

Gatlinburg Presbyterian Church

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION

Gatlinburg Presbyterian Church (GPC) was established in 1963 with 21 members. Formal opening services for the church plant were held in 1965. The congregation's population has varied greatly over the years. At its highest, the congregations consisted of 125 members. Today there are around 25 members. The congregation's mission has always been to provide a place of worship for local residents and visitors alike. Over the years, the church has allowed various groups to stay at the church and use the church for a retreat site. In 2009, the congregation renovated and repurposed the second floor of the facility and built the Retreat Center as a way of supporting the church's continuing mission to visitors and tourists to our community. The Retreat Center welcomes church and other groups coming to our area that want to stay in a dormitory like facility for retreats, conferences and missions.

On November 28, 2016 a fire, which had been burning for several days at the Chimney Tops in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, spread into the City of Gatlinburg and surrounding parts of Sevier County. The fire burned over 17,000 acres, destroying or damaging over 2,400 buildings or structures. Several structures within a block of GPC were completely destroyed while GPC was left undamaged. People and groups from all around the country have graciously provided support for the Gatlinburg community since the fires. During the recovery phase which occurred in the days and weeks immediately after the fires and because of the generosity of so many donors, GPC was able to host a group of international volunteers. These folks worked in our community for nearly two months by supporting and organizing the volunteering efforts. They also helped individual families by sorting through ash and removing fire debris. Today GPC is honored to house volunteer groups who are working on the rebuilding efforts in our community. We would like to thank you for being here with us. We hope that our facilities make you feel at home while you are working in and around Gatlinburg. Bless you as you bless us with your hard work and presence.

WHAT IS A MISSION GROUP?

A Mission Group is made up of persons representing churches or other organized groups who volunteer to offer their time and talents in the recovery, restoration and rebuilding of the areas affected by the wildfires. The Retreat Center can host up to a 40-member group (with beds for 32). Groups of 10 or less may be asked to share the facility in order to better utilize the facility and allow as many groups as possible the opportunity to share their talents. Each group is expected to have at least a group leader who is responsible for the conduct of the entire group. Groups with members under 18 years of age must provide at least one designated chaperone for each gender represented in the group. GPC does not require a particular ratio of adults to youth but, GPC expects that each group will follow the requirements of their representative sponsoring bodies. Please note that children under 15 are not allowed to operate the kitchen appliances at the church, and the group leader will be held responsible for the group's actions and conduct.

WHAT DO MISSION GROUPS DO?

Although GPC is a designated host site through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program, we understand that groups will be responsible for finding their own suitable mission projects. Projects can be organized through the PDA and their partnering construction manager or projects can be organized by other denominational or a non-profit volunteer group such as:

- Patti Hopple 865-474-0993 phopple@volunteeretn.org

Groups typically leave for work at about 8:00 am and return around 5:00 pm depending on the project and group they are serving.

It is important to understand that Mission Groups are not employees, agents or representatives of Gatlinburg Presbyterian Church. Neither the church nor its members are responsible for the activities or conduct of the Mission Group or their members. In this endeavor, GPC is acting as a hosting site for the residence needs of the group and is not a sponsor, supervisor, or director of the group's activities with any particular project or

work site. Mission group leaders and sponsors are responsible for the care and conduct of their members.

WHERE WILL WE STAY?

Mission Groups will be staying in an area of the church referred to as the Retreat Center that is on the second floor of the church building. The Retreat Center consists of men's and women's dormitories. The men's dormitory consists of a single room with bunk beds to accommodate 16 people. The women's dormitory consists of a larger room for 12 women in bunk beds and a smaller room with four single beds. Each person is required to bring their own bedding (i.e. sheets, blankets, sleeping bags and pillows). There are men's and women's half baths in the dormitory area and two showers designated for each of the dormitory rooms (one of which is within the smaller women's dormitory room). There is some additional space for air mattresses or cots (which will not be provided) if necessary with prior approval from the GPC contact. Total occupancy of the facility and/or groups will be limited to 40 people.



Additional men's and women's bathrooms are available on the first floor of the church near the fellowship hall. The church's kitchen and fellowship hall may be used to prepare and serve meals or for groups to congregate. The kitchen contains a four-cook top stove and two ovens (standard and small), two microwave ovens and a large refrigerator(19 cu.ft.)/freezer (10cu.ft.) with an ice machine, a dishwasher, and three coffee makers. Pots and pans, and basic utensils are available for cooking and eating.



There is a large great room in the Retreat Center which has a large screen TV equipped with Chrome Cast streaming (personal subscriptions or apps may be required for some use. See the attachment.). There are also some games and a foosball table. WiFi is available in the Retreat Center and the Fellowship Hall.

We invite groups to view our beautiful sanctuary and especially the *Bible in Stained Glass* windows that were installed in 2003, but asked that you stay out of the sanctuary otherwise without first getting prior approval. (There are pianos in the common room upstairs and in the fellowship hall that can be used for midweek or daily worship if desired.)

Lodging and Fees

The lodging for the Retreat Center includes common areas, sleeping rooms, shower facilities, and the kitchen facility.

