

**MISSION**  **N**  
**TO**  
**VIRGINIA**  
*Churches Helping People*

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- MISSION STATEMENT
- THE MISSION TO VIRGINIA WAY
- PREPARATION
  - SAFETY
- OPTIONAL SUGGESTIONS
  - M2VA PRESENTATION/ANNOUNCEMENT/CALL TO ACTION
  - TEAM STRUCTURE
  - HOME SELECTION AND DISCERNMENT
  - TEAM & SUPPLY LAYOUT
  - THE SEND-OFF
  - CLEAN UP AND CLOSE DOWN
  - M2VA CELEBRATION
- CONTACTS
- SAMPLE FORMS
- FAQs
- NOTES

# **MISSION STATEMENT**

Mission To Virginia (M2VA) ministers in the name of Jesus Christ to underprivileged and handicapped citizens with home improvement and winterization projects on the second Saturday of November, forging relationships and bonds throughout the year that provide assistance and security to those we help.

## **HISTORY**

**Mission To Virginia** started as a small local project in Beaverdam, Virginia in the fall of 2001 with just a handful of folks helping a handful of citizens. We packed a lunch and set off to rake leaves, clean windows and spring clean homes. From humble beginnings the event grew each year to include a spring and fall mission trip. Word spread and in 2006 we held our first Mission To Hanover (M2H) with over 1,000 volunteers from all over Hanover County serving over 200 citizens in 135 homes. Projects ranged from raking leaves and wrapping pipes to roofing houses, adding bathrooms and constructing handicap ramps. In 2003 we partnered with the Department of Community Resources to obtain the names of citizens who were already approved for assistance through the county and who had reached out to them for help. Community Resources provided some of the materials for the smaller projects and the balance of the supplies were provided by business owners, church donations and individuals who were volunteering. The Hanover Board of Supervisors was so moved by the county's rally around the mission, that they passed a motion to make the second Saturday of each November Mission To Hanover Day. On April 25, 2007, Beaverdam Baptist Church received the Point of Light award from President George W. Bush for their community mobilization effort.

With today's economy, we see the needs in our community becoming greater. Our goal is to keep our neighbors from ever having to make the choice of heating their home or repairing their leaky roof. Join us as we work to improve our neighbors' lives one project at a time.

# **THE MISSION TO VIRGINIA WAY**

## *Our Guiding Principles*

1. **“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”** James 1:27 (KJV)
2. **“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”** Matthew 25:40 (NIV).
3. **“...God is not unjust; He will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them...”** Hebrews 6:10 (NIV).
4. **“Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”** Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV).
5. **We work directly with program partners in the communities that we serve.** We seek the input of organizations that assist underprivileged and handicapped citizens within the communities we serve to identify needs and obtain volunteer support. A few of these groups include community resources, the local fire department, police department and social services.
6. **We continue our efforts and seek to forge a lasting relationship.** Our November project has grown so large that we no longer have an organized spring event, however, the volunteers that have placed plastic on the windows of residents or started other projects that need additional work, commit to continue working with these families and/or individuals until all the needs are met. We also have gardening teams that come out in the spring and fall to plant annuals and perennials.
7. **We encourage volunteers to provide companionship and Christian counsel as well as assistance with home improvement and winterization projects.** Many of our participating churches and organizations, provide food baskets, entertainment groups that come and sing and fellowship and even deacons that bring communion on a quarterly basis to their homes.

# PREPARATION

**So how do you get started?** Well, the next two pages will give a brief overview and also provide a timetable to assist you in planning your event. But remember, it doesn't matter whether you're planning to rake the leaves for a few homebound citizens or you're going to lead your county in this event, the most important part is that you reach out and get started.

**Step 1.** We suggest that you start in the summer (July, August) contacting your local community resources or social services' office to identify folks within your area that have home improvement or winterization needs. You can also contact the police department or fire department to obtain the names of homebound folks that they monitor. Your own church or organization may be able to identify needs as well. Once you've been doing this for a few years, you can also advertise in your local paper and provide a contact name and number for citizens in need to call. This will, however, require someone with the ability to screen applicants to make sure the need is legitimate.

**Step 2.** Using the DVD provided in this manual, get your church or organization excited about getting involved in the program. We recommend showing the DVD in early September. You can also do skits, place the information in your church bulletin or your organization's newsletter or send out informational emails providing the Mission To Virginia website and any pertinent information.

