camp, so they will not get lost. We can keep this bag in a safe place for you.

# DRESS CODE POLICY

As we serve the Lord in the Yucatan, we must remember that we are an example to both the believers and non-believers with whom we come into contact. In addition, we want to remove some of the things that distract us back home so that we can better focus on the purpose of the trip – serving others and listening for what God might want to teach us.

For this reason, we have tried to keep modesty in mind and have developed a dress code which stands for ALL participants, both student and adult, on ALL of our trips. Additionally, some of the organizations we will be working with have specific dress requirements for safety reasons.

## GENERAL DRESS CODE FOR ALL SON SERVANT CAMPS

**No tank tops** - in an effort to eliminate past confusion about what tank tops were and were not appropriate. We ask that everyone wear shirts with sleeves at all times.

**Swimsuits:** Both male and females should wear modest swimsuits. Girls should wear one-piece or full coverage tankinis.

**All shorts** must be finger-tip length. When you hold your arms at your side, the bottom of your shorts must meet your fingertips. If your shorts aren't long enough, you will be asked to change.

**Important Note for International Trips:** Females will need to wear knee-length skirts or dresses with sleeves and males need to wear long pants (can be jeans) and collared shirts for 'SGO program and church services.

### Son Servants Sexual Misconduct Policy

We live with an increased awareness of human rights. It is in that spirit that certain guidelines have been established in order to assure that everyone's rights are protected, as well as the reputation of Son Servants.

- At no time will counselors be in compromising situations with kids.
- There should be absolutely NO physical contact that can be interpreted as sexual advances made toward any camper or any conference participant.
- Adult counselors should not walk unaccompanied at night with campers of the opposite sex.
- Adult counselors should not involve themselves in in-depth counseling with campers of the opposite sex in secluded areas.
- These guidelines state clearly that there should be no inappropriate sexual conduct between counselor and campers, counselors and counselors, and campers and campers.
- When adult counselors are notified of inappropriate conduct by anyone, they must immediately report it directly to Danny Dotson, Director of Son Servants. Since the person in question may be a minor, state laws will be followed.

# Group List Form & Instructions

The **GROUP LIST** form is available on our website.

The group list needs to be completed and submitted **by April 15**, WITH **T-shirt sizes included**.

Once you complete the Group List, please email to Danny at [danny@sonservants.com](mailto:danny@sonservants.com).

Please note the descriptions below so you will know what information you need before going to fill out the forms.

If you have any trouble with a form, please contact Danny at [danny@sonservants.com](mailto:danny@sonservants.com) or (423) 400-8197.

## Group List

Under the **Summer Trips** dropdown on our website ([sonservants.com](http://sonservants.com)) select **Downloads for Summer Trips**. Under the dropdown for Panther click on **Group Info Sheet Panther Specific**.

- EVERYONE in your group- students AND adults - should be included on the sheet.
- List each participant's first and last name, gender, category (student or adult) and **grade**
- Please list all allergy information (if applicable).
- **Emergency contact** during travel- this should be someone NOT attending the trip
- **T-SHIRT ORDER** Sizes for EVERYONE in your group (t-shirt is included in the cost of your trip)

**\*\*\*Failure to complete this form by April 15 will result in your group getting whatever t-shirt sizes are left over after other orders have been filled.\*\*\***

*We understand that it can be difficult to get your Group List finalized by **April 15**; however, it is imperative that we have this as close to this date as possible so we can organize each camp's work groups. If you are unable to make this deadline, **please** contact us to let us know when we can expect your completed Group List. **T-shirt Order Form** due date is non-negotiable, as we have to order these in time to get them mailed out to you before the summer. Thank you!*

# HOUSING INFORMATION

- Son Servants will be staying at a location that will be determined soon.
- Housed at Shalom PC and will sleep in hammocks.
- The conditions will be simple and rustic compared to home, but more than adequate.
- Meals will be prepared by Mexican cooks associated with Shalom PC.



# MEDICAL FORM INFORMATION

## MEDICAL FORM DETAILS

Please download medical forms from our website and distribute two (2) medical forms to each person, both student and adult, along with the instructions for completing. These forms will need to be brought with you to camp.

- Both copies of the medical form must be completed; a notarized copy with original signatures by both parents or legal guardians is required for everyone under the age of eighteen (18). Adult forms must be completed but do not have to be notarized.
- One copy is to be turned in to the Son Servants staff upon arrival at camp, and the other copy is for you as you travel to and from your trip location.

