

CMJ: Information for Volunteers

CMJ (Church's Ministry Among Jewish People) is a 200 year old ministry of service and its present diversity of ministries continues to bridge ethnic, religious and national boundaries, sharing the reconciling love of Jesus with both the Jewish People and the nations. CMJ is now an International Ministry operating as "CMJ Israel" in Israel. We are part of CMJ's worldwide family, which includes CMJ UK, CMJ Ireland, CMJ USA, CMJ Australia, CMJ South Africa, CMJ Canada, CMJ Hong Kong and CMJ France.

Volunteering with CMJ Israel

Service

Being a volunteer requires a servant heart. It is not an overseas holiday and **there is a need for everyone to be flexible and willing to enter into the life of the various ministries.**

The job requires that volunteers work 40 hours per week, 5 days a week. Shifts are normally 8 hours, either day or evening, and include a required morning devotional time Monday through Friday. There is no guarantee that a person will get 2 days off per week together. We do the best we can, but it is impossible at times. We might ask that volunteers work an additional shift on occasion but we try not to do that if at all possible. We also have various ministry events which the volunteers are asked to participate outside the 40 hours. This might include church related events, outreach events, parties, etc. Practically, volunteers are mainly involved in domestic cleaning of guest rooms and public areas, laundry, and kitchen duties which include the serving of meals and dishwashing. Some volunteers work in specific areas such as kitchen assistant, maintenance or reception.

All volunteers must be willing to work on Saturdays (Shabbat) and Sundays – we cannot make any exceptions. As a ministry of hospitality our Guest House must be open on weekends and we must be able to provide for our guests.

Room and Board

Full room and board is provided for volunteers who serve at one of our guest houses. If you volunteer at one of our other ministries (bookshop, church, library, etc.) you will have to provide for your own accommodation. At the Christ Church Guest House, housing consists of one apartment for men and one apartment for women offsite. If warranted, Christ Church volunteers will be provided with bus fare to and from work. At Beit Bracha or Beit Immanuel, volunteers live onsite. **Most often** volunteers will share a bedroom. A general standard of tidiness and consideration for others is most necessary. Members of the opposite sex are not permitted in each others' rooms, unless they are married to each other. Because accommodation may be shared and volunteers work different shifts, an 11.00 pm curfew is imposed to encourage quiet and accountability.

Food at the various ministries is a mix of European/American and Middle Eastern. Meals usually include salad. Chicken and minced (ground) beef are popular as are pasta and rice dishes. Hummus (a paste made from chick peas and olive oil) and tehina (a thinner paste from sesame



seed and olive oil), together with falafel (ground chickpeas blended with herbs and spices, shaped into a ball and deep-fried in oil) make up the typical local cuisine. We do our best to cater for vegetarians and any essential diets notified to us on your application form. Two litres of water should be drunk each day – bottled and filtered water is provided at all ministry sites, although local water is safe.

Community Life

Living in a community is a challenging experience but many friendships are established. You will be coming into a community of believers from all over the world, serving in a Middle Eastern culture. Volunteers live, eat, work and worship together. You experience the best and worst of each other all the time and there is no escape from the pressures that this creates! Volunteers need to have a servant heart, be flexible, be an encourager and not a complainer and understand that in the smallest of tasks they are serving the Lord here in Israel. Please remember that living space is limited, so all volunteers need to come accepting the possibility that it will be necessary to share a room and possibly change rooms sometime during your volunteer service.

Volunteering with CMJ can be a wonderful experience for someone with the right heart. Alternatively, a wrong fit can end badly with someone needing to leave before their agreed upon time.

Spiritual and Educational Enrichment

There are required daily devotions and monthly prayer meetings on site for staff and volunteers. We have different classes and training for our volunteers to help them to better understand the Jewish roots of our faith, issues regarding Israel and her neighbours, guest lecturers on various topics, etc. As well, there are regular outings for volunteers both for fun and educational experiences of the land.

Volunteers are expected to commit themselves to the spiritual life of the community by attending the daily devotions. We strongly encourage worship at either the English Congregation of Christ Church or the sister Hebrew Congregation; or with a congregation in Tiberias, or at Beit Bracha. Volunteers may be expected to lead devotions occasionally, and are expected to attend the regular volunteer outings and any other learning opportunities provided.

Your time spent as a volunteer here in Israel will be a unique experience, during which you contribute in a significant way to the smooth running of the ministry. In addition, you gain insights about life in this unique country, which will immensely benefit your own life. It is a time when an individual can take significant steps in their Christian walk.

Friendship

Although volunteers spend a lot of time doing chores that can seem mundane, there is opportunity to meet a wide variety of people, both Jews and Arabs, as well as visitors from overseas. It is important to realize that exclusive relationships can distract volunteers from the commitment this period of ministry requires. Intimate relationships with the opposite sex outside of marriage are not permitted, nor are new opposite sex relationships while in the community. Same sex intimacy is not permitted.



Holidays

One day of holiday is earned for each month worked and may be requested at a specific time and/or in combination with regular off days as the work situation permits. It can be arranged for two volunteers to go on holiday together so that you have a companion. Discounts are granted at our other ministry sites and other Christian guest houses.

