



EXPLORE

SERVICE WITH RECLAIM

What Might Serving Look Like?

Possibilities. Questions. Discernment.

*"What has God placed in my hands,
and could it be useful?"*



DISCOVER



EXPLORE



PREPARE



GO



CONTINUE

What Might Serving Look Like?

What Might Serving Look Like?

You have learned a little about who RECLAIM is, why we serve, and some of the ways people can become involved.

Perhaps something connected with you.

Maybe you can imagine using your profession or skills in a way you had never considered.

Maybe your church is interested in becoming involved.

Maybe you have begun wondering what it would actually be like to travel to Uganda or Kenya and serve alongside the people and ministries there.

Or perhaps you are interested in volunteering closer to home.

Explore is where we begin asking those questions together.

You are still not making a commitment.

This is an opportunity to look more closely at the possibilities, understand what participation might involve, and begin discerning whether there is a place for you within the work of RECLAIM.

Faith And Serving With Reclaim

RECLAIM is a Christian ministry.

Our faith in Jesus Christ is not simply one part of what we do. It is why we serve.

We believe God is at work restoring lives, relationships, families, and communities, and we have been invited to participate in that work.

That means a RECLAIM volunteer or mission experience may naturally include prayer, worship, Scripture, church participation, testimony, discipleship, pastoral encouragement, and other expressions of Christian ministry.

But faith is expressed in more than those moments.

It is also expressed when we listen.

When we serve without needing recognition.

When we treat another person with dignity.

When we use our skills for someone else's benefit.

When we sit in someone's home and receive their hospitality.

When we encourage a tired leader.

When we remain patient when plans change.

When we choose relationship over accomplishment.

When we recognize that the person we came to serve may have something God wants to teach us.

We want our service to reflect Jesus through both word and deed.

RECLAIM also serves people who do not share our Christian faith. We do so freely, compassionately, and respectfully. Assistance is never conditioned upon someone's religious beliefs or willingness to participate in Christian activities.

We work alongside Christians from different churches, cultures, and denominational traditions. You may encounter worship, prayer, preaching, church life, or expressions of faith that are different from what you know at home.

We believe that can be a gift.

Our Statement of Faith identifies the foundational Christian convictions around which RECLAIM serves without requiring uniformity on every secondary theological issue.

If you are considering serving with RECLAIM, we invite you to understand our Christian identity, ask questions about it, and consider what it would mean to serve within it.

There Is No One Reclaim Volunteer

When people hear the words *mission trip*, certain pictures may immediately come to mind.

Perhaps you imagine building something.

Holding children.

Teaching a Bible lesson.

Providing medical care.

Painting a school.

Those can certainly be meaningful forms of service.

But they represent only a small portion of what volunteering can look like.

RECLAIM works across relationships, ministries, professions, churches, communities, and countries. Because of that, the people who can contribute to the work are equally diverse.

A volunteer might be a:

There Is No One Reclaim Volunteer - continued

- Teacher.
- Pastor.
- Nurse or physician.
- Counselor.
- Mechanic.
- Farmer.
- Contractor or tradesperson.
- Business owner.
- Accountant.
- Engineer.
- Photographer or communications professional.
- IT professional.
- Administrator.
- College student.
- Retiree.
- Parent.
- Church member.
- Person who simply has willing hands and a desire to serve.

Some opportunities require specialized expertise.

Many do not.

The better question is often not:

"Am I qualified to volunteer?"

but:

"What has God placed in my hands, and could it be useful?"

That is something we can explore together.

What Does A Reclaim Mission Trip Look Like?

There is no single answer.

And we think that is important.

RECLAIM does not want to create activities simply so that visiting teams have something to do.

Whenever possible, a trip should connect with the ongoing work, relationships, needs, and opportunities identified alongside leadership in Uganda and Kenya.

That means the purpose of one trip may be very different from another.