## SECTION BY SECTION BREAKDOWN

### Side A: Medical Insurance and Emergency Contact Information

- The reason for this is fairly obvious. We hope we won't have to use it, but everyone needs to fill this out.
- General Medical Information: This is the information our doctors and nurses have told us they need to have in front of them in order to treat anything. Everyone needs to fill this out.

#### **Behavior Contract**

- All participants, both students and adults, must sign the contract.

#### **General Information**

- Participant, church and leader information

#### **Medical Evaluation Form**

- This form helps to insure that the students are, as best as a doctor can tell, physically able to participate. This is required for minors and recommended for adults.

### Side B: Permission Form & Release of Liability

All participants must complete this. This is particularly important because it grants permission for you as the youth leader to be taking a student to a trip location, either domestic or international.

# PARENT SECTION

## What about Safety

**Son Servants is committed to providing a good, safe mission experience for all who participate.**

However, in any such experience there are some risks. These include, but are not limited to, transportation related accidents, work site accidents, and sickness. We do our best to prevent hazardous situations and train the participants, as well as our staff, to be safety conscious. It is also the responsibility of the participants to act responsibly in all situations.

## Emergency Contact

The emergency number for the Yucatan is 011 521 999 970-1580 and your contact is Gabriel Glory Morales; **THIS NUMBER IS FOR EMERGENCY USE ONLY**. If you cannot reach anyone at this number, you can call Danny Dotson at (423) 400-8197. **Please do not expect or require your child to call home, as this may not be possible.** Son Servants suggests that you arrange a phone hotline so your leader can make one call and let everyone know how things are going.

## Letters From Home

If you want your student to receive a handwritten note while in Mexico we suggest sending that note with the leader to deliver during the week.

## Medical Facilities

We have our own doctor or nurse and a well-equipped medical chest for use in case of injury or illness. For emergencies, the participant will be taken to a nearby hospital.

## Prayer Requests

- ◆ For the host city - its leaders, government, and people as a whole
- ◆ For the churches - members, leadership, missionaries
- ◆ For the work of Son Servants:
  - safety
  - able to accomplish what we set out to do
  - growth in the lives of participants

For families and churches at home—that they will be prepared to welcome back changed people.

**Questions? Let us know!**

[danny@sonservants.com](mailto:danny@sonservants.com)



# SUMMER'S GREATEST OUTREACH ('SGO)

## WHAT IS 'SGO?

In Matthew 28:19 Jesus says, "Let's go (or 'SGO for short) into all the world and make disciples of the nations." Well, really it says, "Go ye into all the world." By participating in a Son Servants trip, you are responding to the call of Christ to share His message with the world. Part of how we do that is through the Summer's Greatest Outreach ('SGO). Each camp will host a separate program at a school or church near the camp.

**If we are able to put a SGO program together**, the 'SGO program will last for three or four days, depending on the trip. Every Son Servant will have the opportunity to be involved if they so desire. In order to make the program run efficiently, however, **we need a core crew** of about ten people willing to devote the majority of their time on this trip to the **children's outreach** (and some time before the trip in planning and preparation). This is a commitment for the duration of the program. **You will also have a chance to join the construction work for a short time at some point during the week.**

### QUALIFICATIONS:

- ★ Love children and have experience in children's ministry
- ★ Be willing to be a "student leader" by heading up a class teaching team
- ★ Be willing to devote time in preparation prior to the trip



## HOW DO I SIGN-UP?

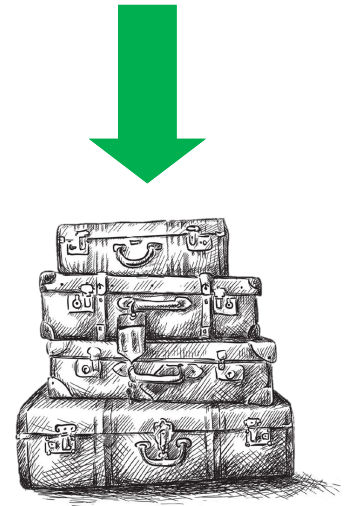
- Talk with your parents and youth director/group leader about your participation with 'SGO.
- Once they've said "YES", go to our website to download the 'SGO Core Crew Application:
- Find and download the 'SGO Core Crew Application under the Yucatan dropdown in the Downloads for Summer Trips.
- Fill it out completely and enter all requested information
- When you're finished filling everything out, please email the finished application to Danny Dotson at [danny@sonservants.com](mailto:danny@sonservants.com).
- You have applied to be on the 'SGO Core Crew!

If you have questions, you can talk to your youth leader, but please also feel free to call Danny.