**Step 3.** Provide a sign-up sheet that asks for the name, age, telephone number and email address. The sign-up should begin immediately after showing your DVD or first promotion of the event. Make the sign-up sheets available through the first part of October until it's time to assign teams. We encourage groups to have someone responsible to man the sign-up table at least 1-2 times each month and decorate the table to enhance interest.

**Step 4.** Assign team leaders from your sign-up sheets who can assess the homes, secure the supplies and manage the teams that are assigned to them on the day of the event. These leaders will need to make sure they have first aid kits and coolers with water for their team as well as make sure that each member of his/her team has a tool and an assignment to keep them busy.

**Step 5.** The team leaders will need to assess the job sites the first week of October.

**Step 6.** Assign your teams. From your sign-up sheets, assign the necessary number of members to the team leader's job/jobs. Make sure you know the

capabilities of the folks that are signing up so you know the best place to put them. Too many teenagers on one team can be difficult for one leader who has a roofing assignment so it's advisable to spread out your youth.

**Step 7.** Contact the families or individuals that you'll be assisting and let them know when you're coming by. We recommend doing this the week before the event.

**Step 8.** Secure materials. This can be done 1-7 days before the event or as soon as your team leader assess the job. We don't secure supplies too soon before the event because, many times, homeowners will call with additional requests.

**Step 9.** Set up a meeting time and place, have your volunteers bring a lunch and any supplies they need, as well as gloves, and pray and go out.

You can organize your own celebration or dinner afterwards if you'd like, but many groups are too tired after the event to participate. We definitely recommend a gathering within a week of the event to allow the participants to share their experiences and also obtain feedback and suggestions for your next event while it's still fresh on everyone's mind.

# SAFETY

Safety of all volunteers is paramount! Here are just a few safety tips to ensure that everyone enjoys a healthy and happy day.

- Each team should have a first aid kit including ice
- Mission leaders need to ensure a permission slip/medical release form is provided for all minors
- Each team captain should be aware of any medical conditions within his group (i.e., allergies to bee stings)
- Keep an eye on children and youth at homes, near roadways, construction sites or wooded areas
- Make sure each team member gets plenty of water to drink
- Someone should always hold and steady a ladder for another volunteer
- Always check for soft ground before climbing a ladder
- Always check for electrical lines and wires overhead before raising a ladder
- Each work team should have a cell phone with good reception
- Know the driving route to the nearest hospital or emergency room from each work site
- Be alert for nails in boards and broken glass in yards
- Wear protective gloves or latex gloves if cleaning in unsanitary conditions
- Apply antibacterial lotion before lunch if hands cannot be washed properly
- Drivers should be alert and careful when parking, backing up and leaving a work site
- Make sure that equipment is in good working condition (oiled, sharpened, etc.)
- Ensure that volunteers know how to use equipment **before** they use it
- To accommodate changes in temperature, volunteers should dress with layers

# **OPTIONAL COMPONENTS**

A number of best practices are offered on the following pages and are not requirements in executing a successful mission. You know your needs best as well as what will work for your church or organization. Review the following and determine if there is anything that can be tailored to fit your needs.

# **M2VA PRESENTATION/ANNOUNCEMENT/CALL TO ACTION**

The most important activity to ensure successful implementation of the mission will be **prayer**. It is only through the power of our God that we could accomplish the work before us. The second most important activity will be the **communication** of what MISSION TO VIRGINIA is to your church leaders and congregation. At the highest level, communication should achieve the following:

- What MISSION TO VIRGINIA is
- Why we are doing it
- Where MISSION TO VIRGINIA will be held
- How we will do it

You can deliver the messages through a number of different avenues:

- Church Leader and/or Ministry Meetings
- Posters
- Newsletters
- Displays
- Sunday School Class
- Sunday Announcement Time
- M2VA Video
- Bulletin
- One-on-One

Enclosed in your information packet is a DVD presentation that depicts the various ministry activities that make up M2VA. Showing this during announcement time on Sunday morning and following it up with an explanation of the “Where, Why, What and How.” You may find that having a M2VA display and sign up sheets available immediately after the presentation will help gather up the names of those individuals being called to volunteer. Having a M2VA leader or volunteer at the display table to answer prospective volunteer questions can further encourage participation.

As with any event, the marketing rules of “**communicate, communicate, communicate**” and “**the sooner the better**” apply here. Providing your congregation with updates on the development of the project, number of volunteers signed up to date, and number of families to assist will help your congregation feel a part of mission from the beginning.

# TEAM STRUCTURE

The following provides some recommendations on ways to organize your teams. Based on ministries already established at your church, numbers and types of volunteers, and/or skills and resources available to you, your team make-up should be tailored especially for you.

