

Guidelines for Ministry With New Life Fellowship Cambodia

Our Vision Statement

To plant a New Testament Church in Phnom Penh and train Cambodians to pastor and lead that church. To plant churches with the same foundation and philosophy in each province in Cambodia and throughout Southeast Asia.

New Life Fellowship is a church-planting church. It is our intent to raise up a strong local church in Phnom Penh, that will plant churches throughout the provinces of Cambodia and eventually, in the coming years in other Asian countries.

As of 2007, we have a growing church of 750 people in Phnom Penh, the capitol city of almost 2 million people, and we have over sixty churches in the rural areas of Cambodia.

Many of these Churches are Churches of over close to a hundred people and all of them are being lead by Cambodian nationals. Others are still in the house Church stages and are overseen by one of our Church planting teams. Short term teams minister both in the city and in the rural churches. Our ministry has grown over the years and now includes many areas of possible ministry by short term teams and individuals that are mentioned in the document "Team Possibilities".



A Word about "Conversions"

We lead people to Jesus and call for a biblical commitment to Him. However, there are some difficulties we run into when it comes to "western-style" methods of conversion. The Cambodian people have been taught to show respect to foreigners. Therefore, they will answer "yes" even when they mean "no." This is called "giving face." There have been reports of teams or individuals coming (English-speaking), witnessing for a week or two, and reporting numerous conversions. I honestly believe these are often not actual conversions. First of all, the average Cambodian you speak to using the English language only understands about 50% of what you say. Secondly, it's been my experience that a Cambodian needs several exposures to the Gospel before he even understands God's grace and who Jesus Christ actually is.

The concepts of the Almighty, Jesus death and resurrection and salvation by grace are not concepts that have had much exposure in Cambodia and therefore take time for a Cambodian to grasp. Therefore, we may get a person to pray a prayer or agree with us about the Gospel, but I really believe outside of a supernatural move of God, a Cambodian will probably not be truly saved after two or three exposures to the Gospel. What will happen is they like the Good News, but only add Jesus to their other assortment of religions and traditions. After this deception occurs, it is often even more difficult to bring them

Our process has been to start with the Bible, then explain clearly who God is - His nature, character and essential and moral attributes. We then begin in the Book of Genesis and work our way through the stories of the Bible, explaining the holiness and love of God and the sinfulness of men. It's a slow process, but the ones who choose to follow Jesus are generally truly born again and added to the church.

Therefore, during your visit to Cambodia, don't lead someone to believe they are a Christian just because they prayed a prayer with you. Pray – YES! Pray for their sicknesses, pray for their needs, pray that they will want to truly know Jesus. Pray a lot, but don't lead them to believe they are now a Christian simply because they prayed a prayer. This is not biblical, nor is it helpful to our ministry or to them.

Cultural Considerations

One important thing to learn is the proper polite greeting when meeting someone in Cambodia. The Khmer people do not usually shake hands, unless they have been quite exposed to western culture. Instead, the palms of the hands are brought together, as though in prayer and raised to about the chin level, accompanied by a slight bow, while saying "Choom reap suah." It is polite to initiate this action, although it is not necessary to do so for children. Failing to respond to this greeting is considered rude as if someone extended their hand to shake yours and you refused.

Please understand that in Asia in general people tend to be more reserved and quieter than people in the West. Those of you from boisterous cultures such as the United States

should remember to be more reserved in public places and don't "horse around." You will stand out like a sore thumb and people won't think you're funny. Also, immodest dress, such as short shorts, halter tops or see-through shirts as well as activities such as card games played with a traditional deck of cards, public displays of affection between men and women, and public consumption of alcohol can all be offensive to Khmers.



Cambodians are known for smiling, nodding their heads in agreement, but not necessarily agreeing with you. Just because they say they understand or agree doesn't mean they do. Believe me, this is very common. It's for that

reason that want you to be careful about giving someone the idea they are a now a Christian because they have agreed with you or said a prayer with you. Bring the person to a mature Christian in the Church for a conversation before praying with them to receive Jesus. Feel free to pray for them regarding their needs, but don't lay your hands on their heads (another cultural no-no in Cambodia) unless you ask first.