# What to Bring:

When you are packing, please remember that you are representing the Christian Community, your church and your family. Modesty is the key guideline. Space to put your things will be very limited; please bring only what you *absolutely* need.

- Tennis shoes
- Work boots or sturdy shoes / work socks
- Flip flops or sandals
- Lightweight work pants or modest shorts (no short-shorts, no Softe shorts, shorts should be fingertip length)
- Work shirts (no tank tops)
- Swim wear (modest swimwear for both males and females; girls should be one piece or full coverage tankinis) and beach towel
- Work gloves (suggest at least 2 pairs)
- Shorts
- Sleep wear (modest)
- Towels and washcloths
- Single bed sheets, blanket & pillow (or lightweight sleeping bag)
- Hat or bandanas (to protect from sun)
- Poncho or rain jacket
- Sweatshirt, long-sleeve t-shirt, windbreaker or other light jacket
- **Bible** (a must-have)
- Notebook/Journal, and pen/pencil
- Travel chair (like a Crazy Creek) - great for meetings and quiet times (suggested)
- Personal toiletries (toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.)
- Flashlight and batteries
- **Water bottle** (a must-have)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 or higher – the sun is intense) / Sunglasses
- Bug spray or lotion
- Plastic bags (for dirty shoes and/or wet clothes)
- 1 jar peanut butter and 1 jar jelly (we will collect and use for lunches on work site)
- 2 rolls of toilet paper (we collect these for bathrooms)



**PLEASE NOTE:** All personal items should be marked for identification – baggage, clothing, linens, everything! We have experienced real problems with look-alike clothing and other items. Please use a permanent marker to put your name on all of your belongings.

# What NOT to Bring:

- Weapons of any kind
- Electric razors, hair dryers, straighteners, and other unnecessary electric cosmetic items
- Tobacco, alcohol any form of mind-altering substances
- Clothing that advertises alcohol, tobacco products, drugs or displays obscene images



**Cell Phones:** We understand that the majority of students now use their cell phones for a camera, alarm, flashlight, etc. We ask that **ALL** students and leaders limit their cell phone use as much as possible (no cell phones on the work site, during Quiet Time and program). It is up to individual church leaders to enforce this however they see fit. We ask that you take advantage of the gift it is to be "unplugged" for the time you are on the mission trip and focus on **WHY** you are here!

# What to Bring: Yucatan Specific

- Appropriate dress in the Yucatan differs from place to place, and the standards for the Christian Community are different than that of the tourist industry. When you are packing, please remember that you are representing Son Servants, the Christian Community, your church and your family. **Modesty is the key guideline. No ragged or torn clothes should be worn. Bathing suits should be one piece OR full coverage tankini- for girls and conservative.**
- Light-weight, cotton clothes are best for work. Painter's pants and hospital scrubs are recommended; jeans are in general too heavy and hot.
- **Shorts** are okay for the activities at the camp but **should be fingertip length or longer**. Shorts or skirts that are either very tight or short are not appropriate.
- **Do not** bring clothing that advertises cigarettes, alcohol products, drugs, rock bands, or displays obscene or suggestive language.
- **Don't bring anything that you can't afford to lose!**
- We ask that **each group** bring the following items for use with the children's program: (leftovers will be donated)
  - ⇒ At least one package of **construction paper** (multi color)
  - ⇒ At least one set of **markers**
  - ⇒ One box of **zip lock bags** (pint size)
  - ⇒ One box of **zip lock bags** (gallon size)
  - ⇒ "**Decorating stuff**"-- glitter, sequins, beads, feathers, ribbon, felt scraps, etc. (This is a great opportunity to clean out your Christian Education closet!)

**PLEASE NOTE: ALL PERSONAL ITEMS SHOULD BE MARKED FOR IDENTIFICATION**

**—Baggage, clothing, linens, EVERYTHING!**

We have experienced real problems with look-alike clothing and other items. Please use a permanent marker to put your name on your things.

## LUGGAGE DOs and DON'Ts

**Bring only what you can carry yourself!**

**ONE** medium size suitcase. **DO NOT** pack the suitcase so full that you have no room for a little extra.

**ONE** carry-on bag to fit under airline seat.

**Weight limit must not exceed 50 lbs. (per piece).**

Check your specific airline for baggage restrictions!

**Before your group arrives at the airport:** Make sure you tag your luggage with a red ribbon or red duct tape to make it easier at baggage claim. Your leader will be able to tell you what material to use as a tag (they may even have this taken care of for you)—ask your leader for more information closer to your trip.