

Mission Focus



Issue 14
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Serving in Mexico

Happy Easter!

How wonderful it is for us to celebrate together the new life given us by the exquisite sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus! New life is springing forth in each of us from the dead, dry places! New life and fresh hope are beginning to bloom and grow! "How wonderful! How marvelous! Is our Savior's love for us!"



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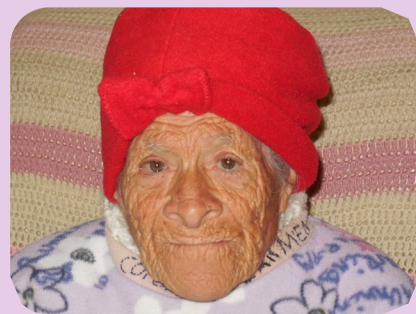
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Play time.



*Senior
Community.*



*Vacation
Bible School.*





Day in the Life

Many of you often ask me what a typical day on the field is like. This is a hard question to answer, since it depends on the season. I would like to share with you what it looks like when a team comes to serve with us for a week.

After much planning and many hours of travel, a team usually arrives to us on a Saturday evening in vans. After unloading, we give an orientation to provide each member with important information about safety and honoring the infrastructure and culture of our site and the people we will be serving. The teams stay for the week in rooms with 6 to 10 bunk beds. They have use of a large kitchen and fellowship hall. We have not had any running water for the past year, so showers are taken using a bucket of water that is hand-carried to the shower stall, where one lifts water by the bowlful to pour over oneself. Toilets are flushed with a hand-carried bucket of water that is poured into the toilet bowl to flush it. All toilet paper is deposited into waste baskets and never flushed down the toilet, as Mexico's infrastructure cannot handle paper products. Though this is hard, we are ever so grateful that we can call a truck to come deliver water to our large storage tank on site. None of this water is potable and must be kept from entering our mouth.

For drinking water we drive to town (about 25 minutes away) to fill 5 gallon jugs called garafones. This water is also used for dishwashing and toothbrushing.

On Sunday, the team spends half the day in church experiencing Mexican culture with lively worship and a translated Bible message. The other half of the day, the members of the team can choose to go to the beach (as the Pacific Ocean is a mile from our site) or often they will go into town to spend time in the open air market.

Monday morning the real work begins. Breakfast is at 7am, personal devotion time is at 8am, and worship begins at 8:30 followed by a message. At 9:45, work crews are assigned. Clean up is at 12:15 and lunch is at 12:30. We meet again at 2pm for VBS orientation and assignments as we prepare to go into a migrant camp or neighborhood to share the love of Jesus. After VBS, we return to our site for dinner at 5:30 and then prepare for the evening ministry. Depending on the day of the week, we may go back to camp to show a Jesus film and play with the kids, or host a youth event at our site - playing soccer or volleyball, serving a meal, and then going into the church for worship and a message. On Wednesday, we all go to the evening church service. Sometimes on other evenings, we make cookies and split into small groups to go visit and pray for families in our little village.



Outdoor sports court.



Youth Center roof completion.



*Pouring the floor for
the Youth Center.*

Day in the Life (cont.) Some weeks, we will have a day of visiting a nursing home to help with work projects and spend time with the seniors who live there. We wash feet, massage hands, play balloon volleyball, work on a craft and play bingo. We always close with worship songs and the laying on of hands and praying for each of the residents.

Work projects include many things such as cleaning bathrooms, painting, building, digging, organizing,, mixing cement, pouring concrete, sweeping, driving the trash trailer to the dump to empty and then set the trash on fire, or doing one of the many other tasks that need to be done.

Some of the work projects that we are involved in right now include building a youth center and a fenced-in sports court for playing soccer and basketball. It has long been a dream of Pastor Rafa and his team to have a place on-site that the youth can gather to experience Christian community through connecting and belonging.

There is a clinic equipped with a basic medical office as well as two dental chairs. It is staffed with a full time nurse who also wears many other hats. The Mexican government sends a doctor to our site one day a week to give free care and medicine to the local community.

There are small dwellings and some designated rooms to house the site leaders and staff. I live in one of the rooms. I use the staff kitchen in the clinic for meal preparation.

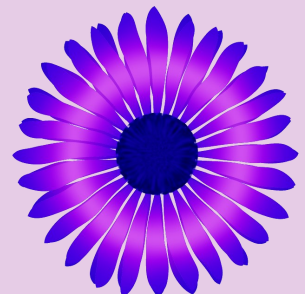
Also on site is the church La Hermosa. They have a fellowship hall and kitchen. There are two Sunday school rooms and a nursery. Currently under construction is the youth center and sports court. There is also the Bible School classroom and library.

All of these things have been built brick by brick over the years by the hands of the many whom have come here to serve.

In all of the ministry we do with the teams from the US and Canada, we always serve side-by-side with the Mexican church volunteers. The heart of our ministry has been to serve the indigenous people who travel north the 2000 miles from southern Mexico. However, we also serve the local community of Mexicans in Northern Baja. In addition to the teams we host from the US and Canada, we recently had a team come from a church in Tijuana to serve with us as well. It truly is a unity of North Americans working together to bring hope and healing to the lost and poor.



*Serving one-another,
praying and playing
together.*



Personal Note

I am experiencing pain in my left knee. I have been to my doctor and had an x-ray and MRI. She referred me to UCSD Ortho. I have an appointment on May 10th for a consult. I have had some physical therapy and continue to do the muscle strengthening exercises that they taught me. This has helped with the greater part of the pain. The MRI showed that I have almost no ACL left and I have several tears in the meniscus. My doctor thinks I will need a knee replacement. I continue to hold out hope for God's healing touch, but this may be the path He is calling me to for healing.

I want to share some of my struggles in this matter. I must be open, honest, vulnerable and authentic with you, so I hope this is not TMI (too much information).

I have always loved hard physical work. It has been what I have leaned on to maintain my physical, mental and emotional health. Since I have lost the ability to engage in strenuous physical activity, I have put on weight. When I walk past a mirror, I am surprised by my image. I feel like I am in someone else's body and I don't like it. This, coupled with the possibility of a total knee replacement, has felt traumatizing and I was having a difficult time processing and accepting that this is where I am at right now. My whole life feels so open-ended.

I continue with my commitment to work with the indigenous people in Mexico. Depending on what comes next, the manner in which I am serving may change, but not for now. I will let you know and keep you updated. I have been and will continue to travel between my post where I serve in Mexico and San Diego visiting doctors.

The good news is that I continue to learn to be thankful in all circumstances. My levels of trust and dependence on Jesus deepen each day. He is so good in all things.

Isaiah 41:10

Do not fear for I am with you: do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

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Ps 46:10 Be still
and know
that I am God.

Bringing hope and healing
to Mexico.