



Network of Biblical Storytellers International Mission Manual 3.0 (2018)

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So you want to lead, or be part of, an NBSI International Mission? Wonderful!

It will be a never-forgotten experience for everyone, we guarantee. **Although every mission is different**, there are common elements, principles and procedures which everyone needs to understand and observe.

This manual will be addressed to the leader of a mission as “you,” but all of it can be shared with team members as well. The appendix will hold specific pages that might be useful as handouts for team members. Examples from our history will be inset in boxes.

Most of the organization of a trip will happen in email and online meetings, but the team should also plan to attend the Festival Gathering before the trip and meet at least once for training and planning there.

Although this manual is laid out in “stages,” of course you may be able or required to handle particular elements of one stage while you are primarily working on another.

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Three Principles to remember

First and most important, as an NBSI team, **you are representing Jesus Christ**. Let everything you do be done with an attitude of Christ's love and servanthood! *Bathe the whole effort in prayer.*

You are there to help local folks learn and tell biblical stories by heart; to help and not dictate or get in the way. A corollary of this is that a primary goal of each Institute is to launch an independent but connected NBS_____ (Name of the country) organization in the host country, if possible.

Second, as an NBSI team, **you are representing the Network of Biblical Storytellers International**.

NBSI holds certain values. Everyone on the team needs to understand and seek to embody these **values**:

- Love for the **text** as it has come to us in the church's tradition, and for telling the text and for telling the text from an accurate scholarly translation, such as the New Revised Standard Version (NBSI's recommended English translation), with at least 75% word accuracy and 95% meaning accuracy (except in work with children).
- **Ecumenicity**: Understanding that Christ's universal Church includes all who follow Jesus, of every tradition, denomination or independent congregation. We focus on the stories that are our common language and avoid getting involved in theological differences.
- **Inclusive welcome for all** people. We focus on the stories that are our common language.
- Equal leadership of **men and women**. We strongly urge teams to be composed as closely as possible of equal numbers of men and women, and to model equal leadership.
- Love for **good scholarship** as we dig into the texts so that we can understand their meaning in their original context, to tell the stories with integrity for our own context.
- Understanding that the overall arc of the Bible's story is one of **peace**; God's mission to reconcile all people to each other and to God. The story is "God's Story of justice, peace and love" (Dennis Dewey, *I Love to Tell the Story*) and that's how we strive to tell it. We believe that sharing sacred stories with folks of other religious traditions is one avenue toward peace.

Third, wherever we go, **we are guests**. We need to understand as much as possible about the culture we are visiting, and enjoy the differences! We will say more about being a good guest in different cultures in the appendix of this manual. It's the team leader's responsibility to ensure that everyone understands them. Feel free to copy the page. Team leaders, you must be prepared to remind your team about good manners as needed.

Keep these three principles in mind, and have fun!

Steps for Organizing a Trip

The mission leader is responsible for *everything*. Before you start, read this manual and consider whether you have the time, energy, passion, patience and *finances* to accomplish it. The process of leading a trip will involve periods of intense activity interspersed with long and frustrating waits for response from local partners and team meetings. There will be anxiety about finances. You don't have to be rich to lead a mission, but you need to be prepared for the unforeseen, and willing to spend money and time on the project. The time frames suggested for these stages are just that – suggestions.

Stage One: Find a Mission Partner or Local Liaison (a year ahead)

Liaison and Sponsor:

There is no substitute for the leader's direct personal contact with local partners. Each mission must have a connection with an **organizational sponsor** and an individual **liaison person** in the host country. The liaison person must have a direct connection with the sponsor.

The organizational sponsor, whenever possible, should be an ecumenical organization such as a national council of churches or a national Wycliffe organization. The organization may not have connections with *every* Christian group in the country, but must be prepared to include others that are willing to participate.

Identifying the liaison and organizational sponsor *usually requires you, the leader, or your representative to visit the country* and sit down with them, often by presenting a preliminary workshop. Strong local partners who support the biblical storytelling vision are absolutely crucial, no matter how you find them.

For example: Juliana's work in the Gambia began after a meeting with her friend Janet Young and later with Bishop Tilewa Johnson in New York and after making an individual trip to meet with the Gambia Christian Council, The Sponsors and lead a workshop to demonstrate what NBSI is all about and the work we do.

The institutes in Cameroon happened as an off-shoot from the second NBS Mission to the Gambia in 2011 where Pastor George Vimensi Minang of Cameroon had been brought over by NBS for training. George went back determined to replicate what he had experienced in Cameroon.

Beth's institute in the Philippines happened only after she had visited twice, led a workshop, and sat down with Wycliffe Philippines partners, even though Juliana had previously sat down in New York with other potential partners.

The mission in India happened only after Linnea Good's extensive personal mission work there.

Letter of Introduction:

As you and your potential liaison and organizational sponsor begin to communicate, you will email a letter of introduction to them. It will include information about you, NBSI and its mission, the art of biblical storytelling, and proposal for an Institute. You will need to judge how much detail to include in your proposal. Some sample documents are included in the Appendix which you can use as models.

Timing and Venues for the Institutes:

It takes a long time to organize a mission, both on the NBSI side and on the local side. Do not rush things. Six months is the absolute minimum. A year is much better. Your local partners may want to rush, and you will have to explain that NBSI members have to arrange time off at least six months in advance of such an event, let alone all the other preparations that must be made. And the local folks will need time for making arrangements and especially for promotion.

On the other hand, your local partners will almost surely not respond to your emails as quickly as you would like. Sometimes local folks who have promised faithfully to work with you may show by their non-response that they really don't want to, and you must find a way to graciously withdraw from the relationship.

For example: Beth's efforts to lead a Philippines trip first connected with a local training leader and a clergyperson. Both promised to help but after many delays and unfulfilled promises it was clear the "hot climate" courtesy was at work, so Beth withdrew. Then, through NBSI members who are also Wycliffe members, she contacted Wycliffe. But the first liaison person Wycliffe assigned also never answered her emails. Gentle inquiries to the head of Wycliffe Philippines led to the face to face meeting at Christmas 2013, which led to the Institutes in 2014. Total elapsed time: four years. It takes patience and gentle persistence – and prayer.

Once a strong, solid relationship with a local liaison and sponsor is established, these details need to be agreed upon:

- Dates:** When will the trip be? How long? After spending money and time to get there and overcome jet lag, it's usually most effective to plan a two-week trip.
- Location:** Where will the Institute(s) be held? Again, after spending the effort, it makes most sense to hold two Institutes in two cities.
- Venue:** The institute will need a plenary area large enough to hold all the participants comfortably, plus breakout rooms for small groups. "Small" groups may range from 8 to 30, depending on attendance! If at all possible, the venue needs to be donated space. This is the local sponsor's "buy-in" to the project.
- Timeframe:** How long will the Institute days be? When will folks need to leave for home? How soon can they get there? What breaks for meals will be needed? Are evening sessions possible, or not? How many days will the Institutes meet?
- Participants:** Who will attend? How many? Emphasize the importance of ecumenical participation. The local sponsors' vision of appropriate numbers may be different from yours; try to accommodate their vision!

For example: In the Philippines, the leader in one city was insistent that the Institute would be only two days, with 200 participants. We negotiated a longer day (8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.) and adapted the program a bit to accommodate, but since experience has shown that attendance hopes are often very optimistic, we expected 100. We got 200, as promised! Small groups were 30 people each and we all adjusted our teaching methods to fit. In the other city, a three-day Institute accommodated the city's heavier traffic and longer travel-times with a shorter day.

Funding: The local liaison needs to have a team of folks who will handle registration and arranging meals for the participants. Be clear about what your NBSI team will pay for and what is the responsibility of the local folks. Naturally this will take some negotiation. Local sponsors need to handle: registration procedures, meals for participants, and cost of the venue including tech support, etc., unless otherwise agreed. The NBSI team members will pay for their own expenses including travel in the country, the food and lodging expenses of the local liaison person who is part of the team, their own teaching materials, gifts for the local team members (such as *Story Journey*) and participant packets.

For example: in both the Philippines and Cameroon, the team supported the travel expenses of local liaison team members. In Cameroon, the team paid rent for the venues, but in the Philippines, the sponsors donated the venue space. In Cameroon, the team brought materials to be assembled into participant packets, but in the Philippines, the team paid for local printing of packet booklets after negotiating a reformat of the plan to bring the price down to the budgeted figure of \$1 each!

Promotion: The local liaison and sponsors need to begin thinking about and planning for promotion. They will know best how to promote the event through printed flyers and posters, radio, TV if possible, and church connections. The NBSI team leader connects with NBSI communications director for promotion through the website and *The Biblical Storyteller*.

Team Arrangements: The team will need to know where they will stay, where they will eat (including what they will drink), and how they will get around. The team will of course pay for these items either individually or as a group, but you'll need local help in arranging them. Five-star hotels are not expected, but for most NBSI members, the basics are: indoor plumbing, hot water for showers, and air conditioning.

A note on water: You will need to know how to handle water; ask your liaison. In virtually all cases, team members should drink filtered or purified water, even if tap water is perfectly safe for local people, simply because travelers are not accustomed to the local water.

For example: In Cameroon, cases of bottled water were provided which traveled with the team. In the Philippines, bottled water was readily available for purchase and was bought as needed; also, a team member brought a Steri-pen (ultraviolet purification devices).

Budget: At this point your budget will be *very* rough, but it will let folks know how much to start saving up!

Stage Two: Building the Team (six to nine months ahead)

How many members?

There is no set rule for how many members are on a team. One answer is “enough to provide reasonable leadership for reasonably sized small groups.” Another is “How many folks have signed up to go?” Typically a team runs between 7 and 12 people, including the local leaders who will present plenaries.

