

Accept the challenge...



E-VAN Mission Team

Central Mexico

2007

Who we are, Who we help, & Who is invited

Evangelical Ventures and Assistance Network is a mission team project lead by missionaries Tim and Melissa Meyer have been working in Central Mexico in church development since 1995. Currently we are partnering with Vineyard Christian Fellowship churches in the state of Zacatecas, Ethnic Group Ministries (Ministerios a Grupos Etnicos) that is working in the Sierra Madres to minister to the unreached people groups of the Tepehuan and Huichol Indian Tribes, and Good Shepherd Baptist in Fresnillo. We welcome all evangelical churches that desire to serve and share the Gospel to others through us and our local partners.

Our goal is to encourage and empower native ministries as they share the saving grace of Jesus Christ. We seek to do this by outreach evangelism, project work teams, Christian literature, project funding, and resource development.

Locations of Ministry

Currently there are two types of cross-culture ministry you may participate in. The first type is urban ministry in towns or cities in the state of Zacatecas with the Mexican people and the second type is rural ministry in the Sierra Madres with the Tepehuan and Huichol Indian Tribes.

Zacatecas is largely an agriculture state with many small farming communities and villages. Much of the geography is made up of plateaus, mesas, and valleys within the Sierra Madres. The predominate religion in the area is Catholicism with less than .05% claim to be Evangelical Christian. The largest city in the state is Fresnillo with almost 183,000 inhabitation followed by the capitol city, Zacatecas. Groups may serve in one or two ministry locations during their trip to Zacatecas.

Mountain tribal ministry may be the experience for you. At an altitude of almost 10,000 ft. within the pine forests of the Sierra Madres live the Tepehuan Indian Tribe. Their second language is Spanish. Presently there are two native Christian camp sites among these people. The first site, Cienega de Las Esperanzas, is a growing Christian community and the second, Tabernaculo de Emanuel, is the location of the Native Bible School. This camp, five hours from Fresnillo, has become a stopping point for native travelers in the mountains like the Tepehuan and Huichol Indians and is the location where our teams primarily serve.

Strategy of Outreaches

Our ministry strategy is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed. We seek to be an instrument of God to reach the spiritual need of those around us while also meeting practical and physical needs.

During the weekend of your stay you will be able to meet local Christians and be an encouragement to them in one of the Saturday Children's Bible club where your team will prepare lunch for the neighborhood children and give a visually illustrated children's class. On Sunday you will have the opportunity to attend and share testimonies in a local church service.

During the week you will also be able to share your faith with unsaved children, youth, and adults through "outreaches." Outreaches are special meetings or events that usually consist of ministry over several days in a particular area.

Community Outreach In this outreach the mornings are used to invite people in the area, make contacts, and share the love of God in a practical ways through grocery give outs, close give-outs, community service, and/or a medical or dental clinic. In the evenings we invite our new contact friends and their families to hear a Gospel presentation (usually at or near a local church). The outreach meetings usually consists of music, testimonies, visual representations (mimes, dramas, or object lessons), a brief Gospel message, and prayer ministry by the team. Sometimes the gatherings attract many children so a part of your team should be ready to do children's activities. This may include reading a visually illustrated Bible story in Spanish or using a translator.

Other children's activities that you may consider are simple games, figure balloon making, face painting, blowing bubbles, Gospel color bracelets, etc. Outreach activity will provide a positive encounter with new people in the community and contact lists will be given to our local church partners for follow-up visitation.

Gospel Film Outreach- Gospel films bring variety to an outreach and are helpful when smaller teams may be short-handed and may not have illustrated material.

Construction Outreach- For special projects teams may help build a local church, training facilities, or ministry clinic. You should be ready to participate in evangelistic meetings although the majority of your time will be working on your designated project. Check to see if tools and possibly extra funding may be required to achieve project goals.

Medical/ Dental Outreach- Qualified doctors or dentist may minister in needy areas when sponsored by a Mexican doctor. Medicine other than personal and small quantities of non-prescription drugs is restricted from importation. Medical teams should assess their project goals, the medicine required, and raise funds to buy medication in Mexico.

Park, Plaza, Theater Outreach- For larger productions and with advance notice parks and plaza permits can be gotten at usually no cost. Theaters can be used at a reasonable cost. These productions may include a music concert, a full length drama with costuming, a conference, etc. Funds must be raise prior to the event for calculated expenses.

Children's VBS Outreach- For those who like to work with Children a vacation Bible school format may work out well. All materials should be provided by your team and children's school schedules should be considered.

Trip Accommodations The recommended group size is 10-20 team members.

