

# Mexico Caravan Ministries

## *Leader's Check-list – Weeklong Groups*

### ❑ Give this material to someone who is making the trip

We want to be certain that someone who is coming on the Mexico Caravan Ministries (MCM) trip gets this material. If you are not making the trip yourself, please pass this material on to the one(s) who will be the on-site leaders in Mexico. Once groups arrive in Tijuana, we are often met with blank stares followed by “oh, they never told us that.” Lack of information makes the adjustments that much harder. Our intent is to minimize the shock that is part of entering and working in another culture by providing those who are coming with adequate information.

### ❑ Understand our philosophy

It is important that you understand the purpose of this trip so that you can accurately communicate it to those on your team. Though there is opportunity to minister to others through building shelters and interacting with children, those activities are secondary. The greatest benefit derived from coming to Mexico will be what God does in the lives of Caravan participants. We are a mobilization ministry. Our focus is to present God’s plan for worldwide missions and how he wants us to participate in that plan. The challenges will be pointed and the teachings direct. It is not meant to be an adventurous vacation or even primarily a service project, but a time when you come ready as a learner to seek and to listen to God. The more your team focuses on listening rather than building or “ministering” - the more you will benefit from the trip.

### ❑ Determine length of your trip

We accept groups for duration of one to six days. During the spring and summer, we only take weeklong groups. All one-day groups are expected to attend the morning teaching session and therefore are required to be at our facility by 7:30 a.m.

*Note for weeklong groups:* Building days will be Monday through Thursday. Friday will be a structured debriefing and service day which will consist of additional debriefing time, prayer walks, cultural education and neighborhood service.

### ❑ Confirm your reservations

If you haven’t already, send in the dorm fee, which also serves as your deposit. You may register in writing, phone or by email – however, your dates will not be reserved until we have received the deposit. The dorm fee is \$10.00 person/night or \$50 a person for weeklong groups.

### ❑ Make the trip

As a first step, we recommend that for those who haven’t been here to send at least one of your leaders to Tijuana to see the ministry. It is hard to lead somewhere you have never been.

□ **Take care of trip logistics – these include:**

**Travel**

- Transportation: You are responsible for transporting your own team into and around Tijuana. Vans are better than cars and busses. We strongly recommend that buses be a last resort. Please be aware that the terrain is really rough. You will be working in teams of 8-15 people and each team must be able to travel independently. If you fly into San Diego, you can rent vans. We recommend that you reserve early for spring and summer as rentals book fast. Local rental agencies include Bob Baker Ford (619-297-3106) Drew Ford (619-464-7777) Pearson Ford (619-287-8877) and Enterprise (619-294-3313). Weekly rental fees range from \$550 to \$625 for 12 or 15 passenger vans. This price range does not include taxes or insurance. Be sure that the rental company understands you will be driving in Mexico and that you'll need Mexican insurance.
- Travel to Tijuana: If you would like assistance getting to the dormitory, please plan on meeting a MCM staff member at the Mex-Insur at the I-805 and "E" Street exit in Chula Vista, California. We will contact you to arrange the actual time. For weeklong groups, please plan on meeting no later than 4:00 pm Sunday afternoon.

**Lodging**

- Lodging in San Diego: For weeklong groups - if you get into San Diego on Saturday or before, or if you plan on staying beyond noon Saturday following your time in Tijuana, you'll need to make your own overnight accommodations. A local travel agent on your end can help you with that.