A team might spend time:

- Serving alongside a children's program.
- Visiting families and communities.
- Working with teachers or schools.
- Participating in a practical or construction project.
- Providing professional or technical training.
- Working alongside healthcare professionals.
- Supporting agricultural or community-development efforts.
- Encouraging pastors and ministry leaders.
- Participating in church ministry, discipleship, or outreach.
- Assessing a future project.
- Meeting with community leaders.
- Helping develop organizational systems.
- Sharing a particular professional skill.
- Listening and learning.

Many trips will involve several of these.

And some of the most meaningful moments may not appear on the itinerary at all.

A Trip Is More Than A Project

We want to accomplish meaningful things.

But RECLAIM does not measure a mission trip simply by the amount of work completed.

Imagine spending a morning visiting a school where RECLAIM is involved.

You may tour classrooms, meet teachers, talk with children, hear about challenges, and learn what school leadership hopes to accomplish.

From a task-oriented perspective, you may wonder:

"What did I actually do?"

But perhaps you are an educator.

During those conversations you recognize something.

You begin talking with a teacher.

Questions turn into ideas.

Months later, that relationship develops into teacher training or an educational partnership that strengthens the school for years.

The morning wasn't wasted because nothing was built.

Relationship was the beginning of the work.

We want participants to leave room for that possibility.

You Will Probably Learn As Much As You Give

It is natural to think about a mission trip in terms of what you will bring.

Your time.

Your skills.

Your resources.

Your experience.

Your faith.

All of those may be valuable.

But if you come willing to listen, you may discover how much you receive as well.

You may encounter expressions of faith different from your own.

You may see generosity in circumstances where you expected only need.

You may encounter approaches to family, community, hospitality, worship, leadership, or relationships that cause you to reconsider some of your own assumptions.

You may discover strengths in people whom the world might describe primarily by their needs.

We hope you return home not simply with memories of what you did, but with relationships and questions that continue shaping you long after the trip ends.

Who Decides What A Team Does?

We want trip planning to happen through relationship.

RECLAIM leadership and those serving within Uganda or Kenya should work together to identify meaningful opportunities for visiting participants.

Local leaders understand circumstances that visitors may not.

They know the communities.

They know the relationships.

They know what has already been tried.

They often know why something that appears simple from the outside isn't simple at all.

At the same time, a visiting participant may bring expertise, experience, or a perspective that opens a new possibility.

The goal is not for one side to have all the answers.

The goal is to listen to one another and discover what we can accomplish together.

What Kind Of Trips Might Be Possible?

As RECLAIM's ministry develops, trips may be organized around different purposes.

General Service And Relationship Trips

These may provide broad exposure to RECLAIM's work and include visits to children, families, schools, churches, ministry programs, and communities.

Participants may serve in several different ways while gaining a greater understanding of the ministry.

Skills-Based Teams

A team may form around a particular need or profession.

Examples might include:

- Education.
- Healthcare.
- Construction.
- Agriculture.
- Mechanical or technical work.
- Business development.
- Leadership development.
- Counseling or family support.
- Technology.
- Administration.
- Ministry training.

Church Teams

A partner church may send a team to deepen its relationship with RECLAIM and local ministry partners.

Such a trip could include service, discipleship, pastoral encouragement, children's ministry, community visits, projects, or other activities developed together with local leadership.

Project-Focused Trips

Occasionally, a particular project may benefit from a team with the appropriate skills or capacity.

Even then, we want the project to serve the larger ministry rather than allowing the trip itself to become the purpose.

Individual Or Specialized Service

Not every opportunity requires a team.

There may be circumstances where one or two people with a particular skill, professional background, ministry experience, or relationship can provide meaningful assistance.

What About Volunteering Without Traveling?

You do not have to travel internationally to serve RECLAIM.

As the Organization grows, meaningful volunteer opportunities may exist in areas such as:

- Administration.
- Communications.
- Donor relations.
- Church relations.
- Fundraising.
- Event planning.
- Graphic design.
- Photography and media.
- Technology.
- Grant research and writing.
- Accounting or financial expertise.
- Legal or professional consultation.
- Educational resources.
- Project research.

What About Volunteering Without Traveling? - continued

- Logistics.
- Prayer coordination.
- Advocacy.
- Professional mentoring.

Some opportunities may be ongoing.

Others may involve helping with one particular need.

