

STEP INTO STUDENT SUMMER TRIPS

**Your Guide to
Financial Support**



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STUDENT SUMMER TRIPS 2020

MAKING SURE EVERYONE CAN GO

A Note to Students and Families

Money can feel stressful, uncomfortable to talk about, or even a little embarrassing. For some, it's tight. For others, it's complicated. And for most of us, it's just... a lot. If you've ever felt that tension, you're not alone.

But here's what we want you to hear clearly: **We do not want money to be the reason a student misses out on what God wants to do in their life this summer.**

These trips matter. They create space for students to grow in their faith, build meaningful friendships, serve others, and experience God in ways that are hard to replicate anywhere else. We believe that deeply—and because of that, we're committed to doing everything we can to remove financial barriers.

At the same time, trips do cost money. There are real expenses involved in transportation, lodging, food, programming, and more. So instead of avoiding the conversation, we want to approach it with honesty, clarity, and a whole lot of grace.

That's what this guide is for.

Inside, you'll find:

- Simple payment plan options to help spread out the cost
- Practical fundraising ideas and guidelines
- Information about our scholarship plan
- Clear next steps for how to move forward

Our hope is that this guide helps take away confusion, lowers stress, and replaces any sense of pressure or shame with confidence and support. You don't have to navigate this alone. We're in this with you.

We're prayerful and expectant for what this summer could mean for your student—and we don't want anything standing in the way of that.

If you'd like to follow up on guide with a conversation, please reach out. We would genuinely love to spend time with you.

Grace Chapel Student Ministry Team



MAKING PAYMENTS



Whether it's donated funds or personal installments, here's what you need to know about how it works.



INSTALLMENTS

Installment Plan Expectations

There are two payment plan options, after the initial \$100 deposit is paid. One splits the remaining cost across two more payments, and the other splits the cost across four payments.

In our **two-payment plan**, we'll follow up with you and invite you to make larger payments about **6-8 weeks apart**.

In our **four-payment plan**, we'll follow up and invite you to make smaller payments about **4-6 weeks apart**.

In either scenario, **when you deposit can make a difference**. Trips need to be fully paid for by June 15th, so payment reminders may come more frequently if you registered in May, compared to someone who registered in March.

Making payments in a timely manner is important. Staying on track helps us plan responsibly and ensure that all trip costs are covered on time. We also have our own milestone payments that need to be met with our mission partner or camp.

Because of that, **missing a milestone may put a student's spot on the trip at risk**.

If a payment is missed, the trip leader will follow up to better understand your situation. In some cases, we may be able to work with you to create an adjusted plan. However, that is not something to assume ahead of time.

What matters most to us is seeing **consistent effort and communication**. If challenges arise, we ask that you reach out early rather than waiting until a deadline has passed.

Our goal is not to create pressure—but to be clear and fair to every family, while also making space to support those who need it.

SCHOLARSHIPS



**Understanding
guidelines and access
to donated funds.**

STUDENT SUMMER
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REQUESTING SCHOLARSHIPS

We never want money to be the reason a student misses out on a summer service trip. If cost feels like a barrier — even a little — scholarships are available.

How It Works

- **Open to anyone.** You don't need to prove financial need or fill out a complicated application. If you need or want help, you just need to ask for it.
- **Dollar-for-dollar fundraising match.** For every dollar someone donates in your name, the scholarship fund will match it — up to 50% of your total trip cost.
- **First come, first served.** Scholarship funds are limited, so they're available until they run out.
- **Apply.** When you register for a trip, there will be an option you can choose that is a scholarship option. **This does not automatically mean it will happen.** A Grace Chapel Student Ministry staff member (or trip leader) will follow up with you to confirm scholarship fund availability as they will need to check the total number of registered students requesting scholarship funds to make sure there is enough.

Example A

- Your trip costs \$1,000
- You fundraise, and donors contribute \$300
- The scholarship fund matches those \$300
- Your personal cost for the trip is now the remaining \$400, rather than the initial \$1,000

Example B

- Your trip costs \$1,000
- You fundraise, and donors contribute \$600
- The scholarship fund matches up to \$400
- Your trip has been fully paid for by your fundraising and the scholarship fund

If Plans Change

We understand that sometimes plans shift. Here's how that works:

If you've paid toward your trip and received scholarship funds, any eligible refund will only include what you personally paid. The matched scholarship portion goes back into the scholarship fund to help another student.

GIVING TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

We never want finances to be the reason a student misses out on a meaningful experience. That's why we have a Student Ministry Scholarship Fund—a pool of resources set aside to help students participate in Grace Chapel trips, retreats, camps, and other high-cost opportunities.