**Meals**

- Breakfast – Please keep it simple – e.g. cereal, juice, rolls/muffins, fruit, etc.
- Lunch – Most of the Mexican families will provide lunch for the group at your work site. However, for some families the expense is too great so you will need to prepare a sack lunch to eat at the work site. In this situation, please plan on an extra few lunches for the family you build for and for the staff members leading your team. Unfortunately, we will not know if the family will provide a lunch until the morning of the work day so it is best to have lunch fixings on hand for one of your teams. Note: Please bring wipes or hand sanitizer to clean hands on the work site. There may not be washing water available.
- Dinner – Please plan on eating out at local restaurants or taco stands. The staff will be happy to provide you with their recommendations. For budget purposes, \$7.00 person/meal should be sufficient for dinner out. Cash will be required for your evening meals – U.S. or Mexican currency is acceptable – small bills are best.
- Water – Sufficient bottled water will be provided for your stay in Tijuana. Please bring your own water bottle.
- Shopping – Plan on buying the necessary groceries (including disposable cups, plates and utensils) for breakfast and lunch – either in the U.S. or at a supermarket in Tijuana. Anything you need to get during the week can be purchased in the El Florido area. For budgeting purposes figure on about \$12 person/day for food, including your dinner. Most large supermarkets in Tijuana will accept MasterCard or Visa.
- A stove, coffee maker, microwave and refrigerators are available for your use.

## □ **Budget**

Start building your budget and determining your per-person costs. A budget sheet has been provided for you assistance.

**Mexico Caravan Ministries** – There are two costs to participate in Mexico Caravan Ministries. First is our dorm fee - \$10.00 person/night or \$50 a person for weeklong groups (please see “confirm your reservations”). In addition to our dorm fee, our building fee is \$750.00 per shelter (or per two roofs – at our discretion). Divide the total amount of building funds you can contribute by 750 and that’s how many shelters we will plan to have you build. A group of 10-15 people can comfortably complete a shelter in a day. We need to know the number of shelters and have your building funds in hand no later than two weeks before you arrive so we can purchase your materials and plan the projects for you.

**Travel** – You are responsible for your travel to Tijuana and transportation during your stay in Tijuana. You are also responsible for vehicle gasoline and insurance (U.S. and Mexican).

**Meals** – Please see the above information regarding meals. A budget of \$12.00 person/day should be sufficient. Grocery prices in Tijuana will be comparable to those found in the U.S.

**Showers** - The dormitory does not have shower accommodations. A public shower facility is located within ten minutes of the dorm. The showers are clean and offer complete privacy. They charge \$2.50 per person for one shower.

## □ **Team Selection**

Use an application process to select team participants. The ministry focus is high school and college students. Adults and families are welcome. Be selective. Choose only those who are mature, cooperative and teachable. All participants should apply and be approved by a pastor, youth pastor, youth leadership team, missions committee, board of elders or deacons, etc. The value of this trip will be directly proportional to how selective you are in identifying the participants. Consider using a team contract or covenant. We have frequently seen the benefits of an entire week ruined by the immaturity of one or two team members. Your team will rise to the level of your expectations. Maintain high standards.

## □ **Permission slips**

You are responsible for obtaining the permission slips listed below from each team member under 18. Please use the standard forms your church or denomination uses. Please remember these when you come (you’ll retain them yourselves). See the Packing List attachment for a list of other forms and identification you will need.

Forms needed – 1) Permission Slip (signed by parents) and 2) Consent form for medical treatment (signed by parents).

Prior to or upon your arrival at Caravan, please provide us with a list of the names of your participants.

## □ **Insurance**

You are required to provide the necessary liability insurance for your trip.

## □ Fundraisers

The benefits that are derived from raising funds for the trip are twofold:

1. Fund raising contributes to the team-building process. Working together to achieve a common goal is a valuable and unifying exercise.
2. Fund raising in itself is a faith-building activity. To see God graciously and providentially provide for both the individual and group needs is a stimulus to grow our faith in Him.