Provide is:

Lodging or Hotel for up to *7 nights (extended an extra night form 2006 trips)

Breakfast, Lunch and Dinners

* Two restaurant meals

* Two tourist attraction tickets

Mission Outreach name tag

* Mission Orientation notebook

* Official Mission T-shirt

A mission guide and translator

Local transportation and drivers

Offerings for assistants

Purified drinking water

Outreach Equipment

Materials or items for projects and outreaches

* = New 2007 mission items

Trip Costs

For both the Zacatecas Trip costs and the Mountain Tribal Ministry the cost is the same. Total mission trip and outreach costs = \$500 USD per person for one week

Want an extended team trip?

*New in 2007 \$800 USD per person for two weeks

Outreach Funds: Approximately 20% of your funds go to outreach which may include food for the needy, Christian literature, work projects materials, children's material, and other associated expenses.

Extra nights: For each night over 7 nights \$45 a night should be added to your trip costs per person

Private room fees: Trip prices are based on 4 people to a room. For people staying by themselves or married couples wanting a room to themselves, \$50 USD per person should be added for the week.

Discounts: Senior pastors and/or senior pastor wives attending the mission trip receive a 10% discount on trip cost. Children attending with one or both parents 16 years or younger receive a 10% discount on trip. For early team payment at least two months prior to your arrival you will be reimbursed the \$100 deposit.

R& R

The capital city of Zacatecas (founded by the Spanish in 1548) and the city of Fresnillo (founded in 1554) provide an atmosphere of traditional Mexican culture and Spanish colonial architecture. There are many fine restaurants and activities to choose from on your leisure day. Here are activities to choose from:

1. La Bufa- The hallmark crest of Zacatecas which overlooks the city. It includes monuments, a museum on Poncho Villa and the Revolution, tombs of men of renown, a temple, food and souvenirs. Although you can drive to the top some groups opt to take the Teleferico.
2. Teleferico- This is an Italian made, enclosed, cable-car that takes you over the historical downtown and up to La Bufa.
3. The Historical Downtown
4. Mine Tour- The Zacatecas Mine of Eden or the Fresnillo Proaño Mine and Ecological Park tour explain how mines played the primary role in the cities foundation and give insight to early mining days.
5. Art and History Museums in Zacatecas
6. The Archeological Zone "La Quemada"- About a 45 minute drive out of Zacatecas "La Quemada" was home to an ancient pre-Hispanic civilization. Today you can visit the museum, hike the seven level ruins, and picnic. This trip will require most of the day.
7. Plateros- Five miles outside of Fresnillo, Plateros is said to be the second most "holy spot" in Mexico for the Catholic religion and houses the "Santo Niño de Atocha". Get a perspective on the culture and understand more of the spiritual need in the region. There is also an open market.

Transportation

When deciding your transportation to your mission field find the balance that best suits your team. Consider the factors of travel time, costs, and convenience.

Flying

For those flying to your destination the Zacatecas international airport is closest to the ministry locations (airport code ZCL). For our Sierra Madre outreaches it is advisable that you fly into Zacatecas. If you will be serving in the local area here you may want to check to see if cheaper flights may be available to a larger city nearby. The following is airport information that may be useful:

<u>Airport</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Time by land to Zacatecas</u>	<u>Direct flight schedules to and from Zacatecas</u>
Zacatecas		1/2 hour	Chicago (ORD) We,Fri,Su 6:05am Arrival Tu,Th,Sa 9:30pm Departure
			Dallas (DFW) We,Fri,Su 5:05 am Arrival Mo,Th, Sa 10:40 pm Departure
			Denver (DEN) Friday 2:50pm Arrival Friday 3:40pm Departure
			Los Angeles(LAX) Mo,Tu,Th,Sa 6:00am Arrival Mo,Th,Sa,Su 7:05am Departure Mo,We,Fr,Su 9:30pm Departure
			Oakland (OAK) Wed, Sun 5:05am Arrival Wed, Sun 8:55pm Departure
Aguascalientes	AGU	2 hours	San Luis Potosi SLP 3 hours
Leon	BJX	4 hours	Saltillo SLW 5 hours
Monterrey	MTY	6 hours	Nuevo Laredo NLD 9 hours
Laredo	LRD	10 hours	McAllen MFE 11 hours
San Antonio	SAT	13 hours	Houston HOU 16 hours
Dallas	DFW	20 hours	Lake Charles LCH 18 hours

For those wanting to fly personal non-commercial aircraft to the area please contact me for more information.