These funds are:

- Available to any student—no applications, income verification, or interviews required
- Unrestricted—they can be used for any eligible student ministry event
- Distributed at the discretion of our Student Ministry team, based on need and available funds

Our goal is to make this support simple, accessible, and free of pressure or embarrassment.

A few important notes:

- All contributions to the scholarship fund are considered charitable donations, making them tax deductible
- Because of this designation, scholarship funds are **non-refundable**
- Donations to this fund cannot be designated for a specific student
- Scholarships are available on a first-come, first-serve basis and will be distributed as long as there are funds to distribute.

If you would like to support a specific student, you can give through their fundraising page in support of their trip. This will still be a gift made to Grace Chapel, making it a non-refundable, tax-deductible donation.

We are incredibly grateful for the generosity that makes this fund possible—and for the ways it opens doors for students to experience growth, community, and life change.

Please consider donating to the scholarship fund. Even small amounts add up and benefit students for years to come, making sure money is never a reason a student cannot participate in the life of their church.

FUNDRAISING



An approach to navigating fundraising without feeling weird about it...or maybe in spite of feeling weird about it.



STUDENTSUMMERTIPS

HEY! CAN YOU GIVE ME MONEY?

Let's just say it out loud.

Fundraising can feel awkward. Especially if it starts with "Hey, can you give me money?"

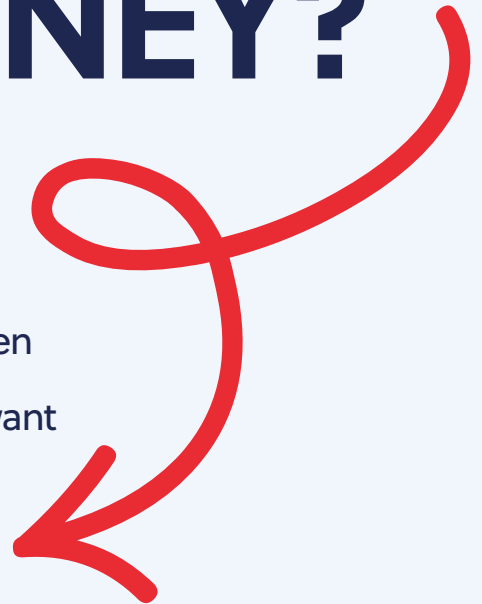
Most of us don't love asking people for money, even when it's the difference in having groceries or getting needed school supplies. We don't want to feel pushy. We don't want to burden anyone. We definitely don't want to sound like a telemarketer or a social media campaign. And in New England especially, we tend to value independence — you work hard, you handle your own business, you don't make a fuss. So when you hear "raise support," it can sound like: Go ask people for cash.

But that's not actually what this is.

These trips aren't just line items in a budget. We don't run trips so that students have something to do over the summer or even make great memories. **We offer these trips as opportunities for students to discover and own their faith.** And these trips challenge students to do that in the context of service and leadership development. It's formation. It's stretching faith. It's learning to serve. It's stepping into community.

So, when you invite someone to support you, you're not just asking for money — you're inviting them into the story God is writing in your life and the lives of others. You're giving them an opportunity to participate in what God is doing in you. That invitation matters.

But here's the important part: if you only ask for money, then yes — it's just asking for money. But if you ask them to pray for you, if you follow up and share what God did, if you let them see how their support made a difference — then it becomes partnership. It becomes shared mission. It becomes a relationship.



Real fundraising isn't transactional. It's relational.

It sounds more like:

- "Would you consider praying for me as I prepare?"
- "Could I share with you what this trip is about and why it matters to me?"
- "When I get back, I'd love to tell you what God did."

Yes, it may require a follow-up conversation. Yes, it takes initiative. Yes, it asks you to step slightly outside your comfort zone. But that's part of the formation too.

Learning to invite others into your spiritual growth is not manipulation. It's humility. It's recognizing that we don't grow alone. It's trusting that God often works through community.

This guide will walk you step-by-step through how to do this in a way that is clear, respectful, and authentic — not awkward or sales-driven.

You don't have to pressure anyone.

You don't have to perform.

You don't have to apologize for going.

You're simply inviting others to be part of something meaningful. And that is a good, brave thing.

SO, WHAT DOES THAT LOOK LIKE?



HOW FUNDRAISING WORKS

If you've asked for scholarship help, then you will get scholarship funding **through a dollar-for-dollar match** on what you fundraise. That means that outside supporters (not you or your parents/guardians) will donate to church, and specify that their gift is in support of your trip.

Our staff will update you periodically with how the fundraising is going - sending you a current total and the names of those who have donated.

Our Giving Platform

You will be fundraising through the same website that we use to collect retreat registrations, even Summer Trip deposits.

There is a form very similar to the one that you will use to pay your Summer Trip deposit. Once you've asked for scholarship help, we will add your name to that form, and we will give you the link that you can send to potential supporters.

