

*Then it came about as they were going along & talking, that behold, there appeared a chariot of fire & horses of fire which separated the two of them, & Elijah went up by a whirlwind to heaven.
2 Kings 2:11*



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GROUP INFORMATION

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JUST SOME NOTES!

We are so excited that you are wanting to come visit us and spend time ministering in areas surrounding Reynosa, Mexico. The areas that we work in are very poor BUT very loving and eagerly awaiting to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If you're flying - McAllen is just 20 minutes away and Harlingen is 35. Either one will be fine. Keep in mind when you fly out we'll need to be there a minimum of 90 minutes before takeoff.

Questions always arise about the safety of working in Mexico (mostly from parents). In our 6 years of mission work we have never been fearful of the neighborhoods or people. When with a team we always come back to the stateside before dark. Our goal is to minister when we know the people will be home. Many of the men may be out for work so it's a day to day decision .

About VBS - I have watched the children as the gospel is presented to them. One thing to keep in mind is to be VERY VISUAL, VERY LITERAL and VERY SELF EXPLANATORY. Some things are easy for us to understand because we have the TV, radio & everyday life to help us understand. These folks rarely have this available & when telling that Moses split the water - whoa! WHAT? So make sure your crafts or stories are basic and easy to understand.

If you would like a PLAY DAY - we can arrange for you to go to Progreso, Mexico for shopping & lunch (on your own). Following we'll head to South Padre Island for an afternoon of swimming at a Family Beach. You may want to consider eating on the way home from the beach as you may just be too tired to cook when you get back to the dorms.

PROJECTS - Perhaps you might be interested in having a work day to paint a house or build a bano? This can be discussed with us before hand & the cost involved to do this. Also, the Mexican ladies are willing to prepare Charro Beans to feed those attending the services - we just have to provide the dollars ahead so they can get to their market.

We consider it a pleasure and a blessing to help you minister to our brothers & sisters in Mexico. We wish we didn't have to ask - **BUT** - if it is at all possible for you to cover our truck fuel expense for the duration of your mission trip (or any pre-trips to wherever getting ready for your trip), this would be greatly

appreciated. We always take our truck in to haul supplies, etc. but it becomes costly for us.

THIS CAN CAUSE PROBLEMS

PLEASE do not make promises to the nationals that you cannot keep. You may have the best intentions in the world but they could still fall through. When you tell them 'maybe we can build you a church' or 'we'll send some money' or 'we'll send money for presents for the kids'...you are setting yourself up for a broken heart when it doesn't go through. It would be better for them to be surprised than to build their hopes up.

Offer to pray for their needs but make no promises. Refer to above paragraph. Why do I go into such detail.....we've seen it over & over & really want to make sure the Lord leads rather than our emotional being.

Current as of
(*1/1/12

HOUSING RENTAL

There are several possibilities for dorm housing in the Donna, TX area - with easy access to Reynosa, Mexico. Each is in good condition, excellent locations, reasonable rates. You will be responsible for your own bedding, towels, food, etc. I can do the footwork for you but here's the terms:

*FLAME OF TRUTH (732 Eldora Road, Donna, TX 78537)

956-464-4631

*Girls Dorm will sleep 18 (restroom inside)

*Boys Dorm 14

*\$50.00 non refundable deposit to confirm dates

*\$30.00 per day for large awesome kitchen/eating/worship area

*\$6.50 per day per person for housing

*Washer/Dryer available for \$1.00/.75 a load

*Boys/Girls showers & toilets very close walking distance.

*Country atmosphere, volleyball, calm environment.

*These dorms are 10 minutes away from us.

*RV trailers are also on the premises, various sizes, for \$20.00 per day.

Most sleep 2 to 3, one larger house/trailer is \$25.00 per day and sleeps 6.

NEW LIFE (Alamo, TX)

956-787-8055

*One building houses the Girls (16) & Boys (16). NICE

bathrooms/washer/dryer/kitchen/eating areas. Kitchen & eating area smaller than the Flame dorms but fine.

*Also has 3 bedroom apartments with living room & kitchen available for \$28.00 a day for the whole thing. (not per person but one price)

*\$100.00 non refundable deposit to confirm dates

*\$12.00 per day per person

*Country atmosphere, calm environment.

*Dorms are 25 minutes away from us.