How is a team recruited?

...Through announcements at Festival Gatherings, *The Biblical Storyteller* magazine or constant contact email.

AFTER a local liaison and sponsor is recruited, you can announce the mission and ask folks to let you know of their interest. Once the dates are set with a rough budget, you can contact those folks and let them know the dates and rough cost. Estimate high for the individual cost. It's much better to promise a higher maximum and come in lower than that.

When the dates are set and the cost is estimated, half the folks on your list *may* withdraw.

Considerations for selecting the team

While you will open the team to every member of NBSI, you will be looking for a certain mix of participants, and you will want to be very honest about conditions of the trip. You want:

A balance of men and women: Try to model equality with equal numbers, or as close as possible.

A balance of experienced and newer folks: Be sure there is room on your team for persons who have never been on an NBSI mission before. That's where future leaders come from! Some of your team may be new to NBSI but not new to biblical storytelling. Some may be well experienced teachers of the art and presenters of workshops at Festival Gathering. All members need to be able to lead small groups.

Needed languages: If possible, try to cover the “trade languages” or national languages you may encounter in your mission country.

For example: In the Gambia and Cameroon, Juliana spoke Krio which was very similar to the pidgin of many of the participants, and in Cameroon Ron led small groups of French speakers. In the Philippines, our local liaison, of course, could connect with those who spoke Tagalog; sadly, we did not have any Bisaya speakers in Davao. In Haiti, we had to learn to speak slowly with many pauses to work with interpreters.

Plenary presenters: You'll need at least three strong speakers who can present the principles of NBSI biblical storytelling in daily plenary sessions. Consider assignments carefully. You may not have a good handle on these assignments until the team is formed. Learn and use the particular gifts and skills of your team members. One of the plenaries should be about **working with children**, so you need someone who specializes in biblical storytelling with children for that session.

For example: In the Gambia and in Cameroon, Tom and Amelia Boomershine, Juliana, Tim Coombs and other longtime NBSI leaders were present and handled all the plenaries. In the Philippines, the only experienced mission participant was Beth. So in that case, she assigned each team member one plenary. If your team members are inexperienced, **preview their talks and coach them**.

Administration: Decide how you will handle money and administrative duties. If you as team leader do not want to handle the finances, appoint a competent person to be the team treasurer. Stay in touch with that person to be sure you both know what's happening. You'll be working in both dollars and the local currency or currencies, so this is challenging. There is a suggestion in the appendix for handling multiple currencies.

Health: Research conditions in your mission country, and then be up front about physical demands.

Nearly all mission trips involve some or all of these:

- > Long airplane flights and long walks through airports carrying luggage
- > Long walks and, often, stairs to climb
- > High sun exposure, heat or cold; high altitude or humidity
- > Allergy-producing conditions of dust, air pollution or cooking fire smoke
- > Insects such as mosquitoes or gnats.
- > "Interesting" food.

NBSI suggests prior medical examination to go on mission trips. There is a **medical form and a hold harmless agreement** (in the Appendix) which must be filled out. The team must know they are going at their own risk. And **not everyone should go** on a mission trip. Please discourage participants who have serious mobility issues or have health issues requiring special handling of medication (such as insulin-dependent diabetes). If your mission's conditions will be more rural than urban, add serious food allergies to that list.

Visas and Vaccines: Go online to your country's official website to find out the requirements for visas and travel taxes. Most countries require a passport that is good for 6 months beyond your return date. Have folks check their passports. Then, some countries require a visa to be applied for and obtained in advance. Find out and let people know how to get it. Note: On all visa applications, customs declarations, etc., **"purpose of trip" is "tourist."**

Also, now is the time to go to **[cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)**, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and check which vaccines and immunizations or medications are required for your destination. Some countries require particular immunizations for a visa. Let people know immediately so they can begin getting what they need.

You and your U.S. participants should also register with the State Department STEP, Smart Traveler Enrollment Program, at **step.state.gov**. This will keep you informed of conditions in your mission country. Travel of any sort carries some risk; there is no reason to add to it by not heeding warnings about where Americans are or are not welcome.

Research: As team leader, research your country and point your people to books, magazines, online resources, Trip Advisor-type websites, maps – anything that can help your team learn about the country they're going to and the people they'll be working with. There is no way to learn everything, but encourage folks to make a start! Remind folks about electric currents and plugs, adapters needed, internet access if any, religious and cultural "land mines" to be aware of, etc.

Publicity: Your team members need to immediately send you a high resolution, high quality digital portrait of themselves and a short bio that focuses on their biblical storytelling strengths and what they bring to the team. You'll be sharing these with the NBSI communications director and the local liaison and sponsor to use in publicity.

Stage Three: Nailing Down the Details (three to six months ahead)

At this point preparations shift into high gear.

Communication: Keep team members informed as plans come together with information sheets about anything and everything that you attach to emails so they can be easily referred to and printed out by participants. And be sure you **have a phone** that connects with your local liaison. If your liaison is not going to meet you at the airport and stay with you for the whole trip, ask the liaison to buy a simple cell phone that you will pay for, to use for the trip only. Or buy an international plan for your phone, but make sure first that your phone will work in that country – all cell systems are not the same.

Logistics: Group travel is more complicated than can be arranged by logging onto the web and doing it yourself. This is what travel agents are trained for. Select a “jumping off point” – typically New York if you’re going east or Chicago if you’re going west, but in any case, a major airline hub. Participants make their own arrangements to get to the hub unless it’s more efficient for them to make their own arrangements and meet you at the mission country. Be aware that if you do have team members who meet you there, it will add to the complexity of your connections, and if individuals are delayed they must be prepared to catch up with the group on their own.

Know your participants’ requirements. Does anyone need to be back for church on a certain date? Set the dates of the trip accordingly. Plan to leave at any time of day or night, but **arrive** during daylight hours. You don’t want to arrive in a strange city in the dark! **Be sure to include trip insurance.**

If possible, choose a travel agent who specializes in the area of the world you’re heading for. OR with firm dates in hand, get bids from two agents and pick one. Use an agent who is “local” to *you* so you can communicate easily, if possible. Find out how payment will be required so your people are not surprised.

Example: Juliana chose an agent for the Cameroon trip based on bids, and her choice was an expert in Africa and based in New York. Beth in Chicago used the same person, but communication was incredibly difficult. We went through 20 itineraries before finding one that worked. And then it turned out payment was required by direct deposit, a surprise to the participants, which took some doing to get done on time! And then someone broke a foot...we had to buy trip insurance at the last minute. Lessons learned!

Local travel: You’ll have to get around the country somehow. Work with your liaison to get that arranged. Know whether it is safe to get a taxi at the airport you’re arriving at. Follow the advice you receive!

Example: In Cameroon, we were able to rent a van owned by the United Methodist Church, and hire its driver, for the whole two-week mission. (Giles, the driver, became a passionate biblical storyteller and is answering a call to ministry!) In the Philippines, each van trip had to be reserved separately by working through the hotels at which we were staying, and our local liaison. (Only taxis arranged by hotels were considered safe.) That worked until someone else jumped into our van right under our noses. And in huge cities like Manila, the driver may or may not know where he is going. We had some exciting, long and educational detours!

Program: Now is the time, if you haven’t already, to negotiate details of the program with your **liaison and sponsor**. They will probably have a “theme” title for the institutes. No matter what the title is, you’ll be teaching biblical storytelling. Their title is designed to attract attendees. With your liaison, agree on the

schedules for the institutes, using the example in the Appendix as a base. This plan has been used with only minor changes in the Gambia, Cameroon and the Philippines.

With **your participants**, assign plenary topics and stories to be told in the plenaries. Let people choose the stories they wish to tell in their small groups. You may need to explain this: Everyone will learn the same story in the plenary and the major purpose of the plenary is to learn the story, using one third to half the time. The plenary topic will take the rest of the time. In the small groups, each small group will learn a different story. These stories are then told in the Epic Telling, with many stories and tellers participating.

If your trip includes a plan for a Mini-Festival Gathering, now is the time to get your participants to choose, or tell you about, the topic for their workshop. A one-day Mini-FG typically happens on a Saturday and is for folks who couldn't come to the Institute during weekdays. Workshops are like workshops at FG, teaching topics about biblical storytelling such as body language, voice and face usage, etc. Specific stories can be taught if your class has many newcomers. If possible, an epic telling closes the event with a telling of stories learned.

Know who is going to lead worship and singing. You may have musicians on team who can teach some new songs to folks, or the sponsors may bring their own musicians. In any case, starting each session with music is a great way to gather folks. If you have no musicians, just ask your liaison.

Example: In Cameroon, Tim Coombs brought his guitar and taught some call and response type songs. And, the local folks brought drums and other percussion and a song leader would simply begin leading call and response when it was time to start, without apparent planning or direction. Fantabulous! In the Philippines, where every church has a praise band even if they don't have a roof or walls, the local sponsors arranged for a band and singers to lead every session.

Timeline: Things should be coming together! Create a detailed timeline to send to all participants and your liaison, showing all the details you know: Times of arrival and departure, where you will stay each night, where you will eat, resting time after arrival for jetlag recovery, team meetings, travel-times – step by step activities for the whole trip. Like the institute schedules, this is a plan, not a promise! Things happen, and flexibility is necessary.

As you plan your timeline, be sure to include time for **rest** after the flight, **team meetings** with sponsors, for **sightseeing**, a few shorter times for **shopping**, and especially, if at all possible, visits to churches. Divide the team into ones or twos and spread them around. Ask each church to let them tell a story, to demonstrate biblical storytelling.