Some ideas for raising funds for the trip are:

- Prayer – Require each participant to have at least two prayer partners prior to and for the duration of the trip. Ask the Lord to meet the needs of the group.
- Supporters – Send out individual or team ministry letters. Let friends and relatives know what you are doing and ask for prayer and financial support.
- Church Budget – In many churches there are missions monies designated for short-term missions trips. If this isn't the case in your church you may want to propose making it part of next year's budget.
- Adult Sunday School Class – Often adult classes respond to the challenge of raising funds for building a shelter for a poor family in Tijuana. The cost per house is \$750.00 each. You can take pictures or video back to show them what their offerings did.
- Activities – Some fund raisers which have worked for other groups:
  - Tamale (or taco) sale
  - Collect pennies
  - Hire a kid (a team member) for a day of work. Ask for more than minimum wage.
  - Car wash
  - Rummage Sale

## □ Info Meeting

Hold at least one pre-trip informational meeting to explain the ministry (as outlined in the information we have sent you) and answer any questions. An information meeting is especially beneficial for parents.

## □ Team Training

We strongly encourage you to have team training sessions prior to coming to Tijuana. Our recommendation is at least six training sessions that cover the topics listed below. Require attendance at all sessions and the completion of all assignments as a minimum for trip participation.

- **Spiritual Journey (*Training Session #1*)** – Explain the spiritual purpose of the trip and some spiritual disciplines to develop (e.g. journaling, silence, prayer, meditation, etc.). Make prayer a high priority. Think through and develop which disciplines or other activities you want to give your group. Make sure to have them use free time in a valuable way. Take advantage of being in a third-world country away from the many distractions we are surrounded by at home.
- **Basic Missions (*Training Session #2*)** – Do a basic overview of the Biblical basis for missions, a brief history of missions, and cover key definitions – “missionary,” “people group,” “unreached people,” “the 10/40 window” and others you want to include.

- o **Entry Posture (*Training Session #3*)** – This involves the attitudes with which you come into Mexico. These are the most important to emphasize and develop are:
  1. Being a Learner – develop skills of observation and the attitude that “different is not inferior – it is just different!”
  2. Being a Servant – “I am here for you – you are not here for me!” Always respond to Caravan leaders and your own team leaders with a smile and the response “I would love to” whenever asked to help. Respect the rules, and consider others as more important than yourselves.
  
- o **Mexican Culture (*Training Session #4*)** – Please cover with the participants the following aspects of the culture.
  - General Behavior – Please avoid the typical loud, obnoxious, and arrogant U.S. behavior (that includes you Canadians!). No yelling and screaming. Try not to call attention to yourself. Let quietness and gentleness be the rule. Do not point or make faces – this is their home and you should respect it as such.
  - Dress – Be conservative and neat (see the clothing section on the Packing List attachment).
  - Language – Use as much Spanish as you can – the nationals will love it. Learn to at least introduce yourself and how to respond when others introduce themselves. Other basic phrases will be helpful.
  - Food/Eating – For some, the thought of eating in Mexico is usually a cause for extreme stress. Following a few simple guidelines can alleviate much of that stress and make it an enjoyable experience. After all, Mexican food is great! What should be avoided are the small pushcarts – no matter what they are selling. Sodas and packaged snacks bought in the corner stores are fine to eat. Do not be concerned about the water – even Mexicans only drink purified water. However, try to avoid ice whenever possible. If you are offered something to eat or drink in a home – our advice is to eat whatever is set before you. The offense given by not eating is greater than the risk taken by eating. In regards to food – there is little reason for concern. Relax and enjoy the food!
  - Health – In the summer it is deceptively hot. To avoid sunstroke, heat exhaustion or dehydration – wear a hat, get plenty of shade and drink plenty of water. Bring a water bottle. Eat adequately and wisely. Wash your hands before you eat. Get plenty of rest. Don’t play with the animals. We recommend that you get a tetanus shot if you haven’t had one in the last five years. Garlic, yogurt and/or acidophilus pills are good to take before you come as well as while you are in Tijuana. Minors must bring treatment consent forms. Everyone should bring their health insurance policy number. In case of a medical emergency, there is a clinic located three doors down from the dormitories. In most cases, we will cross the border for any necessary treatment in the U.S. Please note that U.S. Health Insurance is not accepted in Mexico.
  - Safety – Do not go anywhere by yourself – use the buddy system. Do not wander off without alerting a team leader.
  - Relationships – Do not talk to people of the opposite sex your own age and older. Do not respond in any way to whistles, catcalls, etc. – this includes turning around to look. You are already considered immoral and “easy” by virtue of being U.S./Canadian. Please do not confirm the stereotype by your actions. Unmarried couples should put their relationship on “hold” and should refrain from any activity that would indicate that they are a couple.
  - Basic Gringo Mistakes – Do not throw things to each other – hand them directly. Girls – do not talk to teenage guys. Please try to avoid loud and obnoxious behavior.