VALLEY BAPTIST RETREAT (Mission, TX)

956-585-4393 or 956-968-3161

*Large campgrounds with multiple areas for dorms.

*\$12.00 per person per day. No kitchen available. The meals they have available (not included in base price) tend to be a bit expensive.

Generally we wouldn't be back for their supper meal.

*Non refundable deposit & contract required.

*This is a last choice as it's 45 minutes away from us.

VAN RENTAL

As of March 3, 2008 these prices were current for 15 passenger Van Rental. Call to find out their best arrangements but get it in writing!
December 2010 we rented from Enterprise & it came out to \$175.00 a day.

ADVANTAGE - 956-631-7900 McAllen, TX Airport
956- 430-8677 Harlingen, TX Airport

\$104.00 per 24 hour day (limit 200 miles)

\$ 26.00 per day for Mexico insurance

Credit card required.

We did have trouble with them honoring their verbal agreement between our team leader & their company. SO TAKE NOTE - get it in writing!

BUDGET - 956-686-5394 McAllen, TX Airport
956- 507-4003 Harlingen, TX Airport

\$109.00 per 24 hour day (limit 200 miles)

\$ 25.00 per day for Mexico insurance

Credit card required.

ENTERPRISE-956- 430-8643 Harlingen, TX Airport
956- 687-8428 McAllen, TX Airport

\$57.20 per day with \$58.77 in misc. taxes to add to final total. Unlimited mileage in US + 200 miles in Mexico each day. Then .20 per mile for additional mileage in Mexico.

\$34.99 per day for Mexico insurance to be purchased from Enterprise.

Credit card required.

If you're flying in - we will pick up the rental vans & pick you up.

The best advice I can give you is to get everything in writing once you've made agreements with the van rental business.

JUST A NOTE: Perhaps you would be willing to use your van/bus to go back & forth across the border. Many of the insurance companies I've checked out allows you to go up to 25 miles across the border & still receive coverage. Talk to your company & see what they say. Border insurance is also available at a very reasonable rate for the time you are here.

PASSPORT UPDATE

Note: Beginning June 1, 2009, U.S. and Canadian citizen children **UNDER AGE 16 arriving by land or sea from contiguous territory may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.**

Beginning June 1, 2009, U.S. and Canadian citizen children **UNDER AGE 19 arriving by land or sea from contiguous territory and traveling with a school group, religious group, social or cultural organization, or sports team, may also present an original or copy of his or her birth certificate, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Naturalization Certificate, or a Canadian Citizenship Card.**

The group should be prepared to present a letter on organizational letterhead with the following information:

- The name of the group and supervising adult;**
- A list of the children on the trip, and the primary address, phone number, date of birth, place of birth, and name of at least one parent or legal guardian for each child; and**
- A written and signed statement of the supervising adult certifying that he or she has obtained parental or legal guardian consent for each participating child.**

DAILY SCHEDULE

Our day starts early with breakfast & following that a chapel service. When the cooks plan their shopping list be sure to include the goodies for lunch. PB/Jelly (PB/mustard is my favorite!) and/or lunchmeat sandwiches are standard lunch fare for the mission field. It's up to you if you want to add chips or cookies. We'll bring a cooler of ice water. After chapel everyone can make their lunch to take with them to Mexico. From experience folks eat theirs before we hit the border. Often we'll be so caught up in what we're doing we forget to eat (unless your health demands you eat) or groups give theirs away.

Depending on your group, the options are wide open as to what type of mission opportunity you plan! From VBS in the parks, building a simple house, evangelizing door to door or in large services - it's really up to you to decide where the Lord is leading.

Keep in mind that when I mention VBS, it won't be the style you're used to in the States. Many times we lay out a large tarp for the children to sit on. From puppet shows, telling stories & passing out color sheets or dramas...to others going door to door inviting others to join us for a preaching service. **NOTE:** A thought occurred to me yesterday as I was sitting in the Sunday School class at our Dump church. Recently I found some teaching material that included very visual pictures. Josephina was teaching about Moses & the waters parting & the kids were enthralled as they studied the picture during her lesson. **VISUALS!** When your kids are preparing their lessons, if they could have pictures or some type of visual that will explain the story along with the teaching. I've heard this story taught before to another group (with no visuals). Imagine growing up in the dump with no electric, TV, story books & then someone tells you how Moses parted the sea. Can't even visualize it. We can because we have that stuff in our heads. **END OF NOTE!** At the end of each service we will pray (with individuals if possible), pass out rice or beans & bibles for the adults & candy for the children.