- A \$100.00 refundable damage deposit is required for each group. The deposit is due at the time you make your reservation and will be

required to hold your reservation. The deposit will be returned to you after check-out based on final inspection of the area.

- Half of the final payment and the Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless is due 30 days before arrival to hold your spot. This payment will not be refunded if your group cancels your reservation after this time. If this payment not received, other groups will be allowed to reserve the Retreat Center accommodations in your place.
- There is a charge of \$20.00 per person per night upon arrival. Small groups of less than 10 will be charged a minimum of \$200.00 per night. If smaller groups are able to share the facility, the minimum charge may be waived. The fees can be paid by check or money order. The host site does not have cash on hand. Please make checks payable to Gatlinburg Retreat Center.
- Groups typically arrive on a Sunday afternoon and depart on the following Saturday. The host site will work with groups needing different schedules based on facility availability (i.e. long weekend stays)
- Check-in/Check-out times – We ask groups to arrive after 2:00 pm on Sunday and leave by 12:00 on Saturday. Groups with weekend stays will need to observe quiet time between 10:30 am and 1:00 pm on Sunday for church services. Groups are invited to join us for worship but are asked to respect the congregation and the visitors who will be using the sanctuary and fellowship hall during this time.

WHERE WILL WE EAT?

Mission groups are responsible for purchasing and preparing their own meals. The church's kitchen and fellowship hall can be used for preparing and serving meals. The kitchen contains a four-cook top stove, a standard conventional oven, a small conventional oven, two microwave ovens and a large refrigerator (19 cu.ft.)/freezer (10cu.ft.) with an ice machine, a dishwasher and three coffee makers. Pots and pans, and basic utensils are available for cooking and eating. The fellowship hall has ample tables, chairs and space for serving the entire group.

Since GPC is in the heart of downtown there are small grocery stores within walking distances of the church, however the larger grocery stores such as Food City, Kroger and Publics are all between 4 and 5 miles from

the church. There is a Wal-Mart Supercenter in Sevierville, about 14 miles away. During the busy tourist season, it can take an hour or more to get there. There is also a Costco and a couple of Sam's Clubs in Knoxville about 60 miles away.

There are a number of both fast food and casual dining options within walking distance, 0.5 mile (10 minute walk), from the church. A list will be available at the church for your use.

Some churches in our area might want to provide meals for your group as a way of participating in your mission work. Although the details have not been finalized, this will most likely be coordinated using the Meal train website. You might be asked if you would be willing to accept this gracious offer.

WILL WE HAVE FREE TIME?

Gatlinburg Presbyterian Church is situated in the center of a tourist town right outside the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. The National Park has many scenic views and hiking trails. Within walking distance of the church are many tourist attractions, recreational activities, theaters, shopping areas, and restaurants. In addition, Gatlinburg has trolleys which can be boarded at over 100 locations throughout the city. Two stops are located within a block or two of the church. The trolleys run between many of the tourist attractions including Dollywood Theme Park in Pigeon Forge and the National Park. Bus fares run between \$0.50 and \$2.00. Exact change is required. A trolley map will be available at the church.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE COMING:

Gatlinburg is nestled in by the ridges of the Great Smoky Mountain range. The city is approximately a 10 square mile area sitting at an elevation of 1300 feet above sea level which makes the climate slightly cooler than the neighboring Tennessee valley Cities of Knoxville, Maryville and Alcoa. The average temperature and rainfall trends are listed below. Please note that the weather conditions in Gatlinburg can change quickly. It is often said, "If you don't like the weather now wait an hour and it will change."

- November through February – nighttime lows typically in the 20s with daytime temperatures rising to the lower 60s to the upper 40s. Average temperature is around 45 Fahrenheit. Rainfall is about 4-5 inches a month (which could also be snow).
- March through May – nighttime lows rise from about 30 to 50. Daytime temperatures also range from low 60s to near 80. Precipitation ranges from 4-6 inches a month.
- June through August – nightly lows can be as low as 50 degrees and daytime highs can reach 100. June is usually dry with less than 3 inches of rain. July and August have typically between 4 and 6 inches of rain.
- September and October – Nighttime lows are typically in the 50s in September and dip into the 40s in October. Daytime temperatures can still reach the low 90s. The average temperature for these two months are 72 and 60, respectively. It rains about 4 inches in September while October is usually the driest month of the year at about 2.5 inches.

Group Liability

GPC cannot indemnify any mission group. Each group is liable for their own members on and off church property. Groups are required to sign and submit a release of liability before arriving at the site. Groups, their sponsors, and insurers are liable for each member of the mission group per the liability release. Groups are encouraged to have with them permission forms for minors and their own liability insurance.

Safety

Groups and their members engage in activities and projects at their own risk. Prudent safety procedures, practices, and training should be employed by groups and their members. Safety and training are the responsibility of the mission group. Group leaders should honestly assess the capabilities and limitations for each member of the group before asking them to perform any task. Leaders should not encourage their group members to exceed their capabilities.