Example: In Cameroon the team visited an arboretum and a rescue center for apes, and in both places local guides taught us a great deal about the environment and the social challenges of the nation. On Sunday, our teams went to a half dozen churches, shared stories, and brought back great experiences. In the Philippines we began the trip with a visit to the Museum of the Philippine People, which was a marvelous introduction to the proud history, economic base and challenges of the country. Sadly, we weren't able to arrange church visits since we had to leave Davao on Saturday and the Quezon City Institute hadn't happened yet, but two of us took a taxi to a church the team leader knew and had a great time there and at their mission station.

Buttons: Every trip has had a mission button, which can become the official logo of the new NBS____ organization, so work with your Communications Director or your liaison to design it. NBSI has had "button angels" Elaine and Richard Davies who have produced and given 300 buttons to each mission trips in the past; ask Juliana for information. Buttons are important. They identify participants (and those who aren't

participants) and keeps NBS_____ in view long after the mission ends. They are usually treasured by participants. Typically the button background includes the national colors or part of the national flag, and the foreground should include the NBSI dove from our logo and the name “Network of Biblical Storytellers _____(name of country).” The first batch needs to be produced here and it may be easy or less easy.

Example: In Cameroon, participants proudly wore their buttons every day and to church the following Sunday – and so far as we know, are still wearing them. In the Philippines, the design – agreed to after consultation with the liaison and sponsor, and produced after long struggle with Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, was so popular that the new NBS Philippines made more as a fundraiser for their future workshops, and also produced vinyl banners with the logo.

Packets: Besides the button, participants will want to take home material they can use to study and to help them lead workshops. There are a number of items in the Appendix based on the packet created for the Philippine institutes. The packets are extremely popular. Work with your liaison to decide what will go into the packet and how it will be produced.

Note: in the Philippines, which has a strong internet and most folks have smartphones, we made the decision to only include references to resources that could be accessed for **free online**. In Cameroon, where the country’s internet service was still in its infancy and smartphones weren’t yet abundant, we offered mostly printed materials. In both cases, we did not emphasize books. There are many great books for beginners, but as you consider what to include in the packet, keep in mind that not all participants may be literate (or literate in English), and most participants will probably not be rich enough to purchase materials. Ron Coughlin’s book on how to lead a biblical storytelling workshop is an excellent resource to bring and to give as gifts to leaders.

But do collect a separate list of books that a seminary may want to purchase for its library, to give to interested folks. And take *Story Journey* copies, with blessings autographed by the team, to give to the local team leaders.

Example: In Cameroon, the team printed and carried materials which were put together in plastic envelopes by young participants. The plastic envelopes were especially appreciated as the rainy season began. In the Philippines, the packet materials were reduced in size so that they could be printed locally, half size in a booklet for every participant. The colorful posters for the institutes, designed by a student of the liaison, formed the cover, and they came to only a dollar apiece. Since the pages had been provided in a larger font, they were quite readable at half-size.

Certificates: Certificates are **not optional**. They are treasured. Certificates are the only credential many of the participants have ever received in their lives, and they will be seen framed and hanging in homes. Decide what the requirements will be for earning one. Typically attendance for the whole institute, or for three days if an institute is followed by a Mini-FG, are required. If you have time, certificates can be handed out in a formal graduation ceremony; if not, team members can hand them out to their small groups after the final session.

Example: In Cameroon, we brought pre-printed certificates which team members with good calligraphy lettered the night before the last institute day. In the Philippines, the local folks who handled registration also printed the certificates. The team leader only had to provide a .jpg of her signature. Lovely! But in Haiti, the local liaison did not produce the promised certificates, and there was deep disappointment. Lesson learned

Budget: By now the airline tickets have been paid for and the final budget is coming together. Remember to include a “contingency” category. As team leader, you may also want to bring an extra contingency stash of your own, since if anything goes awry you will be responsible for fixing it, and a group

trip is not a place to be unwilling to spend what's necessary to solve a problem. But in most cases you will come back with your stash untouched.

Example: In the Philippines, we had budgeted a generous daily amount for food and water. But our hosts treated us to ten wonderful meals – so we all brought back “food money” unless we spent it on souvenirs!

Stage Four: We're Really Here!

Congratulations! Now the planning is done, the details are as nailed down as they're going to get, and it's time to simply execute the plan. As leader, you will gently steer things in the right directions, in collaboration with your liaison partner, but your local partner's team may have everything well under control! Wonderful!

Be sensitive to the presence of VIP's, and as appropriate, be attentive to them. This will benefit both NBSI, the new NBS____, and your local liaison and sponsoring organization(s). You may be called on to formally inaugurate NBS____ and install its officers. Be as joyfully official as you can!

Review

At the end of the trip, **meet once again with the team and your local liaison and sponsors** for a review. Share what the small group members said in your evaluation sessions.

Strategy Planning Meeting: Ask for volunteers who would like to lead the new NBS____ to meet with you and a couple of other NBS leaders for a commitment session. Encourage discussion on how they will continue the work, their leadership and reporting structure, etc. Above all, ask how NBSI can partner with them in the future, which leads to –

Watering the Newly Planted Seeds

As soon as possible after your return home, collect the **email addresses**, and cities if possible, of your sponsoring organization's team members. Do two things with them:

Send **thank-you notes** to the sponsors and locals who contributed to the success of the mission. Send further instructions to the newly formed local leadership group on how to keep the new group progressing. Periodically, leaders will ask for more materials. Be prepared to keep sending them.

Send your list of leaders to the person in charge of the monthly **international enews** (in 2018, it is Beth, beth@bethgalbreath.com). The international enews includes electronic copies of *The Biblical Storyteller* to share, appropriate Scholarly Musings (approved for international folks by authority of the board), and news from each national group. U.S. folks can also sign up (though if not members, they don't get the musings). If some of your contacts in this list are **academics**, also send the information about them to **Tom Boomershine**, tom@gotell.org, who may provide his own latest book and other resources to teachers.

Contact the **NBSI communications director**. Collect your best **pictures** from the trip, and encourage your team to do so, and email them to her. She will contact you for a follow-up article if that's in the plans. Send your pictures to the International Director and board liaison too, to be included in the International Storyworks video or presentation for the next Festival Gathering.

Stay in contact with your liaison and sponsoring organization. If the new NBS____ has a Facebook page (which often appears even before the end of the trip), follow it and cheer on news about workshops. Or when you receive email reports of workshops and new chapters, celebrate them! Send suggestions and encouraging emails. Submit news for the monthly enews. Water the seeds!

Being a Mission Supporter

We aren't all able to lead or even participate in international mission trips. It takes health, resilience, stamina, and a fair amount of cash! But anyone can be a mission supporter, and the International Storyworks group needs mission supporters! If you have a passion for mission but can't personally go, please consider:

1. **Prayer support** for a particular mission. Leading a team can be hard, often frustrating work. Any team leader would love to have a prayer partner they could share their progress and struggles with by email, and who would commit to praying for the effort.
2. **Financial support.** No gift is too small (or too large), and all gifts to NBSI are fully tax-deductible. Financial support can come from: and can be designated to:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your congregation• A small group in your congregation• Women's or men's groups• Yourself• A friend interested in biblical storytelling• Your Scripture by Heart group• Your local NBSI guild or regional network• Your church's district or conference, presbytery, etc.• A grant making entity you might know	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group expenses for a mission (printing, etc.)• A specific need of the mission (gift copies of <i>Story Journey</i>, etc.) Example: Elaine and Richard Davies have made a gift of the buttons to four missions so far!• A sponsorship for a team member who otherwise would not have the funds to go• Seed money for the new NBS_____, such as travel expenses for workshop leaders, biblical storytelling radio shows, printing costs, etc.• Scholarships for local participants• Scholarships for international FG participants• Support for Scholars, Seminar members teaching short-term classes at international seminaries• Undesignated international mission needs
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3. **Hosting and Guiding** international members who attend NBSI Festival Gathering or NBS Canada's Festival Gathering.

When an NBSI member from another country wants to come to visit us, home hospitality can enrich their experience of the U.S. or Canada and also keep costs down.

And when they attend FG, they need a guide to help them feel at home and make the most of the experience. The role of the Guide is also to introduce them to members, explain what's going on, what to sign up for, help them make choices at the Resource Center, while at the same time leaving them room to mix with others and feeling at home at FG. Their work does not end there. They are to keep in touch throughout the year, be their direct link to NBSI, compare notes about their biblical storytelling activities and encourage each other to attend the next Festival Gathering.

Principles for being a good guest

Everyone on the team needs to know and agree to follow these principles.

- Know the food and water situation in your host country. Is food plentiful or scarce? Will those who prepared your food eat only from the leftovers? If so, be sure you do not take more than your share, and never waste food. Don't ask for "western" foods that aren't readily available. Do express appreciation for whatever you are served and those who served it!
- Never, never criticize anything about the culture in earshot of any of our hosts. This includes non-verbal reactions such as sighs and eye-rolling! Never even *discuss* struggles with transportation, hard beds, strange food, cold showers, or strange toilet facilities, either current or on previous travels, in public. Even if you aren't technically criticizing your hosts, these discussions can only appear to be critical to anyone listening.
- Accept gifts graciously, even if you know that you cannot bring them into your home country. If you can't bring them home (such as flowers or foods), try to find someone who can use them; never discard them.
- Is the culture you are visiting a "direct" or "indirect" language culture? Western cultures are generally direct: people say what they mean, even if it is "No, I disagree." Many hot-climate cultures are indirect. People will say "yes" when they mean "no." They are not lying, they are being polite; it's up to you to discern what's going on.
- Be sensitive to the culture's social deference patterns. All cultures have pecking orders. Western cultures' hierarchies are based on wealth and formal authority structures (offices, titles) but are relatively fluid. That is, a lower-status person doesn't have to do *everything* a higher-status person says. Many traditional social hierarchies are based on age or inherited authority and are less fluid; younger or lower-status persons never challenge their superiors. This can be a problem when teaching, because students will almost never tell you to slow down, or that they don't understand. It's up to you to figure out when the stares turn blank!
- Know the rules for tipping and follow them. This may take some research. Online travel sites are helpful, plus the advice of your local contacts. On the other hand, know the lines where tipping slides into bribery, and your sponsor's policy on bribery, and follow that.
- Do not give or promise to give individual participants money unless they happen to be friends of yours from other situations, and in that case, be careful not to be seen doing so! We need to discourage individuals from asking team members for money. Many team members have provided scholarships for individuals or support for organizations *after* returning from a mission – if you feel moved to do so, that's a different thing. And of course if we attend church we'll put something in the collection, or give coins to a beggar on the street. But if you are solicited by an individual *during* a mission, simply say, "I'm sorry, our NBSI policies don't allow it."