Testimonies - Be prepared to share your testimony of how you came to know the Lord as your Savior. Consider that many of the folks you'll be speaking to have no idea what church camp is, the meaning of walking an aisle, or something that points directly to a U.S. experience. Tell how you knew you didn't have Jesus, How you figured out you needed Jesus and How you got Jesus. This isn't a magic formula but things to keep in mind. Lord willing, **EVERYONE** needs to be prepared to give theirs. Consider using Rick Warren's tips on giving a testimony.

HOW TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS THROUGH YOUR TESTIMONY

by Rick Warren

God has put a life message within you. When you became a believer you also became God's messenger. God wants to speak to the world through you. Paul said, "... we speak the truth before God, as messengers of God." You may feel you don't have anything to share, but that's the Devil trying to keep you silent. You have a storehouse of experiences that God wants to use to bring others into his family. The Bible says, "Those who believe in the Son of God have the testimony of God in them." (1 John 5:10a GW)

Your testimony is the story of how Christ has made a difference in your life. Peter tells us that we were chosen by God "to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you." (1 Peter 2:9 MSG) This is the essence of witnessing - simply reporting your personal experiences with the Lord. In a courtroom, a witness isn't expected to argue the case, prove the truth, or press for a verdict; that is the job of attorneys. Witnesses just tell what happened to them. Jesus said, "You will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8 NIV) He did not say, "You must be my attorney." He wants you to tell your story to others. Sharing your testimony is an essential part of your mission on Earth.

First, it is unique. There's no other story just like yours, so only you can share it, and if you don't, it will be lost forever. You may not be a Bible scholar, but you are the authority on your life, and it's hard to argue with personal experience. Actually, your personal testimony is more effective than a sermon because unbelievers see pastors as paid salesmen but see you as a satisfied customer, so they give you more credibility. Personal stories are also easier to relate to than principles, and people love to hear them; they capture our attention, and we remember them longer. Unbelievers would probably lose interest if you started quoting theologians, but they have a natural curiosity about experiences they've never had. Shared stories build a relational bridge that Jesus can walk across from your heart to theirs.

Another value of your testimony is that it bypasses intellectual defenses. Many people who won't accept the authority of the Bible will listen to a humble, personal story. That's why on six different occasions Paul used his testimony to share the Gospel instead of quoting Scripture. (Acts 22 to Acts 26) The Bible says, "Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you, but do it with gentleness and respect." (1 Peter 3:15-16 TEV)

The best way to "be ready" is to write out your testimony and then memorize the main points.

Divide it into four parts:

- What my life was like before I met Jesus?
- How did I realize I needed Jesus?
- How did I commit my life to Jesus?
- What difference has Jesus made in my life?

Of course, you have many other testimonies besides your salvation story. You have a story for every experience where God has helped you. You should make list of all the problems, circumstances, and crises that God has brought you through. Then be sensitive and use the story that your unbelieving friend will best relate to.

Questions To Consider (Ideas for sharing a brief testimony)

1. **The Story Of Your Life**—Tell us a little bit about yourself (birthplace, parents/siblings, interests, etc.).
2. **The Story Of Your Faith**—What was your life like before knowing God personally? How did you come to know Jesus in your life? How are things different today?
3. **Coming To Grace**--When you moved into this area, how you ended up at this new church, what you like best, why you stayed, got involved, etc
4. **Stories Of Grace**—What has God been teaching you through his Word? How has He been providing for you, your family, etc? What have you learned about serving God, living out your faith in daily life, or loving others? How do you hope to continuing growing in faith and serving God in the future? What plans or desires do you have?

NOTE: Remember to keep in mind when you're on a foreign mission trip what I said about them not understanding some of our U.S. experiences.