Important note: this is a shared fundraising link. Everyone who is fundraising will have their name in that form. When you are sending the link to a donor, instruct them to **check off your name** under the question, "Who are you giving this donation to?"

If your donor already gives to Grace Chapel, their donation to your trip will be reported in the same annual giving statement as their other tithes and offerings.

MAKING THE INVITATION



WHAT IT COULD LOOK LIKE AND SOUND LIKE

THE
CONVERSATION

THE LETTER/EMAIL

THE TEXT

GETTING
CREATIVE



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I HAVE TO TALK TO PEOPLE?

Not technically, no, but while this method can, for some, be the most intimidating way to invite someone to support your trip, the reality is, it's often the **most effective**. It's more personal, more human, more relational, and often way less awkward than we think it will be.

Talking to your Teacher

You:

"Hey Ms. Carter — can I ask you something?"

Teacher:

"Sure, what's up?"

Student:

"I'm going on a summer service/leadership trip with my youth group, and part of it is raising support. I know this might feel random, but I'm inviting a few people who've been important in my life to be part of it. Would you be open to hearing about it?"

Teacher:

"Yeah, tell me about it."

Student:

"It's a week where we'll be serving in [city/place], working with local organizations. I'm really excited — and a little nervous. If you'd be willing to support me financially, that would mean a lot. But honestly, I'd also really appreciate your encouragement. I'd love to tell you how it goes when I get back. And no need to decide right now. Just wanted to ask."

What's great about this ask is that it unapologetically presents the reality of raising financial support, but it doesn't make it the only ask. It gives your teacher (coach, director, leader) an immediate "out" if they don't feel comfortable supporting you financially, still inviting them into your world and story, and communicates value. Even if they say no, which is totally fine, they can still participate and support you in a way that is still helpful and meaningful.

Whether asking non-family is easier or harder, family asks can be nuanced. Here's what it might look and sound like with family.

Family You've Asked Before

Student:

"Hey Aunt Lisa — can I ask you something? I'm going on another summer trip with my youth group this year. I know you've supported me before, and I just want to say that meant a lot. No pressure at all, but I wanted to invite you again in case you'd want to be part of it."

Aunt:

"Where are you going this year?"

Student:

"We'll be serving in [location]. I'm really excited about it. And even if you can't give this time, I'd still love to tell you about it when I get back. If you'd like to be part of it again, I'd be grateful. And if not, I totally understand. I just didn't want to leave you out."

We often decide for people that they don't want to hear about it again or give again, but actually asking may reveal a different story. You just don't know until you ask. Be careful not to make decisions for people how they will feel or respond to asking or asking again.

Skeptical Family You Haven't Asked Before

Student:

"Hey Uncle Mark — I wanted to tell you about something I'm doing this summer. I'm going on a service trip with my youth group to serve a community in [place]. I'm raising support to help cover the cost, and I'm asking a few people who've been important in my life if they'd consider being part of it."

Uncle:

"So you're asking for money..."

Student:

"Unfortunately yes. Service trips still cost money ;). I'm actually working and saving too. This isn't about getting out of paying for it. We're encouraged to invite people into it if they want to be part of it. I completely understand if that's not something you want to do. Your encouragement still means a lot too and I'd love to still tell you about it when I get back."

Talking about money in any context is hard. That doesn't mean it should be avoided. It just means it should be respected, respectful, and preferably come from a place of relationship rather than "the bottom line".

I REEEEEALLY DON'T WANT TO TALK TO ANYONE...

Letters and emails can often express a fuller picture and are sometimes a better fit for certain relationships, schedules, and communication situations. But don't just copy and paste. Make sure this is from YOU and captures your voice.

Example Letter/Email

Hi _____,
I hope you're doing well! I wanted to let you know about something I'm doing this summer.

I'll be going on a service trip with my church from [dates] to [location]. We'll be partnering with a local organization there and helping with projects that support the community — things like [brief example: kids programs, home repairs, community outreach, etc.]. I'm really looking forward to it and hoping it stretches me, helps me grow, and shapes my faith even more.

As part of the trip, I'm raising support. The total cost is \$____, and it's due by [deadline]. I'm working and saving, too, in order to go, but additional support would go a long way in helping me get there. If you'd consider contributing, I'd really appreciate it. But just as importantly, I'd love your encouragement and support while I prepare and go.

If you're interested, I'd be happy to share more about it — and I'd love to tell you how it goes when I get back.

Thanks for being someone who's invested in my life. It really means a lot.

— [Name]

This is intentionally short, not just because you want to start this interaction by honoring their time and attention, but it also leaves some room for you to add a few additional sentences that really make it personal for you.

Remember, this isn't about asking for money...unless you treat it as though it's just asking for money. Make the most important thing what it should be: inviting people into the story.