In Buddhist countries the head is considered sacred. It's for that reason we caution you to lay hands on someone's head for prayer. You will notice that someone who is equal in height to you will make sure their head goes below yours as they pass you. This is done to anyone they consider deeming respect or are older than they.

Some beggars can be quite aggressive. It's best not to give any money to people, but if you do, small amounts of less than \$1 are sufficient.

Language

The language spoken in most of Cambodia is called “Khmer” (pronounced like the contraction of “come here” in English or “come eye” in the Khmer language). It is also the proper name for the people of Cambodia.

You will find people in nice hotels and restaurants who speak English well enough. Many Cambodian young people speak English with varying degrees of clarity. You’ll be able to communicate with most of the people you come in contact with while you’re ministering here on a short-term basis. Nevertheless, understand that there will always be somewhat of a communication gap. If you’re interested in being understood it’s essential to speak un-naturally slowly and clearly using simple words. When you speak don’t use illustrations from current movies, books, or TV programs because the Cambodian people won’t have a clue as to what you’re talking about. Also, because there is such a mix of maturity of Christians in our congregations, many have little understanding of the events, people, and geography of the Bible, especially the Old Testament. When I preach, if I’m going to mention Noah, I remind the Church who Noah was before I mention him in my lesson.

Following are a few sample vocabulary words with rough phonetic approximations for the Khmer.

I, me, my = kngyom

You = neck

Want = changbahn

Go = tao

Water = tuck

How much = ponmahn

Please = sohm

Thank you =

ahkoon

Hello =

soousidiee

Formal greeting

= choom reap

suah

Bye = lia howee

Formal goodbye

= choom reap lea

How are you? = soaksabye

What is your name? = neck ch’muah

eye?

There = tea new

Here = tea nee

One = moeey

Two = bpee

Three = biee

Four = booun

Five = bprahm

Six = bphram moeey

Seven = bprahm bpee

Eight = bprahm biee

Nine = bprham booun

Ten = Dahp

One hundred = moeey roy

Lodging and Accommodations

We have 2 apartments across the street from the Church that have been set up for visitors. The apartments have both



air-conditioned rooms and living rooms with futons, as well a kitchen and bathroom. Each apartment can house up to 10 people. The apartment is \$8 per person per night. There is also a hotel about 5 minutes from the Church facilities for \$25 per night. This comes with a free breakfast.

Food Arrangements You should usually plan on taking care of your own breakfast. Lucky Supermarket is a just a few blocks from the Church and there are also a couple convenience stores within walking distance from the Church. If you like Asian breakfast, there are several Asian restaurants around the Church facilities. You can have lunch and dinner made for you for \$3 per person per meal per day. There are also many Asian and Western restaurants in town that cost on average \$5 per person per meal. We will often schedule you to have meals with some of the various people at NLF. We do this because we believe that one of the highlights of your trip will be the relationships that are forged during your time here. However please understand that the Cambodians that eat with you will not be able to afford to treat your team to meal, so please do not expect them to pay for your meal.

Ministry Agreements and Mutual Understandings

We are trusting that each team will be self-contained and that a team leader will be able to pastor their own team during the trip.

Please make sure that you submit your plans for ministry to us well in advance of your trip and stick to the ministry events, activities, and programs we agree upon. Remember, we have to live and minister here after you've gone, so please flow with our counsel.

We need you to fill out our short term team applications so that we can better know how to arrange your schedule during the time you are here.

Any teams coming from churches need to be sent by their church, as evidenced by a letter of approval and recommendation by their Senior Pastor.

Any teams coming from para-church organizations need to be sent by their organization, as evidenced by a letter of approval and recommendation by the appropriate governing spiritual authority.

New Life Foundation/New Life Fellowship does not assume any financial responsibility nor accrue any debt on behalf of any team that has not been previously arranged. Make sure all personal debts such as rent money or telephone calls are paid in full before you leave from Cambodia. It is expected that teams received by NLF will submit themselves and their ministry to the spiritual oversight of NLF while in the country as our guests.



