

Guidelines for the 2026 India Mission Trip

The key to a healthy and fruitful mission trip lies in **prayer and preparation**.

1. Objective:

To develop a passion for Christ and compassion for others and to experience and learn firsthand about the history, growth, and the mission work of the Mar Thoma Church in India. Participants will be able to gain an appreciation for our church and its missionary zeal.

2. Who are the Participants?

College and university age students and/or working young adults (ages 18 to 35) who are active members of the Mar Thoma Church in the Diocese of North America can participate. Non-Mar Thoma participants will be considered on a case-by-case basis with the permission of the Diocesan Bishop.

3. What is the Expectation?

This trip will be a life changing experience for both the mission team participants and the people being ministered to during the trip. Participants may be required to engage in various mission-related activities. You can work with your Team Leader to determine what can be done to this effect. Your prayerful participation will enrich your overall experience.

4. Accommodation:

The team will be staying at places provided by the leaders in the mission fields we visit. Participants should be willing to adjust to the given circumstances and limitations.

5. Other Activities:

Any available sightseeing and shopping will be permitted only if it coincides with the team's main purpose but could be canceled if not deemed convenient for travel, time, or if it hinders the flow of the mission trip.

6. Participant Responsibilities

- a. Participants should preferably be 18 years old and above and will be required to sign a *waiver form* in order to participate. In certain cases, a limited number of participants below 18 years of age will be permitted if accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- b. Participants will be responsible for purchasing their own air ticket to India. Itinerary and receipts of the booking should be sent to the Team Leader before the commencement of the journey. Participants are responsible for submitting their own air ticket receipts and reimbursement requests to the Mission Board. Upon completion of the trip and submission of the receipts, the Mission Board will reimburse 50% of the airfare, up to a maximum amount of \$1,000.00 (USD).
- c. Each participant is expected to contribute an amount of \$500.00 (USD) to meet the cost of local transportation, food, accommodation, etc. during the mission trip. This amount should be remitted before the commencement of the trip as instructed by the Team Leader.
- d. Participants should bring your Bible and a notepad and/or mobile phone/tablet/laptop.
- e. Participants should dress appropriately for a Christian mission trip, taking into account local weather conditions, and uphold a Christian team spirit in their words and actions.
- f. During the trip duration, all participants are expected to follow the itinerary prepared by the respective mission field co-coordinator and follow the instructions of the Team Leader.
- g. Participants are responsible for their own healthcare coverage for the duration of the trip. Please consult your physician and make appropriate decisions regarding immunizations and other medical needs. Please have handy any medications or prescriptions as needed.
- h. Participants will be responsible for all their personal effects/belongings throughout the trip.
- i. Upon completion of the mission trip, participants are expected to make a presentation in their respective parishes sharing their experiences and describing how the mission trip has impacted them.
- j. Prior permission is to be taken from the Diocesan Bishop if the above norms cannot be complied with for sufficient reasons.

*Dear Participant, we look forward to sharing many experiences together during the India Mission Trip. In order to formalize your commitment for this mission trip, we require that you sign a copy of this registration form and email it to Mrs. Thankam Vinu George (Convener) at georgevinu2000@gmail.com before **March 31st, 2026**, with a copy to your Vicar and to the Mission Board (marthomamissionboard@gmail.com). Before you sign this form, however, please read the information and expectations about the mission trip. By signing this form, you are indicating that you understand and accept the information and responsibilities of participating in the mission trip.*

2026 India Mission Registration Form

Name of Participant: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Cell Phone: _____ Email: _____

Parish/Congregation: _____ Vicar's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Contact Information:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Email: _____

Other Emergency Contact:

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Current Medical Insurance is required for all participants.

Insurance Provider: _____ Policy Number: _____

Physician's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Please provide details about any known allergies to food or medications: _____

Please provide details about any health conditions or special needs that you may have: _____

- In case of a medical emergency, I authorize my Team Leader to make decisions to allow me the best possible care.
- I commit to the India Mission Trip 2026 and agree that I must participate fully in the entire mission from beginning to end. I will not leave my assigned area of ministry or separate myself from my assigned group. I will abstain from any behavior or practice that is not conducive to the values of the Diocese of North America of the Mar Thoma Church.
- I will assume full responsibility for activities that I engage in during any and at all times of this mission trip, even when I am not involved in formal/planned activities. I also recognize that I am a representative of the Diocese of North America of the Mar Thoma Church while on this trip whether I am conducting planned activities or on free time, and my conduct will reflect this representation at all times.

I, _____ (print name), accept the conditions as outlined above and make a commitment to the Diocese of North America, my local parish, my team leader, and fellow participants of my time, money, and energy to participate in this program.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES:

- Participants must adhere to the registration deadline of **March 31, 2026**.
- Participants should obtain a visa to travel to India.
- Participants must have a passport that is valid for at least 6 months beyond the date of the expected departure from India.
- Participants must complete and submit the Waiver Form (Release of Liability).
- Air tickets to India should not be purchased until registration is confirmed by the India Mission Convener/Team Leader. Participants should plan to travel from the USA/Canada by July 3 and arrive in Hyderabad on July 5. Final departure will be from Bangalore on July 15.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORM:

I, _____, a member of the _____ parish/congregation of the Mar Thoma Church under the Diocese of North America, hereby acknowledge that I freely and voluntarily wish to participate in the **2026 India Mission Trip** (“mission trip”) arranged by the Mar Thoma Mission Board of the Diocese of North America of the Mar Thoma Church to be held from **July 3, 2026, to July 15, 2026**, in various places in India. I will assume all responsibility for activities that I engage in at any and all times during and after the end date of the mission trip to various mission fields in Andhra Pradesh and South Karnataka.

I hereby acknowledge that my participation is completely voluntary and that I chose to participate in the mission trip fully knowing that I would be required to sign this Release of Liability. I further acknowledge that I understand that I must secure my own health and/or accident insurance at my own expense to be effective during the participation in the mission trip. In consideration of the privilege to participate in the mission trip and recreational activities during the mission trip, I have fully read this Release of Liability and hereby execute this Release of Liability with the intent to bind myself, my heirs, assigns, and legal representatives. I further state that I am at least 18 years of age and competent to sign this affirmation and release.

I expressly agree and intend that I participate in the mission trip at my own risk and that neither the Diocese of North America (“Diocese”) or the organizers shall be liable for any injuries, damages, claims, demands, actions or causes of action whatsoever which may arise out of or in connection with my participation in the mission trip, whether from acts of active or passive negligence on my part and/or on the part of the Diocese or the organizers, and I do hereby forever release, discharge, indemnify, hold harmless, and will defend the Diocese or the organizers for any such injuries, damages, claims, demands, actions or causes of action whether present or future, known or unknown.

I acknowledge that I have read and understood this agreement; that I understand that the Diocese of North America of the Mar Thoma Church and all related institutions and entities have no responsibility for my actions, return, health or wellbeing after the end date for this mission trip; that I am waiving legal rights which I or my heirs, next of kin, executors, administrators and legal representatives may have against the Diocese of North America; and that I have executed this agreement voluntarily.

SIGNED THIS _____ DAY OF _____ 2026, AT _____.
(place)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS (VICAR)

PRINTED NAME OF PARTICIPANT

PRINTED NAME OF WITNESS (VICAR)