SO, HOW ABOUT A TEXT?

Sometimes text can be helpful. Emails get lost and conversations can get forgotten. While we don't recommend text as the only option or the first option, sometimes a text is appropriate.

Invitation to a conversation text

Hi — this feels slightly awkward over text but I'm going on a service trip this summer and inviting a few people to be part of it. Could I send you some info?

Reminder about an email sent

Hey! Just wanted to make sure you saw the email I sent about my summer trip. No rush — just didn't want it to get buried.

Asking about the letter you mailed.

Hey! Sent you a letter about a summer trip I'm taking with my youth group old school style. Just wanted to make sure you got it. I'd love to tell you more about it if you're free.

Following up after a conversation

Hey — thanks again for talking with me about my trip. No pressure at all, but I just wanted to follow up in case you had any questions.

Gentle reminders don't hurt. In fact, they can be really helpful. People are distracted and busy and reminders are important.

But what if they said "No," or, worse, "I'll think about it." How do you follow up with that?

Here are some ways to follow up with someone who has said “No,” or “I’ll think about it,” in a way that demonstrates it was never about the money.

Response to “No”

Thank you for letting me know — I really appreciate you even considering it. I’d still love to tell you how the trip goes if you’re interested. See you tomorrow!

Response to “I’ll think about it.”

Hey! Just checking back in about my trip. Totally understand if now’s not a good time — I just need to finalize things by [deadline]. Thanks again for considering it.

When a text may feel like the first and only option may be with your friends from school or another group you’re involved in. Here’s some options to get you thinking about how you might word that text.

Close friend. Direct and honest.

Okay so you’re one of my favorite humans, so I have to tell you this first... I’m going on a service trip this summer and I’m raising money for it. If you’d ever want to chip in, that’d mean a lot. But also I just want you to know what I’m doing.

Even shorter...

Hi I hate asking this over text but I’m raising money for trip this summer. If you’re interested I can send info?

Maybe somewhere in between...

Hi! I’m doing a service trip in [location] and fundraising for it. Totally understand if it’s not your thing — just wanted to invite you.

MAKE THE FUNDRAISING CONCRETE

How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time. It can be hard to look at a large sum of money and think about raising support for it all. Feel free to break down the fundraising goal into smaller targets - for yourself and for the people you are inviting to give towards your trip.

Say things like:

I'm asking 10 people to donate \$50. Will you be one of my 10?

My fundraising goal is \$400, and I'm already at \$250. Can you help me get over the finish line?

Or, you can try to offer something to make the fundraising ask feel like a more mutual give and take, like:

If I babysit your kids, would you donate to my trip instead of paying me?

I'm making a batch of cookies to say thank you to everyone who gives to my trip!

We encourage you to lean into your gifts and relationships with your neighbors, your small group community, the children you tutor, and so on. If you can give a little bit of time or talent, like babysitting, taking a family photo, cleaning a car (inside and out!), it can be a creative way to get people to say "yes" to supporting your trip.

A NOTE ON PERSONAL FUNDRAISING

Using Both Options

You can fundraise personally AND access scholarship fund. These can work together to help cover your total cost

If someone gives money directly to you, and you are no longer able to go on the trip, it is your responsibility to return those funds to the donor, even if you've used their money to pay for your trip and what you paid is non-refundable due to the nature of the trip. This is an important part of integrity and trust.

Bottom Line

Personal fundraising is an opportunity to invite people into what you're doing — but it also comes with responsibility:

- Be clear about where the money is going
- Be honest about whether it is tax deductible
- Handle any gifts with care and integrity
- If you're ever unsure how to communicate this, we're here to help.

TAX DESIGNATIONS

Tax & Refund Policy

Because each of our trips is structured differently, the way payments are categorized—and whether they are tax deductible or refundable—varies by trip.

Philly Project & Root Cellar

Payments made by parents/guardians for these trips are considered tax-deductible charitable contributions due to the service-based nature of the experience.

As a result, all payments are non-refundable.

CIY Mix (Christ In Youth)

Payments for CIY are considered registration fees, not charitable donations, and therefore are not tax deductible, but are refundable.

If you choose a payment plan for CIY:

- Any amount paid directly by a student/parent/guardian is refundable (according to our standard refund timeline/policies).
- Any funds applied through fundraising or scholarships are treated as donations and are non-refundable.

If you have questions about how this applies to your specific situation, we're happy to help clarify.

What if someone donated to me personally and I end up not being able to go on the trip?

If someone donated to the Grace Chapel Student Ministry scholarship fund (which would go to anyone in need of scholarship) that money is non-refundable. If someone donated to you personally without Grace Chapel's involvement, and you end up not being able to go on the trip, you would be responsible for making sure they go that money back.