Policies surrounding NBSI missions and new NBS national organizations

The Network of Biblical Storytellers International is a loose network of mutual encouragement with the goal of *encouraging everyone to learn and tell biblical stories by heart*.

Groups associated with NBSI include

- **national NBS organizations,**
- local *guilds* or *regional networks* under them,
- and *individual members* of NBSI

NBSI is in the process of working out how, in the future, NBSI might refer to the overall international network, and “NBS USA” might be one associated national NBS organization equal to all others. For now, the board of the “Network of Biblical Storytellers International” is also the board of NBS in the United States.

NBSI asks minimally that associated new national NBS organizations:

- Name themselves the Network of Biblical Storytellers _____ (name of country).
- Local associated guilds or regional networks may name themselves however they wish, as they do in the United States as well.
- Are ecumenical and open to *all* people.
- Use the term “associated with” the Network of Biblical Storytellers International rather than “affiliated with” or other terms for their relationship with NBSI. This is an important legal distinction.
- Emphasize the art of telling the text as it has come to us.
- Emphasize an understanding that the overall story of God’s love leads to peace rather than justifying conflict.

Finances and gifts:

During the mission:

- On an NBSI mission, the team will pay for its own expenses, program materials and the expenses of local team members, as detailed elsewhere in this manual.

Giving gifts:

- A mission team will want to bring thank-you gifts, such as copies of *Story Journey*, to members of the leadership teams of institutes.
- During the mission, individual team members may make contributions to *churches or organizations* if they wish, but -
- Local leaders are asked to discourage institute participants from *asking* for money or other gifts.
- Team members should not give money to *individual participants during the mission*.

Receiving gifts:

- Participants may wish to give gifts to the mission team, and the team members should receive these graciously, keeping in mind regulations of their own nation which may prohibit the import of raw foodstuffs, especially fresh fruits and vegetables (as U.S. Customs does). If such a gift is offered it can be quietly shared with others on the team before embarking for the U.S.

At the end of the Mission:**NBSI team convenes a local leadership team.**

- The newly formed associated national NBS organization chooses its own leadership and raises and manages its own funds.
- However, a new national NBS organization and its leaders may have financial needs which individual NBSI members, team members, or the NBSI board, through its international fund, may wish to help with.
- Decisions about such support will be made according to need and on an individual basis. The new national NBS organization should work to become financially self-supporting and self-sufficient as soon as possible.
- All financial gifts to national NBS organizations for their work, or to individuals for scholarships or expenses related to NBSI, are to be forwarded through the **NBSI office in Indianapolis**. Coordinator Ellen Handlin will receive the gift, record it in the international fund, and forward it to the national NBS organization according to the donor's instructions.

Support flows both ways.

- National NBS organizations, like local guilds or regional networks in the U.S., are invited to make contributions toward the work of NBSI if they are able.

Sample Letter of Introduction (Updated with current naming and URL's)



at Christian Theological Seminary, 1000 W. 42nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46208
1 317-931-2352
nbs@nbsint.org

March 2, 2007

The Right Reverend Dr. Solomon Tilewa Johnson
Bishop of The Gambia

Bishop Johnson,

I am writing to introduce Mrs. Juliana Rowe, an active member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers International (NBSI). NBSI is an international organization whose purpose is to communicate the sacred stories of the biblical tradition. Our mission is to encourage everyone to learn and tell biblical stories. Among the more exciting developments growing out of our mission over the past twenty years has been the development of biblical storytelling communities and NBSI guilds in international settings in Australia, Asia and Europe.

Mrs. Rowe has been active for several years with “Metro NBS,” our guild in the New York City area, and a participant and workshop leader at the annual Festival Gatherings of our network. Recently, our Board of Directors learned of her interest in introducing biblical storytelling to The Gambia. We understand that this would begin with a visit later this year, in hopes of laying the groundwork for an educational event that would be held during 2008, for which NBSI may be able to provide leadership through the involvement of some of our storytellers and leaders.

Our Board of Directors is thankful for the vision and commitment to biblical storytelling that Juliana Rowe is demonstrating in her desire to introduce biblical storytelling to The Gambia. We see this as a strong extension of the mission of NBSI and of the kind of international ministries we have been privileged to experience in the past. As we strongly recommend Mrs. Rowe to you, we also look forward to the possibilities of forming new partnerships in ministry with the Lutheran Church in The Gambia and the various faith communities of your country.

Please feel free to contact me if any further information is needed in our support of Mrs. Rowe and her extend the mission of NBSI to The Gambia.

Yours in Christ,

J. Lynn White, D. Min.
President
Network of Biblical Storytellers International



Juliana Rowe
Director of International Relations

August 23, 2014

Mr.
Director at

Letter of Introduction

Dear

I greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

By way of this letter, I want to introduce myself, and the organization I represent, the Network of Biblical Storytellers International (NBSI) to you. I want to also thank you for your support and partnership.

My name is Juliana John Rowe, an active member of the Network of Biblical Storytellers International (NBSI), and now on the Board of Directors with responsibility for international missions and relations. I have successfully led teams of scholars and dedicated biblical storytellers on missions to the Gambia and Cameroon where we trained pastors, Christian Educators and laity to use biblical storytelling to revitalize their worship service and ministry.

NBSI is an international organization whose purpose is to orally communicate the sacred stories of the Bible, as in the ancient oral tradition. Its mission is to encourage everyone to learn and tell Bible stories - orally. (See our web site www.nbsimt.org.) Among the more exciting developments growing out of our mission over the past thirty years has been the development of biblical storytelling communities and guilds in Australia, Asia, West and Central Africa. In these places, the oral telling of scripture has replaced the poor reading of lessons during worship. We stand ready to bring this exciting art of telling the Gospel to the Southern part of Africa and to the people of Botswana in particular.

Our Board of Directors is thankful to you and your organization for your commitment to partner with us for our upcoming mission. We support your vision...

I look forward to hearing from you.
Sincerely,

Network of Biblical Storytellers, Int'l.
800-355-6627 1000 West 42nd. St. Indianapolis, IN. 46208-3301
Web: nbsint.org email: nbs@nbsint.org
boodydede@aol.com,

Sample Institute and Mini-Festival Gathering Schedule

Example of a two-day Institute schedule:

Network of Biblical Storytellers Institute, Davao, Oct. 23-24, 2014

Day 1, October 23	
8:00 a.m.	Registration
8:45 – 9:15 a.m.	Gathering and welcome
9:15 - 10:15 a.m. Session 1	Plenary: Rev. Dr. Larry Paul Gusto, Wycliffe Philippines <i>Introduction to Biblical Storytelling - The Bible as performance literature.</i>
10:15 – 11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m. - noon	Small Group Session 1
Noon – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch
1:00– 2:00 p.m. Session 2	Plenary: Rev. Beth Galbreath, NBSI vice president <i>Internalizing and telling a story with your voice, face and body.</i>
2:00– 2:15 p.m.	Break
2:15– 3:30 p.m.	Small group Session 2
3:30– 3:45 p.m.	Break
3:45 -4:45 p.m. Session 3	Carole Danby, NBS Australia <i>Biblical Storytelling with children</i>
4:45– 5:00 p.m.	Break
5:00– 5:50 p.m.	Small group 3

Day 2, October 24	
8 a.m.	Gathering
8:30– 9:30 a.m. Session 4	Phyllis Hostmeyer, professional storyteller <i>Digging in to the story!</i>
9:30– 9:45 a.m.	Break
9:45– 11:15 a.m.	Small Group Session 4
11:15– 11:30 a.m.	Break
11:30– 12:30 a.m. Session 5	Penelope Ferguson, Shenandoah Guild <i>Connecting your story and your spirituality with the scripture story</i>
12:30 – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:30– 2:30 p.m.	Small Group Session 5
2:30– 2:45 p.m.	Break
2:45– 3:30 p.m. Session 6	Jim Cyr, certified master storyteller. <i>Biblical Storytelling in community: resources, groups, and guilds</i>
3:30--3:45 p.m.	Break
3:45 – 4:00 p.m.	Karl Hallsten, professional storyteller <i>Preparing to tell</i>
4:00-- 6:00 p.m. Session 7	Dr. Larry Paul Gusto, Dr. Julie Bustamante <i>Epic Telling and Graduation and Commissioning NBS Philippines</i>

Example of a three-day Institute schedule:

Network of Biblical Storytellers Institute, Quezon City, Oct. 27-29, 2014

Day 1 Oct 27	
8:30 a.m.	Registration
9:15– 9:45 a.m.	Gathering and welcome
9:45– 10:45 a.m. Session 1	Plenary: Rev. Dr. Larry Paul Gusto, Wycliffe Philippines <i>Introduction to Biblical Storytelling - The Bible as performance literature.</i>
10:45–11:00 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m.–12:15 p.m.	Small Group Session 1
12:15– 1:15 p.m.	Lunch
1:15– 2:15 p.m. Session 2	Plenary: Rev. Beth Galbreath, NBSI vice president <i>Internalizing and telling a story with your voice, face and body.</i>
2:15– 2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30– 3:45 p.m.	Small Group Session 2
3:45– 4:00 p.m.	Closing; Q&A
Day 2: Oct. 28	
8:30– 8:45 a.m.	Gathering
8:45– 9:45 a.m. Session 3	Carole Danby, NBS Australia <i>Biblical Storytelling with children</i>
9:45– 10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00–11:30 a.m.	Small Group Session 3
11:30 a.m.—12:15 pm	Lunch
12:15– 1:15 p.m. Session 4	Phyllis Hostmeyer, professional storyteller <i>Digging in to the story!</i>
1:15– 1:30 p.m.	Break
1:30– 2:45 p.m.	Small Group Session 4
2:45– 3:00 p.m.	Break
3:00– 3:50 p.m. Session 5	Penelope Ferguson, Shenandoah Guild <i>Connecting your story and your spirituality with the scripture story</i>
3:50– 4 p.m.	Closing; Q&A

Day 3: Oct. 29	
8:30– 8:45 a.m.	Gathering
8:45– 9:45 a.m. Session 6	Jim Cyr, certified master storyteller. <i>Biblical Storytelling in community: resources, groups, and guilds</i>
9:45– 10:00 a.m.	Break
10:00– 11:30 a.m.	Small Group Session 5
11:30 a.m.– 12:30 p.m.	Lunch
12:30 – 1:00 p.m.	Karl Hallsten, professional storyteller <i>Preparing to tell</i>
1:00– 4 p.m.	Dr. Larry Paul Gusto <i>Epic Telling and Graduation and Commissioning NBS Philippines</i>

Example of a Travel and Logistical Schedule

2013 NBS Workshop Logistics – Cameroon February 24 – March 10, 2013

February/March 2013						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
24 Arrive Douala Supper @ restaurant Spend night @ European Rest House	25 Breakfast at ERH Travel to Ndop Supper at St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	26 Debriefing meeting Visit PresPot All meals @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	27 Institute- Day 1 Breakfast/supper @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	28 Institute – Day 2 Breakfast/supper @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	March 1 Institute – Day 3 Breakfast/supper @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	2 Mini-Festival Gathering Breakfast/supper @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House
3 Worship at various churches Epic Telling Breakfast/supper @ St. John Accommodation St. John the Baptist Rest House	4 7:30 leave Ndop travel to Bamenda shopping 12 travel to Mutengene Breakfast St. John Lunch PresCafe Supper Mutengene Accommodation CBC Rest House	5 Free Day Breakfast/supper RH Lunch @ restaurant Accommodation CBC Rest House	6 Institute- Day 1 Breakfast/lunch/ Supper RH Accommodation CBC Rest House	7 Institute- Day 2 Breakfast/lunch/ supper RH Accommodation CBC Rest House	8 Institute- Day 3 Breakfast/lunch/ supper RH Accommodation CBC Rest House	9 Mini-Festival Gathering Breakfast/supper RH Accommodation CBC Rest House
10 Worship at CBC Free day Breakfast & Supper/Lunch restaurant Accommodation CBC Rest House	11 Breakfast at RH Lunch/supper restaurant Pastor George & Sharon accommodations Catholic Rest House Douala	12 Fly to Brussels from Douala Flight at 10:30pm Pastor George and Sharon return to North West				

Possible activities on free days:

Ndop/Bamenda

- **PresPot** – visit a working pottery workshop. You will see how they harvest and store the clay from the nearby river bed. How the clay is molded into beautiful works of art and shop for gifts to take back home. The settlement was started by the Presbyterian's many years ago and still operating.
- **PresCraft** – is a wonderful handicraft center showcasing local artist in the Northwest region. Started by the Presbyterian's years ago as an outlet for artistes to sell their arts and crafts.
- **Visit a Palace** to meet a traditional ruler/chief or as called locally a Fon.

Buea/Mutengene / Limbe

- Mt. Cameroon hike to explore the Rain Forest – for the very fit persons \$15
- The Wild Life Sanctuary **a must see** we will have lunch here and meet the man that talks to the Apes \$6 admission to zoo; lunch \$5 to 10
- The **Botanical Garden** a wonderful setting we will sit and look out at the Atlantic Ocean \$6 each
- **A half day boat trip to Crater Lake** and explore the Rain Forest \$30 each

Douala

- Lunch on the catch of the day on the river
- Visit and shop at the Artist Center

Story List for Institutes

You'll need to adjust the number of stories chosen from Mark to the number of people on your team. After the plenary speakers have chosen (or been assigned) the stories they wish to teach from the *Shema* and the overall list in Mark, the remaining stories are available for the team members to pick for teaching in their small groups. For example, this is the final list from the 7-member Philippines mission. If you have more team members you'll need more stories. Pick texts that are relatively short and full of action, and add up to a good chunk of Mark. The last two small group meetings on the schedule are for Q&A, practice, planning and evaluation, so only three stories per group are needed. A similar schedule was followed in Cameroon.

<p>Section A: Stories from Mark 1-4</p> <p>A1) Baptism of Jesus (Mark 1:9-15)</p> <p>A2) Call of the disciples (1:16-20)</p> <p>A3) Healing the man with the unclean spirit (1:21-28)</p> <p>A4) Healing the leper (1:40-45)</p> <p>A5) Sabbath healing (3:1-6)</p> <p>A6) Parable of the Sower (4:1-9)</p> <p>A7) Calming the storm (4:35-41)</p>	<p>Suggested Plenary stories</p> <p><i>Shema</i>, Deut 6:4-7 – session 1</p> <p>Bartimaeus, Mark 10:46-52, deep study and voice-face-body expression</p> <p>The Paralyzed Man, Mark 2:1-13, connecting with the story</p> <p>Parable of the mustard seed, Mark 4:30-32, children's work speaker</p>
<p>Section B: Stories from Mark 5-9</p> <p>B1) Jairus' daughter (5:21-24, 35-43)</p> <p>B2) Woman with the hemorrhage (5:25-34)</p> <p>B3) Feeding the five thousand (6:34-44)</p> <p>B4) Jesus walks on the sea (6:47-52)</p> <p>B5) Healing the Syrophenician's daughter (7:24-30)</p> <p>B6) The Messianic confession (8:27-33)</p> <p>B7) Transfiguration (9:2-9)</p>	<p>The Resurrection of Jesus, Mark 16:1-8, last session</p>
<p>Section C: Stories from Mark 10-16</p> <p>C1) Blessing the children (10:13-16)</p> <p>C2) Entering Jerusalem (11:1-11)</p> <p>C3) The scribe and great commandments (12:28-34)</p> <p>C4) Anointing at Bethany (14:3-9)</p> <p>C5) The last supper (14:22-25)</p> <p>C6) Peter's denial (14:66-72)</p> <p>C7) The death of Jesus (15:33-41)</p>	

Legal Paperwork for Each Team Member

As team leader, you should collect the legal documents as soon as possible from each NBSI member, before the trip begins. Hard copies are preferable, but scanned copies can be emailed.

Keep one copy with you on the trip and send the other to the NBSI office.

Older participants on Medicare need to check with their Medicare supplement insurance provider to see whether the supplement insurance covers the trip. Medicare does not cover outside of the country. They'll need to know several months before the trip if they need to buy supplemental medical insurance and that may or may not be easy to find.

Be sure that none of the documents you carry include participants' social security numbers, and keep the emergency documents as safe as you possibly can, on your person or entrusted to another team member. Don't leave them in checked baggage or hotel rooms.



Network of Biblical Storytellers, International

Volunteer Release Memo

TO: Volunteers participating in an Overseas Biblical Storytelling Mission Trip
FROM: The Network of Biblical Storytellers, International (NBS Int'l)
RE: Safety, Liability, Insurance, and Contacts

If you are volunteering to participate in an Overseas Biblical Storytelling Mission Trip, you should be aware of risks, be cautious and use good safety procedures.

Some of the areas volunteers might visit may have unusually high risks of unsanitary food or water, disease, civil disturbances or crime. There are dangers inherent in travel and in movement around the country. Be a good steward of your life and health. Find out what the risks are and be prepared to meet them. Volunteers should be informed by reading up on the country to which you are travelling and checking with the US or Canada travel safety alerts for the country concerned.

Persons volunteering to serve overseas are not employees of NBS, Int'l. Therefore, they are not covered by any Worker's Compensation Insurance or accident or group health or life insurance with NBSI. You should obtain any insurance you need. If traveling outside your country, you should check to make certain that you have appropriate medical insurance coverage in effect outside your country. Check with your employer or your medical insurance plan.

To help NBSI we ask that you sign a Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement, provide information about your medical insurance, and give us the name of two people to contact back home. Of course, we hope we will never have to use this information, but it is a necessary precaution for overseas travel.

If you have any questions, contact your trip organizer.

Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement
Network of Biblical Storytellers, International

I, _____ of the city of _____, state/province of _____ shall be traveling with The Network of Biblical Storytellers, International (hereafter "NBSI") from _____ to _____, 20_____, for the purpose of _____

_____ hereafter referred to as the Mission Trip.

I understand and agree that neither NBSI, nor its Board, representatives, or employees, may be held liable in any way for an occurrence in connection with the Mission Trip which may result in injury, harm (including death), or other damages to the person or property of the undersigned. Rather, I agree that I alone shall be responsible for any property damage, personal injury or death that may occur during our travels.