Bus or Shuttle

For those flying into cities other than Zacatecas you may taxi from the airport to the *central* (bus station). There you may buy a first class bus ticket to your destination which will be the city of Fresnillo or Zacatecas.

For those who like convenience you may arrange for us to shuttle you to and from your airport or place of entry. We will be your guide, assisting with paperwork, translation, travel, and finding bathrooms and places to eat. Our prices include the round trip, gas, toll, and parking fees. The following prices apply to each person traveling and are in U.S. dollars for groups of 10 people or more. For groups less than ten people 12% should be added to the shuttle fee for each person less than ten, but groups should not be less than 5 people.

Round trip shuttle fees from point of departure to Fresnillo or Zacatecas:

Aguascalientes	\$35	Laredo	\$145
San Luis Potosi	\$45	McAllen	\$150
Leon	\$60	San Antonio	\$200
Saltillo	\$72	Houston	\$250
Monterrey	\$84	Lake Charles	\$275
Nuevo Laredo	\$132	Dallas	\$300

Reservations and Mission Trip Payment

Step 1 After confirming available trip dates please send by wire transfer or check (payable to: E-VAN, P.O. Box 1847, Beeville, TX 78104) a \$100 team deposit to reserve your mission trip dates. Only teams with reservations will have secured dates. If team payment is sent two month prior to arrival you deposit will be refunded.

Step 2 Confirm by e-mail or phone the total cost amount of trip accommodations based on the number of team members. Include any extra housing fees or shuttle fees if applicable.

Step 3 Please send by wire transfer trip accommodation funds and outreach funds at least one month before your arrival. A \$10 late fee per person should be include if funds are sent 21 days or less prior to your arrival. Send payment to:

Account Name: E-VAN (WOL)
Routing Number: 113-122-655
Account Number: 242-4584

Prosperity Bank (Do Not mail funds)
100 S. Washington St.
Beeville, TX 78102

Step 4 Please verify the following by e-mail or phone at least one month prior to your arrival:

1. Amount and date of wire transfer
2. Name and age of team members
3. Number of married couples on team
4. Number of men and women on the team

E-VAN Missions Team

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Rules & Helps

1. Water- Do not drink the tap water. Drink and brush your teeth with bottled water.
2. Food- When eating out be selective. Although certain street food stands may have a good reputation it would be best to avoid them. Wash your hands before meals. Notify the leaders if you are sick so preventative measures can be taken.
3. Toilets- Due to weak sewage systems do not throw toilet paper in the toilet but rather in the waste basket nearby. The toilet or sewage lines stop up very easy.
4. Leaving the Group- When leaving the site of the group notify the leadership and never go by yourself. Do not make plans on your own without checking with the leadership. Do not invite nationals to your room. They may visit with you in group settings and if you wish to invite them for a scheduled meal only do so after approving it with a leader. If you are invited to someone's house only agree after leaders have approved plans.
5. Serve- Seek to serve each other, the churches, and to the lost.
6. Culture- It is interesting to see other people's perspective on life and their approach to tasks. Culture issues many times have a variety of influences including social, religious, and economic. During your visit I encourage you to be able to better understand the culture but since the culture has evolved over centuries we should not expect immediate change unless prompted by the power of the Holy Spirit. We should not be critical or make fun of people or situations that we do not fully understand (regardless we shouldn't).
7. Be Sensitive- During outreaches we find that foreigners spur interest. Many positive visits or conversations have come about through a foreigner's presence. For the most part Mexicans respect their neighbors to the north and are interested to hear what they have come to share. When talking to non-believers political issues may become a stumbling block for them hearing the Gospel, so please avoid sensitive issues.
8. Dress- We all are visitors here and want to attract positive attention, not negative. For this reason we should act, speak and dress modestly. We should not be the stereotypical loud obnoxious gringos. During outreach comfortable pants and T-shirts are fine. During free time at the facilities or on your free day you may wear modest walking-type shorts. Please do not wear tank tops, see-through clothing, controversial symbols, or expose the stomach or belly button. When in doubt ask your group leader. For those going to Tribal ministries no shorts are allowed.
9. Testimony- No use of drugs, tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or profanity are allowed during your stay. Dating is not allowed during your ministry trip. Guys and Girls should have fellowship in group areas and are not allowed in each other's rooms. Cross culture romantic relationships are discouraged but after seeking God should a post-mission trip liking develop you should seek Godly counsel from cross culture ministers and your local church leaders.
10. Ministry- We believe that the Holy Spirit uses people cross-culturally in unique ways

(ex. Bible). There may be times that you are praying for someone without an interpretation, although an interpreter is preferred. Remember that it is God that does the work and understand all languages and the heart. When you see needs and problems pray on such issues rather than criticize.