If you see something that fits your experience—or something we haven't thought of—we want to hear about it.

How Long Is A Mission Trip?

Trip length will depend upon the purpose, destination, travel schedule, and people involved.

Because travel from the United States to East Africa requires significant time and expense, most trips will generally involve approximately ten to fourteen days including travel.

Some specialized assignments may be shorter or longer.

Longer-term volunteer opportunities may also develop as RECLAIM grows.

Before asking someone to commit, we will provide the anticipated dates and time commitment for the particular opportunity.

How Much Will It Cost?

Trip costs will vary depending upon:

- Airfare.
- Destination.
- Length of stay.
- Lodging.
- Ground transportation.
- Meals.
- Visa or immigration requirements.
- Travel insurance.
- Planned activities.
- Other trip-specific expenses.

Rather than publish a single figure that may quickly become inaccurate, RECLAIM will provide an estimated trip cost when a specific opportunity is being developed.

We want participants to understand what is included and what personal expenses they should anticipate before making a commitment.

Where appropriate, participants may also have opportunities to raise financial support toward their participation.

Questions about cost should never be embarrassing.

If finances are the primary obstacle to your participation, talk with us. It does not necessarily mean the conversation has to end.

Where Will I Stay?

Accommodations will depend upon the location and nature of the trip.

They may range from hotels or guesthouses to ministry accommodations or other suitable lodging.

Our goal is to provide accommodations that are reasonably safe and appropriate for the team and circumstances.

Some locations may provide conveniences similar to those you are accustomed to at home.

Others may not.

Part of exploring a particular trip will include an honest conversation about accommodations, transportation, accessibility, electricity, internet access, meals, and other practical considerations.

We would rather help you understand the environment beforehand than allow unnecessary surprises after arrival.

Do I Need International Travel Experience?

No.

For some participants, a RECLAIM trip may be their first time outside the United States.

Others may have traveled extensively.

International experience can be helpful, but willingness to learn is more important than the number of stamps in your passport.

Those who decide to participate will receive additional preparation concerning travel, culture, health, safety, and the particular country and communities they will visit.

Do I Need To Be In Excellent Physical Condition?

Not necessarily.

Different opportunities involve different physical demands.

Some may include significant walking, uneven terrain, heat, long drives, rural travel, stairs, physical work, long days, or changes in diet and routine.

Other opportunities may be much less physically demanding.

We want to have honest conversations about this before someone commits.

A physical limitation does not automatically prevent meaningful service. It may simply help determine which opportunity is appropriate.

What About Health?

International travel deserves thoughtful medical preparation.

Health considerations vary by destination and individual circumstances.

Before travel, committed participants will receive information about relevant travel-health considerations and will be encouraged to consult qualified medical professionals concerning their individual needs.

At the Explore stage, you do not need to have all of that figured out.

If you have a concern that might affect your ability to travel or participate, we encourage you to discuss it with us early so we can determine whether reasonable arrangements are possible.

What Will Be Expected Before A Trip?

If you decide you would like to move forward, there will be a preparation period before departure.

The exact process will depend upon the trip and your role, but it may include:

- A volunteer or mission participant application.
- Conversation with RECLAIM leadership.
- References when appropriate.
- Background screening when appropriate to the role.
- Team meetings.
- Child-safeguarding preparation where applicable.
- Cultural orientation.
- Health and travel preparation.
- Passport and immigration requirements.
- Safety and security orientation.
- Review of relevant RECLAIM policies.
- Required forms and acknowledgments.
- Trip-specific preparation.
- Prayer and spiritual preparation.

This process is not designed to make serving complicated.

We want people to arrive prepared.

International ministry involves people, relationships, cultures, children, resources, travel, and real responsibilities. Thoughtful preparation allows us to spend less time worrying about preventable problems and more time being present with the people we came to serve.

If you decide to participate, we will walk through that preparation with you.

How Much Pre-Trip Time Should I Expect?

Preparation is part of the trip.

Participants should expect to make time before departure for several team conversations or orientation sessions, completion of necessary forms, personal travel preparation, and any role-specific training.