As part of the consideration for participating in the Mission Trip, I, _____, release NBSI, its Board, representatives, and employees from any claim for damages, injury, death, or loss of any kind, which may occur while participating in the Mission Trip. I further agree to save and hold harmless NBSI, its Board, representatives, and employees from any claim arising out of or participation in any form or fashion in the Mission Trip. This agreement shall be binding on my relatives, personal representatives, heirs, beneficiaries, next of kin, or assigns and shall inure to the benefit of NBSI.

I understand that in the event of death, it may not be possible to return the participant's earthly remains to their home at the participant's expense. I understand that it may be necessary to bury or cremate the participant's body at a location outside of the USA or Canada and hereby consent to such burial or cremation. If return of the remains is possible, they should be returned to this mortuary: _____
Address _____ Phone _____
_____ I prefer cremation if possible _____ I prefer burial if possible

I understand the terms of this agreement are contractual and not mere recital; and that I have signed this document of my own free act and volition. I further state and acknowledge that I have fully informed myself of the content of this agreement and release by reading it before I signed it.

I have executed this Hold Harmless and Indemnity Agreement this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Signature: _____ Witness: _____
Name _____ Name _____

Medical Insurance Coverage

Name _____

Insurance Company _____

Company Address

Phone Number _____

Name of Insured/Relationship to Insured _____

Policy Number _____

_____ I have checked with my insurance company and my current health insurance does cover the trip to _____ for which I have been accepted.

_____ I have checked with my insurance company, and my current health insurance does not cover the trip to _____ for which I have been accepted.

If your insurance does not cover your trip, you can purchase travel insurance for coverage during the time away.

Since my current policy does not cover me out of country, I will be insured for the trip by the following company:

Insurance Company _____

Company Address _____

Phone Number _____

Policy Number _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Emergency Contact Information

Please list 2 contacts for while you are on this trip.

Your name: _____

Contact 1

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Cell phone: _____

Home phone: _____

Other phone: _____

Email: _____

Physical address: _____

Contact 2

Name: _____ Relationship: _____

Cell phone: _____

Home phone: _____

Other phone: _____

Email: _____

Physical address: _____

Sample Individual Equipment and Supplies Checklist

Team leaders, give your team a list that is specific to the climate and culture of your destination. You can get climate information on the internet for the time you will be there.

Westerners' tendency is to pack too much. Please fight against this temptation! Pack the smallest possible luggage containers. Understand that a large case that can be accepted as a carryon for international flights might not fit in the smaller overhead bins on short-hop flights within a country. And when the team is traveling by van, everyone's luggage has to fit into the van along with the people! Besides which, you will have to carry your own luggage. So think *small*.

Clothing

Underwear as appropriate; modest swimwear if swimming is planned

Toiletries as needed. Try to plan for simple hairstyles that won't need a lot of fussing.

Shoes – comfortable shoes and, if needed, socks, for walking. Are sandals appropriate in the culture?

Culturally appropriate clothing – Are shorts OK for men? Women? Should women plan to wear skirts? If so how long? Are sleeveless blouses all right for women? Men? Should men avoid shorts? In view of solar intensity both in tropical climates and high altitudes, are they wise? Are scarves needed for women if church visits are planned? Remember that team members will be authority figures and will want to present themselves as professionals. Do not bring clothes that will need ironing to be presentable.

Outerwear: Light jacket for evening in tropical climates, heavier for high altitudes or colder seasons. Plan layers. Encourage team members to leave their heavy winter wear with the person who takes them to the airport (and will bring it on return). You don't want to drag a heavy coat through a tropical climate.

Raingear: Unless you are sure you'll be visiting only in the dry season and the dry season is really dry, bring a light raincoat or small umbrella.

Laundry: You aren't bringing enough clothing for a full two week trip (hopefully), so bring single-use packets of laundry soap, a thin length of cord for a clothesline, and binder clips or small clothespins so you can wash out clothes in the lavatory or the bucket you'll find in many countries' bathrooms.

Mosquito defense: If you are traveling to a place where mosquitoes will be the norm, don't bring a huge bottle of repellant. Don't bring an aerosol can that will be illegal in your checked luggage (pump spray is OK). Bring a small container or repellant wipes. Pin-on repellants and Permethrin spray that you apply to your clothing before the trip are other options. Test your lotion to make sure you aren't sensitive to it.

Solar defense: Bring and use sunscreen, especially in the tropics and at high altitudes. Nothing will ruin your trip faster than sunburn, and you are likely to be exposed to much more sun than you are at home. Bring and use a hat with a brim and sunglasses. Check local regulations for permitted sunscreen ingredients.

Toilet considerations: Be prepared. Hotels generally have toilet paper but maybe not enough; public restrooms often will not. Obtain a small plastic roll dispenser sold in the "travel" section of your drugstore. You can roll your own favorite toilet paper to fit it. Carry one with you at all times and have three or four refills ready in your baggage. If a waste can with a lid is near the toilet, it is an invitation to put the paper there rather than flushing it; ask your team leader for cultural details. Always carry a small bottle of sanitizer.

Water considerations: Even in cities with potable water, you will probably want to drink bottled water (which your group will obtain from a reputable dealer of filtered water, or from the restaurant or hotel desk) because water is simply different and you are used to the water you have at home. You may want to obtain a Steri-pen to use with a wide-mouth half-liter juice or tea bottle; several people on the trip could share this solution. Be aware that at some airports on returning to the U.S., you may be required to leave your bottle at security, even if it's empty! So don't bring your favorite expensive water bottle.

Electronics: You are allowed to carry batteries for electronic devices (cameras, phones, sound recorders, tablets, pads, CPAP devices) *inside* the devices. Most airlines will not permit extra batteries in checked or carry-on luggage. So rechargeables are a great idea. Also be aware that airlines are not liable for electronics pilfered from your luggage, and that your luggage may be searched at any time. So pack electronics only in your carry-on luggage where you can keep an eye on them. Of course, you will also research the electricity situation in the country you'll visit – shape of plug, voltage, etc. Carry any adapters you will need, including 220-volt transformers, with you; don't expect the hotel to have one. Most modern electronics handle both 220 and 110 voltage, so read the very fine print on your device and bring a transformer if you have doubts.

Medication: for the whole trip and a few days longer, just in case, but not more than that. Carry medication in the original bottle with your name and prescription information in your carry-on – remove the extra pills and leave them at home. Be sure you have everything you need for CPAP's, cochlear implants, or other devices. Take extra batteries for hearing aids.

Money: Traveler's checks are far less accepted than they used to be. Carry your cash next to your body in a money belt or a passport case under clothing. After you change your money, take small amounts out to carry with you each day as needed. Carry one credit card for emergencies and let the bank know the dates you will be traveling, and where.

Identification: Always carry your passport, of course; it is your most crucial possession. In addition: **Scan the full two-page layout of your passport**, the first pages that contain your picture and ID information. Print the scan, in color if possible, and carry it with your cash in your passport case or money belt. Email the scan to yourself if you have a web-based email system so that you can access it from anywhere. Put copies of the scan inside zipper linings of your luggage. On your outward trip, print boldly on an 8 1/2 X 11 paper, your name, address and contact information in your mission country, and put it on top of your packed items. In case your case is opened or misdirected, you can be contacted. For some countries, you will be directed to tape this to the outside of your case. On your return trip, do the same with your US information.

Group Equipment & Supplies Checklist

As team leader, you are responsible for the health and safety of your team and the group money.

If certain expenses have been handled before the trip, such as hotel reservations or rental for the venue, you will have that much less to be concerned about.

You will have individual spending and team expenses (transportation, for example) that need to be covered by “team budget” money. You can avoid one person carrying all the team money by letting each person keep the money they brought, keep a tally of what each person owes the team or has paid for, and settle up as needed.

As leader you might choose to carry small amounts of: Over-the-counter medications:

Cold and intestinal preparations such as Nyquil, Dayquil, Imodium, Pepto-Bismol tablets;

headache remedies such as aspirin, Tylenol, ibuprofen; sunburn remedy, antibiotic ointment, band aids.

Sewing supplies: needles, a good supply of thread, and buttons. Remember you can pack small scissors only in your checked bag.

Example: One team member tore his pants the first day in Cameroon and it took three women’s thread supplies to mend them!

Steri-pen. Team members who share it will save the team some money, but don’t buy one if you don’t have one or get it as a gift; it will take a lot of bottled water to equal the cost.

Cell phone: If a cell system exists in your mission country, carry one phone that will work there. You can:

- Pay for a short-term international contract on your own phone, if it is compatible, and charge the cost to team expenses
- Buy a cheap phone there and load it with minutes, or if your phone is compatible, buy a SIM card for your phone that carries local system minutes.
- Ask your local partner to provide a phone for the team’s use, and return it at the end of the mission.

Be aware that the cheaper the phone, the harder it will be to understand if you have a hearing loss. You will need a way to contact your local partners, hotels, etc.

- Carry your smartphone to use for GPS info and as a clock and alarm clock and turn off the phone access so no one can accidentally call you.
- Or a combination.

Example: In the Philippines, Beth knew from experience on a previous trip that borrowing her church’s local Philippines phone and loading a SIM card wouldn’t work – she couldn’t hear the other speaker clearly! So our local partner lent the team an inexpensive cell phone that she *could* hear, and she kept her own smartphone for GPS use. As the taxi from the airport got totally lost, she called the local partner and handed the phone to the driver to get directions from him. Later, as she and Carole took a taxi to a church, Beth was able, finally, to get the driver to follow her directions, which she was watching on Google Maps on her smartphone.