Emergency Care

There are a number of afterhours clinics and emergency care facilities within the Gatlinburg/Pigeon Forge and Sevierville areas. The closest hospital is Leconte Medical Center at 742 Middle Creek Rd, Sevierville, TN 37862. Knoxville also has a verified #1 Trauma center at the University of

Tennessee Medical Center (UTMC). In addition to ground emergency services, there is air transportation available to transport trauma victims to UTMC if necessary.

Transportation

Mission groups are required to provide their own transportation to and from GPC, the project site, and as need to support the needs of their members.

Alcohol, Tobacco and Non-Prescription Drug Use,

- The use of alcohol, non-prescription drugs and drug paraphernalia are prohibited and will not be purchased or consumed on church property or the job site.
- Smoking, chewing and vaping are not permitted anywhere inside the church building. Please confine smoking to the rear parking lot of the church. Smoking by underage persons will not be tolerated by law.
- Violations of the laws of the City of Gatlinburg, Sevier County and the State of Tennessee will not be tolerated. Individuals or groups may be sent home at the group's expense or prosecuted under certain circumstances.

Tools and Construction Materials

- Groups are required to supply their own tools and equipment based on the projects needs unless otherwise specified by the project manager. GPC will have areas for groups to secure tools and equipment. However, groups are responsible and expected to take appropriate precautions when bringing soiled, dirty or dangerous tools or clothing into the church facility. Groups should plan to protect the floors by storing tools in buckets or on tarps as needed. No flammable materials such as gasoline or tools filled with gasoline are allowed in the facility.
- The church cannot and will not provide tools, clothing or safety equipment to individuals or groups.
- Some projects will accept donations by groups to offset the cost of building materials. Unless otherwise specified for and by the project, groups are not required to make donations in order to participate in projects.

Houskeeping

GPC is glad to have you as our guests and we are appreciative of your work in our community. We ask that you be respectful of our space and return the building in at least the same condition it was left for you. Groups are expected to clean up after themselves. Please remove muddy or dirt work boots after entering the facility. Fire exits must remain clear at all times, so please do not allow boots to pile up in front of doorways and keep boots in the designated trays or areas.

GPC does have a cleaning service that will provide general cleaning after you are gone. However, if the facility is left in poor condition you will be charged for the extra cleaning needed to bring the facility back to the condition it was in before you arrived. Damages to the facility will also be charged at the discretion of the Retreat Center Manager. Please promptly report any damaged or missing items.

Storage

There is limited storage for personal items at the facility. Space is provided under the bunks and lockers (12 in. x 12 in. x 18 in.) will be available to store small electronics and valuables. Please bring your own locks to secure the lockers. Any locks not removed after the group leaves will be cut. Lost and found items will be kept for several weeks before being disposed or donated.

Laundry

GPC is equipped with a commercial coin operated washer and dryer. The cost of these is \$1.00 per load to wash and \$1.00 per load to dry. You will need to bring change to operate these machines, as there is no change machine. Laundry detergent is available at the church.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO BEFORE COMING:

- Identify and appoint a group leader. The group leader will be ultimately responsible for your group and be the main contact. Please provide a name and contact information for this leader.
- The group leader is to sign and return the Liability release and ensure that each member of the group will abide by its constraints. If this means individual releases, permission or consent forms they are required to be obtained by the group leader.
- Assess the capabilities and needs of each member of the group. Ensure that members are responsible and physically capable of performing the mission's tasks.
- Locate and assemble the required tools. Ensure that all tools are in good physical condition and have the appropriate safe guards when necessary. Many projects and groups have restrictions on the age of members to operate certain tools. Abide by these rules for your own safety and liability.
- Make sure members have the appropriate safety equipment as necessary to perform their work This may included footwear, safety glasses, hardhats and gloves.
- Complete the following forms: Liability release form. Groups should also have medical release forms for their members as necessary. Each member should have identification and an insurance card with them.
- Please include the \$100 deposit with the registration. All mail can be sent to Gatlinburg Presbyterian Church, 237 Reagan Dr. Gatlinburg, TN 37738 ATTN: Retreat Center
- Assemble and bring a well-stocked commercial grade first aid kit. Be sure members bring their prescription medicines as need.
- Someone from the Retreat Center will be contacting you before your arrival to:
 - Confirm your head count, approximate time of arrival and departure
 - Make sure you don't have any questions.
 - The Church's email address is gatlinburgpres@att.net if you need to contact us.

PERSONAL PACKING LIST

- Work boots with hard/steel toes. Athletic shoes are typically not suitable for a work site.
- Work gloves
- Heavy pants
- Long sleeve shirts with layers that can be added or taken off
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Reusable water bottle
- Personal toiletry items – including towels, wash cloths, soap and shampoo
- Personal medications
- Sleeping bag or bedding
- Pillows
- Towels and wash cloths
- Hand sanitizer
- Shower shoes
- Changes of cloths and comfortable shoes for walking around town as appropriate by the season

Do Not Bring

- Any items prohibited by law including drugs or drug paraphernalia
- Alcohol
- Tools that cannot be used safely because they are broken or the safety guards have been removed.
- Valuables that you cannot afford to lose. The church is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items. Secure areas will be provided. However, there is no written or implied guaranty that your items will be safe from others staying at the mission site.