In Cambodia you will likely be faced with greater needs than you have ever seen before. It is important that you not make commitments to people that you cannot keep, or give them false hope, such as telling someone you will get them a visa to America or Australia, or some other country. Even promises such as "I will write you" will bring great disappointment if not kept.

Please do not make commitments to people that you presume NLF will fulfill

(such as telling an orphan or an amputee on the street that you will bring them to your friends at NLF who will take care of them, meet their needs and solve all of their problems). Only minister to the degree that you are personally able to fulfill at that time, unless given specific instructions to offer a particular service or ministry that NLF is prepared to follow through on in your absence.

If approached by police or government authorities, you should not immediately say that you are with NLF. Tell them you are a tourist. We would rather not bring attention to ourselves in this way. Should you run into any difficulty with the authorities, whether you resolve them or not, the team leader should immediately contact one of the pastors of NLF to assess the situation.

If you have any difficulty with any authorities, don't argue or resist, but submit and try to get out without making a scene, regardless if the problem is no fault of your own.

Financial Considerations

Departure tax from Pochentong Airport is US \$25. The price of your visa on arrival is US \$20. The local currency is the Riel (US \$1 = 4,000 Riel), however US dollars are commonly used and you should bring them with you.

Short term teams and individuals have been such a tremendous blessing to our work here and we so appreciate you wanting to come and partner with us to further the Kingdom of God. I realize that you will be spending a great deal to make this trip. However we at NLF are at this point we are unable to cover certain necessary expenses during your time here. This means you will need to take transportation costs into

consideration. If there are only a few of you and you won't be travelling outside the city, you can rent a tuk tuk (three wheeled motorcycle cart) for about \$4 per trip. If you prefer a van, you can rent a van for about \$35 day in the city. If you'll be travelling outside the city, the prices for a bus will be anywhere from \$40 - \$60 per day depending on the distance travelled.

You may ask why NLF doesn't just use our Church vehicles to bring our guests around. First of all, our 4-wheel drive vehicles are almost always being used for Church planting in the provinces and it's important to not disrupt the regularly scheduled events. Second, we are on a *very* tight budget and any extra usage of our vehicles causes us to have to scramble and try to find extra finances for fuel. Believe me, this is something we have experienced many times in the past. While we truly appreciate our short term visitors, we just can't afford to foot the bill for non-budgeted usage of our vehicles.

Another possible expense is if you plan to have any type of leadership training event in the province. Leadership training is absolutely necessary and we are so thankful for the many men and women of God who have been able to sow into our provincial pastors. However, we are unable to foot the bill for non-budgeted leadership training events. These types of events usually cost between \$300 to \$500. This amount is probably much easier for you raise from the place that you are than for me to try to scramble and find that



amount. Like I said, we are on a very tight budget and even \$100 outside of our budget is real challenge to find.

It's best to bring cash to Cambodia. Credit cards are not used in most places traveler's cheques are difficult to cash. Everything we do is on a cash basis. However, you can make withdrawals on your credit card at some banks here. We have a safe in which to keep all your valuables if you prefer.

Health and Safety

Don't drink the water! Drink only bottled water from a sealed bottle. If a restaurant looks nice the water they serve is probably safe to drink.



Drink a lot of bottled water. It's easy to get sick from the heat, especially if you're not drinking enough water.

Short of saying "Don't eat the food"

we caution you to stay away from local sidewalk vendors as you might get Hepatitis. We'll direct you to safe eating places. Divert from this at your own risk.

Please bring your own medications for nausea, diarrhea, headache, snakebite, gunshot wounds, etc. (Okay, never mind the last two!) Our medical team may be able to treat you for minor problems and we can get basic emergency care, but it's best to come prepared to take care of yourself. Make sure you are well rested and healthy before you come.

Bring Neosporin or Polysporin and apply it to even minor cuts. Cuts and wounds get infected very easily in Cambodia, so

apply it even to the most minor cuts or scratches.