Sample Participant Packet inclusions (from the 2014 Philippines packet)

Digging in and Connecting the story with our stories – Some approaches for teens and adults

QAR – Question Answer Relationship

Type of Question	Examples
On My Own – Everyone can answer this type of question. It is asked before they even know what story they will be hearing. They do not need to know or hear the story to answer this.	Have you ever been surprised by something unexpected? What types of things do people in your community do to honor someone who has died? What are some common burial customs in your community? Why do you think it might be important to follow traditions surrounding burial?
Right There – The answer is found one place in the words of the story. If you had a written text, you could literally put one finger on the answer.	Who was walking to the tomb with Mary Madgalene? (<i>Mary the Mother of James and Salome</i>) What were the women bringing to the tomb? (<i>spices</i>) What covered the entrance to the tomb? (<i>a large stone</i>)
Think and Search – The answer is also found in the words of the story but you will have to look more than one place to find the answer. These questions usually require more thought.	What did the women discover when they reached the tomb? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The stone was already rolled back.</i> • <i>A young man in white was inside.</i> • <i>Jesus was not present.</i>
Author and Me – These answers rely upon information from the story and your own background information. These are the most difficult questions to answer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did the women's emotions change from the beginning of the resurrection story to the end? • The last line of the story says the women were afraid. What do you think the women feared? • Why do you think that none of the disciples went to the tomb with the women?

Another way to discuss a story is to look at the characters, their motivations and desires, the conflicts that arise and the resolutions to those conflicts.

Somebody (characters)	Wanted (motivation or desires)	But (conflict)	So (resolution)
The three women	to anoint Jesus's body	they were worried about the large stone	they discussed among themselves whom they might find to help them
The young man	to speak with the women and tell them what to do	they were frightened and alarmed	he told them not to be alarmed and proceeded to talk with them and give them instructions

■ *Phyllis Hostmeyer*

Engaging people of all ages, especially children, in telling Bible Stories

Claiming the Space

- Make the gathering space welcoming and bright with a visual emphasis on the Bible – Bible open and on a stand, story stole, cross, coloured cloth and Treasure chest or box wrapped in gold paper if you have one.
- We stand on holy ground when we share our faith stories with others – children.



Drama Techniques for exploring Scripture

Echo Mimes

Divide the bible story into small phrases or single words, then put an action to each one and invite the assembled group to copy what you say and do what you do until you say 'The End'! Example –

One day	Hold up one finger
Jesus went to Jericho	Point away from you
To see some friends	Put hand over eyes, looking
Zacchaeus	Draw a 'Z' in the air
Wanted to see Jesus	Put hand over eyes, looking
But he could not	Shake head from side to side
Because he was too short	Indicate a short person at your side with hand

Liquid Pictures

Divide the Bible Story into 6 or so segments that can be easily said by young children. Assign one segment to each of 6 or so children and invite them to say the line 3 times and do an action to match what is being said. Then when they are finished, they freeze and the next person says their segment 3 times and freezes. A leader introduces the story and ends it. Here is an example from John's Gospel –

Leader: The story of the first Easter.

- The Stone is gone!
- Jesus is gone!
- Peter, Jesus is gone!
- I don't believe it!
- It's true! Jesus is gone!
- Mary!
- Jesus is alive! Alleluia!

Leader: Jesus told Mary to tell everyone the Good News and she did!

Number Stories

Example: 1 day Jesus was going 2wards Jericho with 5 of his disciples. As all 6 of them were leaving, 1 man, Bartimaeus, son of Timaheus, a blind beggar was sitting next 2 the roadside. When he heard that it

was the 1derful Jesus going by, he called out 2 him in a gr8 big voice, 'Jesus, Son of David, have pity 4 me!'

Sound Effects – YEAH, WOW, UHOH, APPLAUSE, OOOHH, AAAHH, HISS –

Make signs with one word on each and invite 7 children to hold one sign each. Tell or read a story and encourage the holders of the signs to step forward whenever they think the rest of the group should call out the word on their sign.

Drama/Story Bags

Two-way stretch sacks made from stretch Lycra material. Children place these over their heads and step into the footholds sewn into the bottom of the bag. A Bible story is read or told and those in the bags respond to what they hear by moving inside the bag. Rules – do not move your feet and no talking while inside the bag.

Puppets

Children can make puppets from paper bags, or adults in your church can make handle-bag puppets from fabric scraps, a handle, and a head. Heads can be made of many different found materials! And when the puppets are made, the children can act the story with the puppets. If an adult has a smartphone they can make a video of the story. Here is a video demonstration about handle-bag puppets and drama bags:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p_KuH7s1apQ

Storyboarding

Give each participant a sheet of paper and instruct them to fold in half, then in half again, then in half again. This will divide the page into 8 sections. Tell a story and then invite children to draw the story as far as they can recall. Then tell it again and ask them to fill in any blanks. Then children can turn to someone next to them and use their story map to tell the story to someone else. OR, you can draw a storyboard in sand or dirt the same way.

Prayer with actions for younger children

Creator God, I give you today, all that I think, and do, and say. I give you the good times, as well as the bad, the time when I am happy, the times when I am sad. Fill me with grace and make me strong. With you by my side, I can never go wrong. Amen

Music

God Delights in You with Actions and Dancing

Great Big God with Actions

God's Love is with Actions

Shalom, Peace to You with Actions

Kingdom Rap with Movement

■ *Carole Danby*



MULL

The acronym *MULL* is a helpful way to remember how we learn biblical stories by heart. It stands for *Master, Understand, Live, Link*.

Master

We master the text by practice, by repetition. Aim for 75% or better word accuracy based on your chosen translation, but don't worry about being "word-perfect" – after all, none of us will be telling in Hebrew or Greek, so the translation is already not "word-perfect!" Here are some suggestions for finding times and ways to practice "*when you are at home, and when you are away; when you lie down and when you rise.*"

- Mouth the text – read it and repeat it out loud whenever you can.
- Move your body: repeat the story to yourself or out loud, while you're walking or cycling – but only if it's safe to take a little of your attention off the road!
- Imagine the images of the story as you repeat it.
- If you can, write out the text several times. If you can write it in longhand that's best.
- Tell it out loud in the shower or in the car (but only if it's safe to take a little of your attention off the road!)
- Repeat it with a friend. Repeat it when you're cooking or washing dishes or pulling weeds in the garden or doing other chores.
- Whisper it to yourself if you can't sleep.
- Repeat it mentally (including thinking about your expressions and gestures) while you're waiting for the bus, or waiting in line anywhere, or riding to your destination.

Understand

Understand the text thoroughly by study. Aim for 95% meaning accuracy. Your goal is to understand how the original tellers and hearers would have understood the story *so that* you can tell it with integrity in your own community today.

- For your base translation, use the Bible used in your congregation in worship. That's so you'll be welcome to tell in worship! Be sure it's a good translation, rather than a paraphrase.
- In preparing, though, you can read several translations. See the page in your packet about free online resources. It's OK to pull a word or phrase from another version or even make culturally appropriate translations and corrections. For example, when telling to teens, you might say "to a teenager whose name was Mary."
- Take advantage of good Bible study classes offered by your church.
- Read *recent* Bible commentaries to understand the nuances that the first audiences would have picked up in their context. For example, "Samaritan" and "Centurion" don't have the same emotional content for us that they did for their first hearers. Rather than changing the words you'll want to understand that, and express the emotional content through your face and voice – maybe disdain, followed by surprise when they turn out to be heroes after all!
- If you're telling in worship and you're not the preacher, ask the preacher which points he or she is going to emphasize. Remember that a story can often be told several different valid ways.
- Read the context of the story to understand the "before and after," and the viewpoint of the whole book. For example, consider the story of Jesus going to Gentile territory and confronting a gentile

woman asking him for healing for her daughter. Does it cast light on this mystifying story when we realize that it comes right after some tough words about what is religiously “clean” and “unclean”?

- Check cross-references to Old Testament and New Testament passages. Consider “cross-stories” – Old Testament and New Testament stories with elements that echo each other. For example, what do Genesis 1 and Jesus’ walking on water or stilling the sea have in common? These allusions to early stories were certainly intentional.
- Read other versions of the story in other books of the Bible – *not* to add in elements from the other versions, but to figure out why *this* author frames the story *this* way?
- Read it out loud and listen for the humor!

Live

For “a set amount of time,” be disciplined about telling the story “X” amount of times. Adapt this discipline to your lifestyle and experience. For example to begin you might tell the story three times per day for a week to a month. As you gain experience, you can be more flexible with time, but maintain regular discipline: *live* with the story. Here’s how to start:

- The first telling: Meditate on the story.
Break the story into chunks or “episodes of a few sentences that seem to make a scene. Speak the chunk, pause and meditate. If it speaks to you, remember and if possible record what you heard.
Repeat the story out loud several times, using your whole body to tell it.
- The second telling: Tell the story to another person, asking for “Why?” and “Aha!” feedback, *not* “how to improve” (what do they know, anyway?) but insights: “Aha! I understand something new” or “Why did you do *this*?”
Each day tell it to someone different if possible, to get new insights from someone with different life experiences.
- The third telling: Pray the story back to God.

Link

Connect the story to a story in your own life.

- Pay attention to all the emotions that bubble up during your meditation about the story. Name the emotions.
- Ask “Why? What is it about _____ that makes me feel _____? It can be hard to face what it reminds you of. You may have suppressed the memory.
- Do something in response to your new understanding. Ask Christ’s healing to help you deal with the negatives and respond in ministry to the positives.

This four-point approach to Scripture is reminiscent of the four-step practice of praying with Scripture called *Lectio Divina* (“sacred reading”): Reading, Meditating, Praying, Listening for God’s response. Truly, the practice of learning by heart is *Lectio Divina* only bigger!