Some specialized teams may require additional planning.

We encourage people considering a trip to think not only about whether they can take time away for travel, but also whether they can make reasonable room beforehand to prepare well.

Specific expectations will be communicated for each trip before commitment.

What If I Have Questions About Culture?

We hope you do.

You are not expected to understand Ugandan or Kenyan culture before you arrive.

In fact, neither country can be reduced to one culture. Expectations can differ between cities and villages, generations, churches, ethnic communities, families, and social settings.

If you are wondering about clothing, greetings, food, relationships, church, photography, money, language, hospitality—or something you are afraid might be a foolish question—ask.

Those conversations are part of preparation.

Our goal is not to give participants a long list of rules to memorize.

We want to help people develop enough awareness that they begin asking a better question:

“How might this be understood here?”

Local leadership will help us answer that question.

What If I Make A Mistake?

You probably will.

So will the rest of us.

You may misunderstand something.

Use the wrong word.

Dress incorrectly for an occasion.

Misread a social situation.

Have trouble adjusting to a change in plans.

Ask a question that sounds different than you intended.

Cultural learning requires some grace.

We don't expect participants to arrive knowing everything.

We hope people will be willing to ask questions, receive guidance, laugh at themselves occasionally, apologize when appropriate, and keep learning.

There is an important difference between not knowing and not being willing to learn.

What About Children?

Because RECLAIM serves vulnerable children and families, safeguarding is an important part of our preparation.

You do not need to study a policy manual before deciding whether you are interested in serving.

If your role involves interaction with children, we will provide appropriate safeguarding training and clearly explain the boundaries and responsibilities involved before you serve.

Our purpose is simple:

Children should be able to experience the joy and encouragement of relationships with visitors without those relationships compromising their dignity, privacy, or safety.

What Happens When Plans Change?

They will.

International ministry involves people, weather, transportation, government processes, roads, community events, illness, funerals, school schedules, church schedules, and countless things no itinerary can completely control.

A carefully planned day may look different by lunchtime.

We prepare carefully.

Then we remain flexible.

Sometimes a change is simply inconvenient.

Sometimes it opens a door we could never have planned.

Part of the experience is learning to recognize the difference.

Can My Church Serve Together?

Absolutely.

We would love to explore relationships with churches that share RECLAIM's heart for Christ-centered service, meaningful partnership, and sustainable ministry.

Church involvement does not necessarily need to begin with sending a team.

A relationship might begin through:

- Prayer.
- Learning about a particular ministry.
- Supporting a project.
- Developing relationships with local churches or leaders.
- Offering professional expertise.
- Financial partnership.
- Sending a small exploratory group.
- Eventually developing mission-team opportunities.

We would rather allow a partnership to grow meaningfully than manufacture a trip simply because a church wants a destination.

How Do I Know If This Is For Me?

There isn't a formula.

But you might begin with a few questions:

What drew me to RECLAIM in the first place?

Is there something about this work that continues to stir my heart?

Do I have a skill, experience, relationship, or ability that might contribute?

Am I interested in learning from people whose lives may be very different from mine?

Could God be inviting me into something unfamiliar?

And perhaps simply:

Do I want to know more?

You don't have to answer every question today.

That is what Explore is for.

From Exploring To Preparing

If after learning more you believe you would like to pursue a particular volunteer or mission opportunity, the next step is Prepare.

That's when the conversation becomes specific.

Together we begin preparing for the actual role or trip.

Application → Conversation → Acceptance → Preparation → Service

During Prepare, you will receive the information and training relevant to your particular role, including applicable policies, safeguarding, cultural preparation, travel details, safety information, team expectations, and country-specific orientation.

There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions along the way.

Still Curious?

Good.

Curiosity is exactly where Explore should leave you.

You don't have to decide today whether you are ready to travel to East Africa.

You don't have to know exactly how you could volunteer.

And you don't have to have everything figured out.

Tell us what interests you.

Tell us what concerns you.

Tell us what you know how to do.

Tell us what you would like to learn.

Ask us the questions you're already thinking about.

Let's discover together whether there is a place for you in the work.