11. Needs of Others- Physical needs in the poor neighborhoods are many times the first needs we recognize. While these are important and our ministry seeks practical ways to meet these (Saturday feedings, etc.) the greatest need is Spiritual. We do not want to cause a situation of unfairness, favoritism, or “out-do” the local ministry. We believe that Spiritual health fosters social justice. If a beggar asks for money you may give but are not obligated.

12. Needs of Ministries- We encourage each person or church to get more involved in missions as the Lord leads. There are many ministers and church projects that need help but you should only do so with sensitivity and as the Lord leads you. Our goal is to facilitate ministry without making it overly dependent on outside recourses and therefore become culturally irrelevant. Please talk to one of the cross-culture ministers about how you can best help a ministry or minister. If help and plans are not clearly communicated both the giver and the recipient may be disappointed with time.

13. Issues- For personal conflicts, problems, or questions you should first pray about the issue. If it is conflict with another person you should talk directly to the individual involved to resolve the matter in love. If it is a leadership issue talk to the leader that brought you and is in charge of your group. If need be he will talk to the missions team coordinator, and if further counsel is needed then one or more local pastors will be sought out.

Q & A

1. *What should I bring?*

Trip Gear- Medical release form if applicable, Bible, journal notebook, pen, testimonies, ministry aids, sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, toiletry items, sleeping bag, small pillow, shampoo, camera, film, batteries, clothes, jacket, comfortable walking shoes, glasses/ contact lenses with solution, travel documents (certified birth certificate, drivers license, and photo ID or passport), plastic bags for dirty clothes, medication if needed, money for one meal on free day (\$6-\$12), snacks, church offerings, and souvenirs).

Mountain Tribal Ministry extras- Flash light, warm clothing, water bottle with a strap, battery powered alarm clock, snacks, small backpack, matches, rain jacket, hand wipes, toilet paper, personal first aid kit., towel, and bedding.

2. *Is there something I could bring to help the ministries?* Yes, ministry donations are always needed. You may bring clean give-away clothes and shoes, toys, prizes, games, balls, school supplies, candy, balloons, crayons, hygiene items, towels, blankets, Spanish Bibles, Spanish tracts, Spanish children/ discipleship material, portable musical instruments, sound equipment, and medical equipment. You may want to check ministry needs before coming. Each person is allowed \$50 dollars by land of non-taxable items, besides their personal items. By plane each person is allowed to bring up to \$1000 of non-taxable items, excluding personal items. Once the \$50 or \$1000 limit is passed the remaining amount may be taxed 17%.

3. *Does your ministry accept interns?* Yes, once a person has come on a short-term

mission trip they may apply to join the 10 week E-VAN Corps internship program. Request the E-VAN Corps information sheet and application.

4. *What is the weather like and how should I dress?* The weather here is mild and dry. A jacket is recommended for the evenings and mornings but it also gets fairly hot during the summer days. The rainy season is normally July-August and it tends to get cold at night. The people in the area are generally more conservative in their dress. Few people wear shorts and during ministry days we ask that you wear pants.

5. *Can I get money when I get there?* Yes, there are ATM machines that you may use or you may change your dollars, Canadian currency, or traveler's checks at one of the many banks. Remember when buying you get a better exchange using pesos, so you may want to make sure you have enough for travel, the visa fee, and food until you arrive at your destination. In larger stores and restaurants major credit cards are accepted.

6. *What paperwork and fees do we need to be aware of coming into Mexico?* For those flying in your visa fee and information is included in your plane ticket. You should have a passport and general I.D. For those coming by land you will need to go to the "migracion" office to apply for a tourist visa. You should have an original or certified copy of your birth certificate or Passport, and a driver's license (additional I.D. may be helpful such as a voter's registration). Children who are considered minors need a birth certificate and a notarized permission letter from both parents if they are not traveling with the child. Current visas fees are approx. \$25 USD per person.

7. *How do we register our vehicle when driving in?* Once you have been given a tourist visa copy the visa, your two I.D.s, and the original title or vehicle registration that must be in the driver's name. If the vehicle is not paid off, is a rental, or a church vehicle you need a notarized letter from the bank, rental agency, or church saying the driver can take it into Mexico. They will want to see that you have full insurance coverage in Mexico for the time you will be there. Once you have your copies go to the vehicle registration window. They will look at your original paperwork and take the copies. You will need to present a major credit card in the driver's name that will be charged approx. \$27 USD (the receipt will be in pesos). Once done you will be given a registration form with a sticker that should be placed on your front windshield.