**Basket Team & Basket Team Leader:** provide food and candy baskets to the families whose homes are being serviced. A Thanksgiving meal or other seasonal dinner is appropriate. This is an excellent role for the church pastor.

- Organize the collection of items for the baskets
- Purchase baskets
- Decorate baskets
- Fill baskets
- Provide praise on site through singing of hymns
- Leader: Prepare delivery instructions for each team. Try to organize them by location from the church
- Leader: Assign folks to deliver baskets (2-3/team)
- Leader: Be prepared to share the gospel with these families

**Kitchen Team:** Ensures that each team will have food and drink throughout the day. Will work with other church teams to provide dinner at a group celebration if one is organized in your area.

- Secure coolers and have water bottles for each team
- Prepare breakfast
- Organize and set-up lunch station for those volunteers who arrive without a packed lunch
- Clean-up after the teams are gone
- Work together with other participating churches to prepare dinner at celebration site.
- 

**Leadership Team:** Directs the MISSION TO VIRGINIA church activities.

- Locate participants through your church and/or social services' office.
- Make sure there is a first-aid kit for every team.
- Assess needs at each of the homes at least four weeks before the event
- Set up sign-up sheets for all teams (don't forget your nursery workers)
- Organize teams prior to the event
- Make sure puppet and basket teams aren't overlapping visits
- Purchase supplies needed for each home
- Organize a 24-hour prayer vigil prior to the event
- Secure clip-on-tags for children in the nursery and markers for nursery workers to write the team # of the parent, name of child and any vital info
- Plan a timeline to make sure all tasks are accomplished
- Set up team rally area and have supplies at each team's location
- Pray with the entire group before you disperse.

- Secure a drop-off spot for leftover supplies, coolers and first-aid kits
- Make sure someone picks up all supplies and stores them and returns coolers and other donated items to owners
- Schedule a critique meeting after the event with all team captains and leaders of the kitchen, puppet and basket team

**Puppet Team** (optional): Provide entertaining praise and worship especially to the homebound seniors and children of families being serviced.

- Prepare 2-3 songs that display joy and God's love for us
- Keep groups small (under 5-including the adult)
- Prepare your children for what they may see and hear
- Keep visits under 20 minutes
- Keep set-up simple

**Team Captains:** Lead the teams onsite to complete the assigned tasks.

- Assess needs, with one of the leaders, at each home you're assigned to complete
- Make sure supplies have been purchased prior to the event
- Work with the leaders to organize your team
- Make sure first aid kits and plenty of water are at each sight
- Teach your youth the importance of remaining positive and doing a good job
- Make sure the homeowner knows you're there before starting tasks
- If you have no cell phone reception, request that the homeowner stay near the phone in case of emergency (i.e. a child at church gets hurt and they need the parent). If the homeowner wishes to assist, assign a team member to man the phone
- Pray with the homeowner before you leave (we gather in a circle)
- Gather all supplies and all trash before you leave
- MAKE SURE you have all your kids before you leave
- Take all excess supplies back to the drop-off station before dinner
- Meet with your Leadership Team to discuss work that wasn't completed, suggestions to make next year's event better and ways to complete the tasks that weren't done on the day of the event

**Sign-In Team:** On the day of the event, ensure that the volunteers sign-in, eat breakfast, obtain a lunch if they forgot one, and find their team captain.

- Arrive one hour prior to scheduled arrival time
- Make sure tables are set up and sheets are out
- Have greeters ready to direct volunteers to the appropriate table
- Direct volunteers with children to the nursery
- After sign in is completed, direct volunteers to breakfast and lunch area
- Provide a copy of the team assignment list to the nursery
- Clean up sign in area after volunteers are dispatched

**Media Team:** Assist the MISSION TO VIRGINIA leadership team prior to the event to communicate the event and document the event the day of for future church communication needs (newsletter, website, history).

- Create posters, skits, videos and bulletin announcements to draw participation within the church
- Take pictures and/or video the event
- Post information on the church website about your event

**Nursery Team:** Follows established church nursery rules, regulations, and policies to care for the children of volunteers on the day of the mission.

- Make sure you know the team assignment for each child's parent
- As children arrive, note any allergies, medical concerns or medications on a clip-on tag along with the parent's team # and child's name.
- Clip the tag on the back of the child's shirt
- Remove the clip only to change the child's diaper
- Obtain a copy of the team assignments from the sign-in team
- Ensure that each child has been left with a breakfast and lunch before parents leave
- Remind parents to pick up children prior to the celebration
- Each nursery worker should know where the Command Center team is located

**Command Center Team:** Remain at the church throughout the day to coordinate any needs that may come up from the work teams, nursery team or kitchen team.

