

Dear Friends,

Spring, 2008

We are amazed at how quickly the year passes and realize that people have already begun to prepare for summer! This is most likely true for your church in terms of arranging for your 2008 summer mission trips. Our goal in contacting you is to recommend some resources that will assist you in making all of your mission trips throughout 2008 run as smoothly as possible. There are four key resources we want you to be aware of:

- 1) The benefits of **short term travel insurance** and how to acquire it;
- 2) A “**resource specialist**” who can help you train your staff and volunteers for short-term missions;
- 3) Other resources available on the **Vineyard Missions website**;
- 4) Information on connecting with our Prayer Net to provide **intercessory prayer** for your trip and team.

➤ *Short term travel insurance*

It's an exciting time to participate in the wonderful experiences of short term mission trips. However, since there can be a great deal of uncertainty, and some risk involved in international travel, we are encouraging local churches to consider investing in short term missions' trip insurance for their teams. The cost of the coverage is reasonable and the benefits of having volunteers covered in case of medical emergencies occurring abroad far outweigh the cost. Depending on which plan is selected, the cost for this type of insurance plan runs about \$1.44 per day, per person. There are a number of insurance providers for this type of coverage, but Vineyard Missions staff is providing you with the information on one carrier, Good Neighbor Insurance, if you do not have time to “shop around.” Good Neighbor provides comprehensive coverage and is very “user friendly”. You may sign up on line and purchase coverage in about 10 to 15 minutes. There are 9 different options in the plan with a variety of coverages and various deductibles to choose from. The easiest way to access the information for this type of insurance and determine the cost is to go to their link for Vineyard Missions at <https://groups.specialtyrisk.com/Z9KZHFBT>.

Good Neighbor Insurance offers regular updates on changes to their plan and other related items which you should pay close attention to. The most recent ones listed in their quarterly bulletin include: the scope of political evacuation coverage, your USA medical plan as primary coverage and the effects of an acute on-set of a pre-existing condition. To get all of the details regarding these issues their quarterly report, as well as a copy of the details of our coverage plan with Good Neighbor, is available on our Vineyard Website (link) at <http://www.vineyardmissions.org/stinsur.asp>.

➤ *Short term teams resource specialist*

Within Vineyard Missions we have recognized the need to identify resource specialists - individuals who can train, coach and work alongside churches where they have specific needs or want additional expertise in order to be more effective in their missions' efforts. Our first resource specialist, *Luane Thomson*, is well known to many people who have been working in Vineyard Missions. Luane has served as the Missions' Pastor at the

Don't miss the opportunity to attend the upcoming regional meeting and hear more about Vineyard missions! Check the schedule for your region at <http://www.vineyardusa.org/regions/regional.aspx>.

Atlanta Vineyard Church in Norcross, Georgia since 2002 and led approximately 50 teams into seven different countries on five continents since 1985. We hope you will join us in welcoming her!

- ❖ For more details on ways Luane can assist your church, please see the more comprehensive introduction which is attached below.

➤ *Vineyard Missions website*

The Vineyard Missions website, www.vineyardmissions.org, is a great tool for the local church. It is full of information and resources on various topics related to missions. Just a few of the many topics covered are: sending long term cross-cultural workers, information on partnerships, legal resources, some examples of short term team manuals and much, much more. Also on the website is an event calendar to keep you updated on key events.

Please take some time to peruse through the drop-down menus on our website. Our goal is to equip our local churches with the most helpful information available regarding missions. New additions to the site are highlighted on the front page. If you have a resource or information that you feel would be valuable to share with other churches working in missions, please submit it to us and we will do our best to get it on the website for others to access.

➤ *PrayerNet*

The PrayerNet is a group of intercessory prayers whose purpose is to provide ongoing strategic prayer for all of Vineyard's missional activity. Many of our missions' leaders have reported that this prayer covering has been incredibly vital to the effectiveness and powerful outcomes of their mission's trips, and shared that they sensed the power of this prayer covering on their trips. We are blessed to have such a passionate and dedicated group of prayers, so please take advantage of this great ministry. You will be glad you did!

Directions: To request prayer for your church's mission trip or other missional activity go to <http://vineyardmissions.org/prayernetoverview.asp>. Here you will find the link "submit a prayer need." Click on this link and it will bring up a form in which you can fill in the details of your mission's trip or activity. Once you fill out this form, hit the submit button. Your request will be sent to our Prayer Net coordinator, Mary Ellen Sawyer who will put your details in an email and send it out to our group of prayer intercessors. Feel free to update your prayer needs as your activity progresses!

We hope these resources prove helpful to you! If there is any way we can be of further help, please don't hesitate to contact us either by email, office@vineyardmissions or by phone at 909-626-0773.

Blessings,

Vineyard Missions Staff

Vineyard Missions introduces Luane Thomson, short term teams resource specialist

Luane's experiences in short term missions have given her hands-on familiarity with teams, leadership methods, cross-cultural issues and travel challenges. Her belief is that as disciples of Christ we need to take seriously not only His call to go into the harvest field but to be ready and equipped to do it. As she says, "Jesus prepared His workers and we should prepare ours."

The international missions' focus of the Atlanta Vineyard is to see a Vineyard church-planting movement in the nations of Russia and Tajikistan and Luane leads the Vineyard Tajikistan Partnership. In that context Luane oversees the training and sending of long and short-term cross-cultural workers. The church currently has eleven long-term cross-cultural workers in the field.

A favorite quote of Luane's is, "*A short-term mission trip is an intentional face to face with God!*" She sees such trips as a wonderful opportunity to disciple people, encourage long term cross cultural workers who may be there, and to come alongside others to grow churches, as well as to build an outward focus in the local church. Luane has identified three specific areas of possible assistance:

1. Where a team leader or church has past experience but wants more training/and or resources, she is available to dialogue about particular issues, email information and assist as they create or complete their team's training; she can also help deal with particular challenges (including specialized teaching on Islam if needed).
2. Where a church is sending out a team for the first time she would be willing to come to your church and be onsite for team leader training (two evenings and a full day). To make the travel and time worthwhile there should be at least two churches in the same area who want to be involved.
3. Luane is also open to being part of a short-term team's week-end retreat. She could help prepare beforehand with the leaders and the team, and then provide support at the week-end, leading specific parts of the retreat such as team building and cross cultural training.

For more information, to check available dates, or just to connect, you can contact Luane at luanet@atlantavineyard.com or at the Atlanta Vineyard 770-274-1010 x23.

The goal of identifying resource specialists is to help make training and coaching for missions more available to our local churches. To that end, Vineyard Missions is incurring some of the costs to support these efforts. However, local churches will be expected to pay any travel and material costs (notebooks or other training materials) and where there is time on site, an honorarium would be appropriate. For the weekend retreat the minimum suggested honorarium is \$250.00 plus travel and materials.