Practical matters in preparation for your visit

Age and length of Service

The preferred age for volunteers is 20 – 60. They must be in good physical and mental health, of reasonable spiritual maturity and willing to put their hands to any task – much of which is physically demanding. If you suffer from a bad back, migraines, have trouble standing for long periods of time then volunteering with CMJ is probably not for you. The usual minimum period is three months (the first three months are always probationary) up to twelve months (this is sometimes extended). We prefer to have volunteers for periods of at least six months. After each period of three months' service there is an opportunity for a review.

Insurance & Finance

All volunteers with CMJ Israel ministries are required to pay for:

1. Flights to and from Israel
2. Travel Insurance
3. Medical insurance

Medical facilities in Israel are good, but the cost of treatment can be high. Local medical insurance can be arranged for you once you arrive but private insurance from your home country may be used. Ensure it is valid in Israel. For insurance purchased locally, you will be directed to a Private Medical Insurance company linked with CMJ in Israel. The cost is generally reasonable but will depend on age and medical conditions. Vaccinations are not required for Israel.

In addition you will need to bring with you sufficient funds for personal expenses. Many volunteers receive funding and support from their churches and families and this should be taken into consideration before leaving.

Visas & Flights Please read this section carefully – it is very important!

Before arriving in Israel, you must obtain a volunteer visa. We manage the application process and cover the cost of a visa. When applying for your visa, we require:

1. A copy of the first page of your passport (your passport must not expire for at **least six months** after the date expected to LEAVE Israel.
2. A passport photo
3. Proof of medical insurance
4. A statement from a physician that you are in good health
5. Criminal Records Check/Clearance with Apostille stamp
6. CV/Resume
7. Copy of Marriage Certificate



8. Form on our website required by the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs
9. In addition you must arrive with a flexible return flight. This is required by the Israeli authorities. There is a possibility that you will not be allowed in the country without a return ticket.

Once approved, you will take your passport and a further passport photo to your nearest Israeli Embassy where the initial short-term visa will be given. Once you arrive in Israel we will apply for an extension as necessary.

PLEASE NOTE If you leave the country during your time on a Volunteer Visa the Israeli government automatically cancels the visa. This has been a problem when volunteers have chosen to visit Jordan, or Cyprus etc. when taking time off while volunteering with us.

Arrival and Departure

If asked during an airport security check or at Passport Control, explain that you are coming as a volunteer. Do not use the word “work” as this can cause confusion. Voluntary service is the right description. In general, it is good to say as little as possible during the airport security check. Politely answer questions at the airport but do not give unnecessary explanations.

It is usually possible for the volunteer to be met at the airport on their arrival. At the end of your volunteer period (including any holiday leave which is due to you) the Ministry Manager may be required to show that you are leaving the country. This means that any remaining time on a volunteer visa will no longer be valid after that date. You will be under the care of CMJ.

Weather

The weather in Israel varies greatly depending on what part of the country you are in and the time of year. Christ Church is in Jerusalem, Beit Bracha is located outside Tiberias and Beit Immanuel is located in Jaffa, next to Tel Aviv. Jerusalem is quite dry while Tiberias and Jaffa can be very humid.

Table of average temperatures in major cities in Israel

C - Centigrade | F - Fahrenheit

Cities:		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Jerusalem	C	6-11C	7-14	8-16	12-21	15-25	17-27	19-29	19-29	18-28	16-26	12-19	8-14
	F	43-53	44-57	44-61	53-69	60-77	63-81	66-84	66-86	65-82	60-78	54-67	47-56
Tel Aviv, Jaffa	C	9-18	9-19	10-20	12-22	17-25	19-28	21-30	22-30	20-31	15-28	12-25	9-19
	F	49-65	48-66	51-69	54-72	63-77	67-83	70-86	72-86	69-89	59-83	54-76	47-66
Haifa	C	8-17	9-18	8-21	13-26	15-25	18-28	20-30	21-30	20-30	16-27	13-23	9-18
	F	46-63	47-64	47-70	55-78	58-76	64-82	68-86	70-86	68-85	60-81	56-74	48-65
Tiberias	C	9-18	9-20	11-22	13-27	17-32	20-35	23-37	24-37	22-35	19-32	15-26	11-20
	F	48-65	49-67	51-72	56-80	62-89	68-95	73-98	75-99	71-95	65-89	59-78	53-68
Eilat	C	10-21	11-23	13-26	17-31	21-35	24-37	25-40	26-40	24-36	20-33	16-28	11-23
	F	49-70	51-73	56-79	63-87	69-95	75-99	77-103	79-104	75-98	69-92	61-83	51-74
Dead Sea	C	11-20	13-22	16-25	20-29	24-34	27-37	28-38	29-38	27-36	24-32	18-26	13-21
	F	53-68	56-72	61-78	68-85	75-93	80-99	83-102	83-101	81-96	75-90	65-80	56-71



What to Bring

We do provide staff T-shirts to wear during your shifts at Christ Church.