■ *Beth Galbreath, using the MULL approach from Tracy Radosevic*

FREE RESOURCES FOR BIBLICAL STORYTELLERS



The mission of the Network of Biblical Storytellers International is *to encourage everyone to learn and tell biblical stories.*

nbsint.org is the website of the Network of Biblical Storytellers International, where you'll find information about the organization and the art and spiritual discipline of biblical storytelling. On this website there are:

Videos: The NBSI website connects to a number of **video examples** of members telling, and members of the NBSI Scholars' Seminar discussing the stories they are telling, at nbsint.org/watchastory. The site also connects to the network's YouTube channel, nobsint, with many more videos.

Scholarship: nbsint.org/performancecriticism and nbsint.org/aboutus link to essays which introduce the concept of Scripture study through biblical storytelling, called "performance criticism," or "performance commentary," as it is being practiced in many colleges and seminaries today. The NBSI Scholars' Seminar has been a leader in developing this "new paradigm" of biblical interpretation. Its basic understanding is that the Bible is not a text intended to be read silently, but *recorded stories – sounds - to be performed in community.*

Organizations: nbsint.org/nbsguilds leads to menus that list every guild and NBS national group that we know about. NBSI is a network, not an organization with lots of rules and bureaucracy. Your local biblical storytelling group can be listed too. Just email beth@bethgalbreath.com with your group's name, location, and contact information. The group should have been in existence for a year with some proven track record before it is listed.

Resources: nbsint.org/resources offers links to important articles from *The Biblical Storyteller*, and also links to founder Rev. Dr. Tom Boomershine's written and audio tellings, storytelling help and commentaries on the Gospel stories of the Revised Common Lectionary, with index.

nbsint.org/nbsmobile offers a series of 12 short smartphone-friendly video lessons on biblical storytelling. This is the series inspired by Beth Galbreath's 2011 visit to the Philippines, where many young folks asked to learn biblical storytelling. These videos were created in cooperation with Wycliffe storytellers and are designed for young, urban folks for whom English is a second language. They are presented by young tellers and use purely aural methods to teach.



gotell.org is the website of NBSI founder Tom and Amelia Boomershine. There are excellent biblical storytelling helps connected with the lectionary gospel readings, and also many helpful general writings about biblical storytelling and its place in the 21st Century, as well as performance criticism.

Facebook has an NBSI group page where folks share help, post pictures of gatherings, and rejoice with one another! Search for "Network of Biblical Storytellers".



NBS TOgether: The Online Guild is a community on Google+ which has monthly meetings involving folks from Albania to Australia. Time and technology might be barriers in some places, but you are welcome to use the community to ask questions, share successes and set up your own hangouts with other tellers in different parts of the Philippines, for free. Email Joyce Orr at cindaynbs@gmail.com for information on joining and using the community.

RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH



textweek.com *The Text This Week* offers links to resources for study, reflection and liturgy for the Revised Common Lectionary. Also includes a scripture index for those who don't use the RCL.

scripture4all.org/OnlineInterlinear/Greek_Index.htm Online (and also downloadable) free Greek (and Hebrew) interlinear. It's in English, but very helpful.



RESOURCES FOR CREATIVITY IN GENERAL



accidentalcreative.com Articles and podcasts on how to be prolific, brilliant, and healthy. Todd Henry's material will help you boost your creativity when preparing to tell stories.



Abbey of the Arts

abbeyofthearts.com is a virtual monastery offering a variety of online classes, reflections, and resources which integrate contemplative practice and creative expression.

RESOURCES FOR PERFORMANCE

storydynamics.com *Tips for the Storyteller* newsletter from Doug Lipman gives many tips on improving your storytelling performance.



artofstorytellingshow.com Podcasts of interviews with storytellers talking about the art of storytelling.

■ *Jim Cyr*

How to Lead a Biblical Storytelling Workshop

A workshop can be one hour, two hours, or all day. A good beginners workshop is two hours. Be sure to collect contact information for participants so you can connect with them and encourage them later!

Choose the story you will use to teach and plan your workshop. should be 5-10 verses, with action (not just talking). *Mark* is a good place to start.



Here are some suggestions for a workshop – they are only suggestions!

1. Gather the people with singing, and from there go into the “Lion Hunt” for fun, as an icebreaker, and to get the idea of call-and-response going.
2. Tell Deuteronomy 6:4-7, the *Shema*. Point out that it tells us why we should learn Scripture by heart (so that we focus on loving God alone), and how we learn (repeat them to our children and others, tell them doing chores at home or on the road, and tell them once at bedtime and once on rising.) If you have more than two hours, you can teach the *Shema* with call and response.
3. Break!
4. Tell the story you are teaching. Show people how:
 - > to imagine the story vividly
 - > to break it into episodes, then chunks
 - > to design gestures that express the story – not too many! This is *not* sign language!
 - > to plan how voice and face can express the story
 - > to make a storyboard, if you have time
5. Lead the story with call and response, with gestures
6. Break into pairs. Each person will tell the story. The other will only help if needed.
If you have provided the text on paper, urge the partners to look at the paper only if *they* can’t remember what comes next either. But paper is not necessary to learn.
Switch roles.
As leader, walk around and offer suggestions to the students for voice, face and body.
7. Combine pairs into fours. Again, each person tells the story to the other three.
8. Come back together. Invite sharing: How did it go? Does anyone want to tell the story?
Applaud loudly *any* efforts! This is not about perfection!
9. Invite sharing: How does this story connect with your story?
10. Commission the folks with the Pentecost story or with the *Shema* – they are now biblical storytellers! Remind them to keep practicing.

Staying Connected

Folks who have caught the passion for biblical storytelling like to practice their art and stay connected with other tellers! Here are ways to do that:

If you have a strong internet connection, join **NBS TOGether: The Online Guild**, which meets monthly for an hour and includes folks around the globe. Email Joyce Orr, cindaynbs@gmail.com, for information on joining.

Find your guild or regional network and connect: <http://nbsint.org/nbsguilds>

Scripture by Heart groups

A Scripture by Heart group is a group of tellers in a single congregation who work with the pastor to present the Scripture reading by telling instead of reading in Sunday worship. They get together every month or so to decide who will tell which story that the pastor is going to preach on in the following month. If there are four members, each can easily learn one story per month.

Guilds, or Regional Networks

When tellers from different congregations, even different denominations, get together, it's called a "guild" or a "regional network." Keep within the NBSI guidelines and values. Some suggestions:

- Help one another learn new stories
- Hold workshops to help others learn biblical storytelling
- Study difficult stories to help one another find the best ways to tell them
- Divide up a series of stories, or a whole book of the Bible, and hold an epic telling
- Travel to different churches upon invitation to present epic tellings
- Create and post video of tellings, to spread the art
- Connect with mission organizations who work in spreading the gospel through storytelling where people learn by listening rather than reading.
- Connect with (NBS local Coordinator) to plan and do many more great things, even holding a national Festival Gathering.
- Take up collections at epic tellings to fund missions or Festival Gathering scholarships.
- Use storytelling in working with teens to deal with the serious issues young people face
- Connect with Muslim and Jewish groups for interfaith story-sharing potluck events

Prison Ministry

Perhaps the best thing a guild could do, if it can, is starting biblical storytelling groups in prisons. Biblical storytelling is a powerful way to share the good news of God's love with those in prison. NBS International is growing in its ministries and workshops in prisons as well as in churches; perhaps that might get started here. Amelia Boomershine, founder of "Circle of the Word" prison storytelling ministry, can help: amelia@gotell.org.

-- *Beth Galbreath*

Finding the Money

As was suggested in the section on “Being a Mission Supporter,” direct designated gifts to NBSI through the NBSI office are always welcome (and fully tax deductible).

Financial support can come from:

- Your congregation
- A small group in your congregation
- Women’s or men’s groups
- Yourself
- A friend interested in biblical storytelling
- Your Scripture by Heart group
- Your local NBSI guild or regional network
- Your church’s district or conference, presbytery, etc.
- A grant-making entity you might know

and can be designated to:

- Group expenses for a mission (printing, etc.)
- A specific need of the mission (gift copies of *Story Journey*, etc.)
Example: Elaine and Richard Davies have made a gift of the buttons to four missions.
- A sponsorship for a team member who otherwise would not have the funds to go
- Seed money for the new NBS_____, such as travel expenses for workshop leaders, biblical storytelling radio shows, printing costs, etc.
- Scholarships for local participants
- Scholarships for international FG participants
- Support for Scholars Seminar members teaching short-term classes at international seminaries
- Undesignated international mission needs

If your congregation includes members who are immigrants from the country you are going to, let them know about biblical storytelling and your trip. Get them excited about the art, and you may find them very enthusiastic donors. Be sure to keep a mission button from your trip for them as a thank-you.

Keeping team finances straight

If handling financial records is not your strength, appoint one member of the team to be the group treasurer. If there are other tasks you would like help with, and there are team members in whom you have confidence to fulfill them, then by all means appoint others to help. Know what your local partners can and will handle, and encourage them in that, by all means. But as team leader, you are responsible for the overall operation and success of the mission.

Handling two different currencies – or three, if some of your team members are not from the U.S. – is a real challenge. It can be helpful to set up a small notebook with a double-page layout for each person, like this:

<u>Name</u>	Dollars in	Dollars out	Pesos in	Pesos out
Itemized Expenses				

This chart shows immediately what each person has contributed to the treasury (“in”) and what has been paid out to that person. Of course personal expenses – meals, souvenirs - are not tracked, but hotels are paid by the group even when they are charged individually, preferably before the trip. There is a separate page for group expenditures, which are divided among the team. The leader using this system could “settle up” on the last day of the trip, but this kind of accounting can help the same way when group expenses are divided and reimbursed to or by the treasurer of the team, as appropriate, every few days.