Personal Necessities to Bring

- *Photo ID for Border and original Birth Certificate (not adults) OR passport
- *Bible
- *Toiletries
- *Pillow
- *Sleeping Bag or Sheets and Blanket (dorm)
- *Towels and Wash Clothes
- *Flashlight
- *Bug Spray/Sunscreen
- *Gum/Candy
- *Personal Medicine
- *Beach Towel (if going to South Padre)
- *Camera
- *Money - for Cokes in Mexico or shopping in Progreso
- *Baby Wipes/Hand Sanitizer - to clean up with in Mexico
- *Alarm Clock
- *Flash Drive - for downloading everyone's pictures

Dress Code for All Camps

- *Tennis Shoes (Bring comfortable shoes you don't mind getting dirty or muddy - you might bring 2 pairs. We highly recommend tennis or closed toe shoes for Mexico).
- *Flip Flops - for shower
- *Girls - Jeans, Capri's, Skirts, T Shirt
- *Guys - Jeans, T Shirt
- *Swimsuit - Girls - conservative one or 2 piece
(2-piece requires a dark T Shirt for a cover up).
Boys - no Speedo's!
- *Shorts - decent length, to be worn in camp only or to the beach/shopping

NO spaghetti straps, no low cut tops, muscle tank tops, short shorts or shirts that expose the belly button.

Come dressed to represent Christ. Please advise your kids to dress conservatively and if you see someone who needs to change - ask them to do so!

Suggested Group Items to Bring

The following are items that your group might consider bringing to use as outreach tools. Room in the vehicles is limited and it is much easier to get small items into Mexico when crossing the border. During your visit you are going to meet someone you would like to give something to or work one-on-one with and these items are great for that purpose.

- *Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, comb/brush, etc.)
- *Fingernail Polish
- *Hard Candy (individually wrapped)
- *Tools (hammers, pliers, screw drivers, etc.)
- *Bicycle inner tubes/patches
- *Small toys (similar to the toys given out in Happy Meals)
- *Soccer Balls
- *Flashlights
- *Sun Visors
- *Kites
- *Pencils, Ink Pens, Notebooks/Backpacks
- *Spanish Color Books
- *Crayons/VBS Supplies
- *Bubbles
- *Jump Ropes
- *Tarps - shade or a roof
- *Can Openers
- *Rice/beans/flour/oil/sugar/coffee

WE ENCOURAGE GROUP MEMBERS TO LEAVE THESE AT HOME!

***CELL PHONES
CD & DVD PLAYERS
IPOD PLAYERS
LAPTOPS***

A CELL PHONE CAN BE A NECESSITY BUT PLEASE KEEP IT FOR EARLY IN THE MORNING OR AFTER YOUR SERVICES.

***THIS WEEK IS FOR FOCUSING ON THE LORD
AND NOT ON OURSELVES!***

Medical Information

(To Be Kept With the Sponsors)

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____ Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Emergency Name & Number _____

Doctor Name _____ Phone _____

Insurance Company _____

Phone Number _____ Policy Number _____

Medication Intake _____

Allergies _____

Diabetic ____ yes ____ no

GROUP INFORMATION FORM

GROUP/CHURCH NAME _____

CONTACT PERSON _____

EASIEST PHONE TO REACH YOU BY _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

WEBSITE _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

FLYING? _____ DRIVING? _____

½ DAY PROGRESO, MX SHOPPING AND 1/2 DAY SOUTH PADRE ___ YES ___ NO

APPROXIMATE GROUP SIZE _____ MALE _____ FEMALE _____ ADULTS _____

TYPE OF MISSION TRIP: (check all that apply) _____ EVANGELISM _____ CONSTRUCTION
_____ VBS _____ OTHER (explain)

ARE WE ABLE TO TAKE YOUR VEHICLE INTO MEXICO? ___ YES ___ NO

BUDGET WORKSHEET

(once you get here)

DORM COST

(per person)

No. of folks (_____) X cost per day (_____)

KITCHEN RENTAL

(if applicable, divided per person)

No. of days (_____) X \$30.00 per day

VAN RENTAL

(if applicable)

Per mile (_____) X miles per day (_____) X days in MX (_____)

FUEL FOR RENTAL

(if applicable)

MEXICO INSURANCE

(if applicable)

SPECIAL PROJECTS

(if applicable)(prices to be discussed)

*Build a Mexican house (\$ _____)

*Build a Bano (\$ _____)

*Paint a House (\$ _____)

*Rice and/or Bean distribution (\$ _____)

*Charro Beans (\$ _____)

*Spanish N.T. Bible distribution (\$1.00 each)

DORM DEPOSIT

FUEL COST FOR LIKE ELIJAH MINISTRY

(for the trips back in forth to MX with group)

MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES

(10% for any unplanned emergencies/activities/etc)

TEAM FOOD EXPENSES

TOTAL COSTS!