Men

T-shirts, trousers/jeans, including light-weight trousers, shorts, sun-hat, umbrella, light water-proofs, sweaters and a warm coat or jacket for rainy, cold weather (November– March) and cool evenings (most of the year in Jerusalem), shoes and trainers. Swimming trunks. (Bring a beach towel but other towels and bedding are provided). Old clothes for 'dirty' jobs.

Women

T-shirts, blouses, light dresses, skirts (at least knee-length) and trousers/jeans (NO see-through, sleeveless, or low-cut clothing and shoulders should be covered in Jerusalem), sun-hat, umbrella, light water-proofs, cardigan/jumpers and coat or jacket for cool evenings and rainy, cold winters (November– March). Shoes and trainers. One-piece swimsuit. Beach towel and wash cloths/flannels (other towels and bedding provided). Old clothes for 'dirty' jobs.

Toiletries

This can be very expensive in Israel, including deodorants. It is useful to bring tablets for sensitive stomachs (Imodium), any favourite cosmetics, insect repellent, cream for insect stings and suntan lotion.

Other items

Bible, books, sunglasses, camera, shaver, pictures of home and family and a couple of videos to share, laptop computer, CD player, clock radio and hair dryer. It is important to note that the voltage used in Israel is 220. Most transformers for other voltage only work well with very small wattage items like an electric toothbrush. Some volunteers may prefer to purchase hair dryers, CD players and clock radios in Israel. Plug adaptors will also be needed for items not made for use in Israel and are available in nearby shops.

Laptops

Volunteers from countries using different voltage than 220 will find it best to bring a computer with "dual electricity" built into the adaptor for the computer. Wireless Internet access is available at Christ Church and volunteer apartments. Internet/email facilities are available at other ministries.

Please note: There is only a small amount of storage and wardrobe space at the in the volunteer accommodations.



Practicalities in Israel

SAFETY

The political situation in Israel can be volatile. Volunteers do come here at their own risk and are responsible for their own belongings. The CMJ Israel centres are havens of peace in this sometimes troubled country, but; if sensible precautions are followed, there is no need to fear going out and about in the Land. Above all, we trust in the Lord for our protection.

Money matters

The Israeli currency unit is the 'New Shekel' (NIS). Traveller's cheques and most international credit cards are widely accepted. **Do not purchase excess Israeli currency in your home country prior to your departure as you will usually get a better rate of exchange whilst in Israel.** You can use your credit or debit cards in the ATM locations to get money directly from your home countries.

It is recommended that volunteers bring with them at least £25 (\$50) per week for spending money, as you will need to pay for personal transport, sightseeing, souvenirs etc. If you need to, consider asking your church to fund part or all of your personal expenses - spending money, flights, insurance, etc. You or your church may also like to contribute up to £35 pounds, (\$70) per week for your board, but this is not compulsory. Volunteers are encouraged to leave the centre on a day off in order to have a complete change.

A Note for Women and Men

In Middle Eastern cultures modest dress is expected. It is best not to wear tight-fitting or revealing outer garments. It is also unacceptable for girls to go bra-less. Jeans are permitted. Beach attire is more relaxed (see the section on what to bring).

When working at the any of the CMJ ministries, going in and out of the Old City and visiting religious sites and orthodox communities women must wear trousers, or skirts below the knee and have their shoulders covered. Women's tops should not be sleeveless or have low necklines, and shorts are unacceptable in such areas for both women and men.

One guide book advises: "In Israel sexual harassment can be a problem for women travelers. Normally it is best to ignore the predictable come-ons. Avoid eye-contact and general conversations, keep to short, sharp, but polite sentences when necessary and do not stop when you are approached or shouted at." Being firm with unwanted attention is not being rude.

The Next Step

If you feel that the Lord is calling you to volunteer with CMJ in Israel then please proceed with the following steps:

1. Download the following forms
 - a. CMJ Israel Volunteer Application
 - b. Form the Israeli Ministry of Religious Affairs
 - c. CMJ Israel Employer/Tutor's Reference



- d. Christian Friend's Reference
- e. Pastor's Reference
2. Fill out the Volunteer Application Form
3. Attach
 - a. A passport photo
 - b. A copy of your passport page with photo
 - c. Your CV/Resume
4. Send the Volunteer Application form, the passport photo, a copy of your passport page with photo and your CV/Resume via email (the forms are provided as Word documents and can be filled out on your computer, saved and returned) to the following Volunteers.CMJ@gmail.com.
5. We require 3 confidential references
 - a. Please give each of the 3 reference forms to an appropriate person and ask them to fill it out
 - b. Have them send the forms directly to an email address listed above (the same email address that you are sending the volunteer application form) – since it is confidential you should not see it in advance.

Once we have received the Application, the passport photo, the CV/Resume, a copy of your passport page with photo and all 3 reference forms we will begin to process the application. Please understand that we are unable to proceed without all the required documentation.

And finally....

May the Lord guide you in all your decisions and preparation and richly bless you as you consider serving Him through CMJ's ministries.