- Have a list of team captains and, at least, one (preferably 2) cell phone numbers where they can be reached as well as the phone number of each home being serviced, in case cell phones are out of reach
- Know the order of homes where each team captain will be traveling
- Stay by the phone to take calls from teams who may need supplies or information
- Have one member of the emergency team check on the nursery to give updates to parents who may be calling. NEVER leave the phone unmanned!

# **HOME SELECTION AND DISCERNMENT**

More than likely your church knows of homebound or people in need that could benefit from the type of work that is provided through the MISSION TO VIRGINIA. The number of volunteers and resources at your disposal will determine the size of the event your church will be able to execute. You may have to prioritize the requests you receive. Pray and search scripture to guide you on which homes you should assist.

The Department of Community Resources or other social services agency will be able to provide you with neighbors in your community that have been assessed and approved by county standards to receive assistance. These contacts are often more fruitful than the contacts known to your church since these people are potentially unchurched or not currently members of a local church. As you may receive some supplies from the Department of Community Resources for these specific homes, it will be important that your organization ensures these needs are met.

Remember, our goal is to work “as unto the Lord.” We want to only commit to those projects we know we can complete on the day of the mission. Our desire is to keep our volunteers safe, complete the work we have promised and to prioritize our tasks. Remember tasks to improve safety, weatherproofing and security come first; tasks to improve aesthetics and quality of life second.

# **TEAM AND SUPPLY LAYOUT**

The most important factor for a successful mission event will be ORGANIZATION. This will be vitally important not only before the event but on the day of the event. The following recommendations can help kickoff a smooth mission day.

## **Work Team Stations**

Establish Work Team Stations outside where an area is marked or designated with each team name. In that space should be all the supplies and equipment that team will need for all of the homes they will be servicing that day. The Work Team captain or leader should arrive early and be in this location to greet his team as they arrive and answer any questions they may have.

## **Sign-In Table**

At the front of the lobby or foyer, place a sign-in table. This will be important so that volunteers have one location where they can have all their questions answered at once, receive their team assignment and name tags. From here, they can be directed to the lunch table if they have forgotten one, turn in any permission slips and/or sign up any children for the nursery.

## **Lunch Table**

Some volunteers will either forget their lunch or not be able to provide a lunch on that day. Prepare a simple bag lunch with favorite foods like a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, apple, bottled water and carrot or celery sticks. Place these lunches at a separate table than the sign-in table so that volunteers move quickly from one station to another.

Have name tags already written out with the volunteers name and team assignment clearly noted on them. As volunteers arrive, have them sign in and then give them their name tag. Any left over name tags will alert you to volunteers who may not be able to attend and are unable to alert their team captain. You should inform each team captain of any volunteers who did not sign in and check to see if in fact the volunteers arrived and had not signed in yet.

After signing in, receiving their name tag and a lunch if they forgot one, volunteers should move outside and report to their team station and check-in with their team captain.

The other support teams, like the food basket team, media team and puppet team can meet inside the church but should be instructed to move to an area

away from the sign-in process to ensure that a crowd doesn't develop and block the flow of the sign-in process.

After the sign-up process ends, you may wish you would have had more people to help in the process. Directing all of your volunteers to their appropriate destination, answering their questions, assigning last-minute volunteer arrivals and answering the telephone will take more people than you would think. Please be prepared and over-man your command center.

# **THE SEND-OFF**

After the sign-in process is complete, there's only one way to send off the troops.  
**Prayer.**

As everyone has gathered outside by their respective team stations, have the other support teams (food basket, media, puppet, etc.) join the work teams outside. If possible, make a big circle and have the group hold hands while the pastor leads the congregation in prayer. Make sure that he or she thanks the volunteers for their time and their commitment to the mission. Explain again the reason why we need to go out and serve. Remind them that the day will not be easy but that it can still be fun. Communicate to them that the people we will be serving deserve our respect and that we should watch what we say and do while a guest at their home. Inform them that they may see situations that are different from what they are used to, but are very normal for the homeowners. Make sure that we don't look down upon or say anything that would make our neighbors uncomfortable.