Please be aware that banditry is quite common, as in most large cities. Our curfew for visitors is 9pm. If you plan to be out later than this, please get permission first. Don't carry much money on you and be cautious about wandering off too far by yourself.

Packing and Practical Details

There are two seasons in Cambodia, neither of which is very comfortable unless you like the heat. April and May are the hottest months and December and January probably the coolest. It can begin sporadic raining as early as June and heavier rains develop until the end of the year. You won't need a jacket. A wind-breaker will be the most you'll ever need.

Our Sunday church meetings are informal. You won't need a tie. You can wear a white shirt if you like but you don't have to. Casual dress is fine.

Most Cambodians wear sandal-style shoes. They are cool and easy to take off when entering a house, but your feet get dirty. Many roads and streets are very bad (rocky, uneven, dirty, and muddy) so you may want to bring sturdy shoes. Sometimes you have to take them off to wade through the flooded streets.

There are some nice swimming places so feel free to bring modest swimwear if you want. Women in Cambodia almost always wear shorts over their swimsuits.

Checklist for What to Bring to Cambodia

___ Casual clothing

- ___ Comfortable walking shoes
- ___ Flashlight
- ___ Notebook (for journal notes)
- ___ Pens/pencils
- ___ Bible
- ___ Alarm clock
- ___ Dual voltage appliance adapters
(if you have an electric shaver,
hair dryer, etc.) (Voltage is 220)
- ___ Camera or video camera
- ___ Plastic bag for dirty/wet clothes
- ___ Wash - N - Dries
- ___ Kleenex Pocket Paks (substitute
for toilette paper in emergency
situations)
- ___ Personal toiletries
- ___ Postcards from your city, family
pictures, small gifts from home
- ___ Small first-aid kit
(Include bandages, antiseptic,
calamine lotion, diarrhea
medication, aspirin)
- ___ Mosquito repellent
- ___ Spending money (U.S. Dollars)
(Silver and wood items are
available for souvenirs, as well as
fabric and clothing.)
- ___ Passport and 2 extra small size
photos

Gift Ideas

One way to get your Church behind your mission's trip is to let the Church know

some of the needs of the ministry in Cambodia and have the Church work together to gather donated goods to bring over to Cambodia. There are many items that are unavailable in Cambodia or are very expensive. Other items are not necessities, but are great way of showing love between your Church and the people here. Having Churches or individuals bring these items over is always a great blessing to the people and ministry here. Some ideas of possible things to bring over to donate to the ministry are:



- Drum sticks, guitar strings, second hand microphones, second hand musical instruments
- Lysol Disinfectant spray
- Second hand children's clothes (many teams leave all the clothes they brought over except the set they're wearing when they leave Cambodia)
- Good Christian books or resources
- Multi - Vitamins
- Toys or crafts for children
- Second hand laptop computers
- Calendars
- Youth ministry tools
- Resources for our Christian School
- Good American coffee
- Good quality wall clocks

- T-shirts from your Church
- Second hand video cameras or digital cameras
- Anything that would be useful for our IT or media departments
- English Bibles or New Testaments (you may have some in your Church's lost and found)

Finally:

Please complete your travel documents as though you were a tourist. When asked on the document where you will be staying, tell them New Life Fellowship or the Royal Palace Hotel.

You can get a visa on arrival at Pochentong Airport in Phnom Penh or you may apply for an e-visa ahead of time at <http://evisa.mfaic.gov.kh>. After getting your luggage pass through the "Nothing to Declare" line of Customs. Sometimes you will need to show your luggage claim tickets to the airport staff.

Remember, this is Cambodia! Things will not run as smoothly here as at home. It is hot, generators break down, something breaks every week, electricity is often sporadic, telecommunications are unreliable, drivers fail to show up, and our best laid plans fail to materialize for a variety of other reasons. Please accept my apology if we haven't remedied all these situations before your team arrives!

Welcome to Cambodia! We look forward to your visit!

The Staff at New Life Fellowship

