



# Mexico

## SERVANT GUIDE



# Mexico Ministry

## BIENVENIDOS AMIGO!

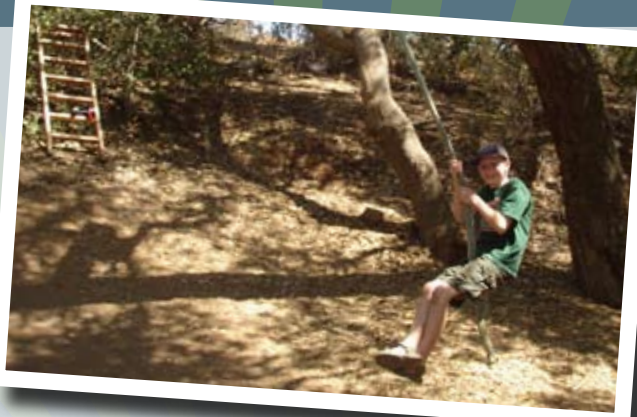
### WHO WE ARE

Thank you for your interest in the mission outreach to Mexico. We have a team of committed leaders who are constantly working to make this a better, safer and more rewarding experience for volunteers while at the same time providing for the real needs of the people in Mexico. As you use this guide to help familiarize yourself with the weekend mission trip process, remember to pray for Mexico and the loft house ministry. Consider how the Lord is leading you to become involved in His Kingdom's work here on earth. Our hope is that these trips will help you learn to maintain a flexible/servant attitude, and that you will surrender yourself to God's will and learn to become an effective partner in ministry.

### WHY DO WE GO TO MEXICO?

Simply, to glorify God by tangibly demonstrating the love of Christ through building loft-houses and latrines, playing with children, and by showing love to the people whom we meet. Jesus said: "...whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me!" Matthew 25:40





## WEEKEND-AT-A-GLANCE

As with any international trip, flexibility is the key to a successful mission. This is what the average weekend mission trip to Mexico looks like. Early on Friday morning, flatbed trailers loaded with the unassembled loft-houses are transported from Redlands to the Mexican border. The rest of the volunteer team departs Trinity Church at Noon on Friday to caravan across the border. You will be staying overnight at Rancho Casitas (Hands of Mercy camp facility).

There will be a brief orientation meeting after breakfast on Saturday morning, and then the team will travel to the work site to have a devotional with the recipient family before beginning the day's activities. A sack lunch will be provided by Hands of Mercy. By mid/late afternoon, the work will be finished and the team will dedicate the house to the family. The brief ceremony may include a song, testimonies, a presentation of keys, and a Spanish Bible. That evening after dinner, groups can choose to have a time of worship, a time of debriefing to process what the experience has meant to the team or just gather around the campfire.

After breakfast on Sunday morning, some teams choose to worship with the missionaries, and then head for the border. Depending on the available daylight and desires of the group, there may be time for sightseeing and/or shopping. This needs to be a group consensus and is very difficult in the winter given the short daylight hours. Please let your team leader know if you have specific expectations before the trip begins and remember to be flexible. Travel time home will vary considerably due to traffic, time of day, holiday periods, and various other delays at the border while waiting in line for U.S. border security. The team should arrive back to Trinity Church mid to late Sunday afternoon.

# TYPICAL SCHEDULE

## Friday

- 11:30 am Meet at Trinity. Please eat before or pack a lunch.
- Noon Depart
- 2:00 pm Make a final stop in the USA before entering Mexico
- 5:00 pm Stop for tacos near our destination
- 6:00 pm Arrive Rancho Casitas, assign cabins, review schedule for Saturday

## Saturday

- 5:30 am Volunteers assist in breakfast prep
- 7:00 am Breakfast (volunteers assist with clean-up)
- 8:00 am Depart for ministry location(s)
- 5:00 pm Refuel vehicles
- 6:30 pm Dinner at Rancho Casitas (volunteers assist with clean-up)

## Sunday

- 5:30 am Volunteers assist in breakfast prep
- 7:00 am Breakfast (volunteers assist with clean-up)
- 9:00 am Depart for agreed-upon activities

## WHAT TO BRING

- Passport\*\* or Passcard
- Sleeping bag
- Pillow
- Flashlight
- Shower shoes/flip flops
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hand sanitizer
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle
- Work clothes
- Work boots
- Gloves
- Warm jacket
- Wide brim hat
- Hand tools
- Something to share (snacks, music CDs, etc.)
- Bible, journal and pen
- Cash for snacks & souvenirs (small bills)

For minors unaccompanied by parents, Parent Permission Form is required. This form can be downloaded on the Hands of Mercy website at [www.handsofmercy.com](http://www.handsofmercy.com) under Nuts & Bolts.



## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Please conserve water as much as possible by taking short showers and don't let the water spigots run.
- Avoid drinking tap water (brush your teeth with bottled water).
- Given the nature of working in rural parts of Mexico and certain site conditions, it is sometimes difficult to stick to a strict schedule, including meal times, so pack some snacks.
- Parents - your first priority at all times is the health, safety and welfare of your children!
- Please do not touch, play with, or feed the dogs. Some carry diseases that could affect you or your pets at home.
- Please do not give money to anyone who is begging. We are working to meet people's needs in a sustainable manner. Begging encourages the wrong behavior, especially with children.
- Separate trash into different containers: organic scraped into slop buckets, metal and glass to be recycled, plastic and paper to be burned.
- Do not flush toilet paper (a trash can will be provided)
- Be flexible and maintain a servant's heart.
- Strive to represent Christ well, encourage others, look for OTS (Opportunities To Serve).
- Weapons are strictly prohibited in Mexico (construction knives are okay)

**Note on appropriate dress:** *We want to be sensitive to the different cultural practices in Mexico. Dressing modestly is essential for men and women. Avoid sleeveless shirts, exposed midriff, short shorts, tank tops, exposed tattoos and pierced body parts (except ears for women). Women are encouraged to bring one long skirt or dress for ministry activities such as passing out gifts, speaking, attending church, or working with kids. Long pants and modest shorts (knee length) are appropriate for painting and construction activities.*



## FOOD

All meals are included in the trip cost. Many people look forward, with great anticipation, to consuming some of the local fare from various taco stands. On the way down, after a hard day of work or maybe even on the way home, the team will stop and enjoy a taste of Mexico. At Rancho Casitas, the food is very good and served in a “summer camp” style mess hall in an enclosed facility.



## LODGING

You will be staying in very modest accommodations (loft-house) with no heat or electricity. It has a raised bunk bed with a mattress pad, but you will need to bring a sleeping bag or blanket with a pillow. The showers are nice and hot, although we ask that you conserve water. The restrooms are outhouses. Refer to the section on “What to bring”. You should plan as though you were going camping. Remember to dress for the weather forecast in Ensenada, Mexico.



## TRANSPORTATION

Teams will ride in heavy-duty passenger vans which have space for luggage and supplies and provide a safe, comfortable environment for volunteers to interact and get to know each other before they start working. We will make at least one stop in the USA before crossing the border. The team will caravan

across the border in multiple vans during daylight hours for security reasons and stop only at designated stops for fuel and food. You may leave your car parked at Trinity Church or have someone drop you off and pick you up. The only personal vehicle allowed is the tow vehicle for the trailer.

## COSTS

Donation of \$75 per person

This includes food, lodging and transportation.

This is non-refundable and tax-deductible.

Please note: Do not let money be an issue. Make an appointment to speak with the Mission Pastor and he will arrange for partial or even full scholarship. Family discounts available.



## OUR PHILOSOPHY

Due to the language and cultural barriers, we partner with local churches who share the verbal witness of Christ's love and purpose for people. While our loft-house ministry meets the physical needs of people in under-resourced areas of Mexico, the local pastors are meeting their spiritual needs. The Apostle Paul commented:

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow... The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers..."





Let us know how you would like to be involved.  
No task is too small.

**To volunteer, contact:**

**Trinity Church Mexico Ministry**  
Team Leader - Pat Hohl  
(951) 452-8980 or *trooper8@yahoo.com*

**Hands of Mercy**  
**Director HoM USA - Rick Carter**  
(909) 499-6734  
**Director HoM Mexico - Danny VanNes**  
(909) 748-1274 or (909) 499-3185



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