# **CLEAN UP AND CLOSE DOWN**

At the end of the mission, there will be a number of items that will still need to be taken care of. Here is just a sample that should be planned for:

- Tools that have been borrowed by an individual or team need to be returned to the owner
- Containers (i.e., Tupperware) dropped off in the morning with dinner for the evening celebration need to be returned to the owner after the celebration
- Projects that were to be completed on the day of the mission were not completed
- Families that were served request a visit from the church pastor or deacon
- Work Team captains have additional paperwork to turn in (i.e., permission slips)
- Receipts for additional supplies that needed to be purchased at the last minute need to be turned in
- Articles or photos need to be turned in

# **MISSION TO VIRGINIA CELEBRATION**

One of the many activities you can organize on the day of the mission is a celebration to be held at the end of the day. This should be a time of fun, fellowship and food. However, the most important reason for this event is to provide non-denominational, community-wide praise and worship to our Lord and Savior, thanking God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit for the opportunity to serve Him.

During this celebration, churches and individuals can be recognized while participants share testimonies on experiences they had throughout the day. As a thank you to all the volunteers, all participating churches can sponsor a dinner where the church community can renew their mind, body and soul.

In order to continually bring the body of Christ together within your county or area, it will be important that you and your leaders emphasize the importance of attending the post-mission celebration if you choose to have one. The community has seen the body of Christ divided long enough, and it will be through events like this celebration, that our world will see that, while we hold varying opinions on the non-essentials, we all agree on the essentials. However, you will find that there will be a number of factors that will challenge the volunteer to attend:

- **Timing.** Individual project teams may finish their projects earlier than others and not feel like waiting around for the celebration.
- **Geography.** Although you may strive to pick a celebration site that is centrally located, some church groups will have to travel farther than others to attend. The sheer distance may be an obstacle for some volunteers.
- **Team Size.** Teams from smaller churches may feel like they won't know anyone if they attend such a large event.
- **Energy.** Let's face it. Many of us will work long AND hard on the day of the mission. By the end of our assigned project, we may only want to go home, grab a shower and rest.

As a leader, it will be vital to the success of the celebration to encourage your teams to attend by including the celebration as another event within the day and not as an "after thought." Here are a number of suggestions of how you can encourage attendance:

- Develop ways in which work teams who finish earlier than others can assist other work teams or meet back at the church to do some clean up there.
- Set up car pools so that the burden of driving and the expense for gas is shared amongst a larger group.
- Encourage your teams to get involved in helping at the celebration.  
**Common work teams will be developed for food, cleanup, music and media.**
- Ensure that all teams have plenty of water throughout the day and that they rest when needed. Provide energy drinks, juice and energy bars so that no one feels like they're too exhausted to make it through the day.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Gary Stewart  
Pastor, Beaverdam Baptist Church  
19110 Beaver Dam Road  
Beaverdam, VA 23015  
[Revgdstewart@aol.com](mailto:Revgdstewart@aol.com)  
804-449-0055

Jay Smith  
Director of Mission To VIRGINIA  
cvcr\_jay@comcast.net  
540-582-7839

Lorna Smith  
Director of Mission To VIRGINIA  
[missiontovirginia@gmail.com](mailto:missiontovirginia@gmail.com)  
804-227-3133

Lisa Strong  
Mission To Virginia Coordinator  
[lisastrongbbc@aol.com](mailto:lisastrongbbc@aol.com)  
804-449-0055

If you are interested in joining the M2VA team and being a contact for your county or area, email us at [missiontovirginia@gmail.com](mailto:missiontovirginia@gmail.com).

# **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## **What if my church or organization can't hold a mission on the second Saturday in November but we can on another day?**

Although the event is promoted as taking place on the second Saturday in November, the most important thing is to have a mission event and minister to those in need on whatever day is better for you.

## **The "OPTIONAL COMPONENTS" look very detailed. Are they really optional?**

Yes. We recognize that every church, organization and community is unique and so should its mission event. What is being provided are some best practices that have developed over previous missions. You are free to use as much or as little as you like.

## **I'd like to help grow the M2VA effort. What can I do?**

If you would like to volunteer as a county contact or area representative, please contact the M2VA office at [missiontovirginia@gmail.com](mailto:missiontovirginia@gmail.com). We need leaders who will support and encourage participation in their communities.

## **What if our community has no immediate needs?**

Check with your county social services' office to see if they know of neighbors in need. You can also help serve the homebound seniors in your own church. If you still have more volunteers than you do mission projects, consider joining efforts with another church in your area or consider traveling to an inner city to serve in a shelter.

## **Our church or organization already holds outreach events like M2VA. What if we can't fit in another?**

Consider branding your existing outreach events as M2VA regardless of when you hold them. As a community of Christian believers, our hope is to organize our state-wide mission events as Mission To Virginia so that we can allow the Lord's light to shine in the work He does by allowing us to serve our neighbors in need.