- o **Team Building (*Training Session #5*)** – Learn how to be supportive of one another, to work together, to solve conflicts, etc.
- o **Trip Logistics (*Training Session #6*)** – Please discuss and distribute copies of the Packing List attachment to each participant. Please also inform the participants of their daily schedule while staying at Mexico Caravan Ministries. As the leader, you will be responsible for enforcing the clothing section of the Packing List as well as the daily schedule.

#### Daily Schedule

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 6:30 am  | Rise                                      |
| 7:00 am  | Personal Devotions                        |
| 7:30 am  | Breakfast and breakfast clean up          |
| 8:00 am  | Worship and teaching with Caravan staff   |
| 9:30 am  | Load and make lunches (if necessary)      |
| 10:00 am | Leave for work sites                      |
| 1:00 pm  | Lunch (approximately)                     |
| 5:00 pm  | Leave work sites for dorm (approximately) |
| 6:00 pm  | Dinner and showers                        |
| 7:00 pm  | Debriefing time or special speakers       |
| 9:00 pm  | Everyone inside the dorm                  |
| 10:00 pm | Lights out upstairs – quiet everywhere    |
| 11:00 pm | Lights out everywhere                     |

- o **Spanish (*should be included in each training session*)** – In Mexico “se habla espanol”. It is definitely a Spanish speaking country. Very few people in the El Florido area speak much English. So our advice is to study up on your Spanish. Learn whatever you can and use whatever you learn. The people will love it! Bring a Spanish/English dictionary and as many interpreters as you can find. Find a Spanish speaker to teach you some basic phrases.

#### □ Mexico Work Teams

In Tijuana please have people/teams ready to handle these specific tasks:

- o Driving – Please see attachment Driving in Mexico
- o Meal Preparation – Please refer to the “Meals” portion of this checklist on page 2
- o Worship – Please have a team prepared to lead worship in the morning worship session. The number of mornings that you will actually be required to lead worship will depend on the number of other groups staying at the dorm. Please be prepared for each day of your stay.
- o Building – You will be responsible for determining your work groups (if you have more than one work group per day). A work team of between 8 and 15 is recommended.
- o Loading Crews – The staff will need assistance in loading tools and supplies each morning after the teaching session. The staff will also need help in the afternoons unloading vehicles and cutting/loading the next days housing materials.
- o Dorm Clean-Up – Daily clean bathrooms, sweep dorm, wash dishes and empty trash.
- o Debriefing/Prayer – Direct evening meetings for your own church group that focus on sharing the day’s experiences as well as the lessons that God is teaching through those experiences.

## ❑ **Payments**

- o The dorm fee (\$10.00/person/night or \$50/person/week) is due to Caravan once you have made your reservation.
- o Building material fees are due to Caravan two weeks prior to your arrival.
- o Please make checks payable to “Baptist General Conference”
- o Please mail checks to Mexico Caravan Ministries, 374 E. H Street, A317, Chula Vista, CA 91910

## ❑ **Emergency Contact Info**

You can also give out the following phone numbers, but please emphasize that these are emergency numbers – not for sending personal greetings.

Dorm (where groups are staying in Tijuana) – 011-52-664-646-2732

Eddie and Maggi Passmore (Caravan Coordinators) – U.S. office: 619-934-4871 or cell: 619-206-2364

David Burdette (BGC missionary) – U.S. office: 619-667-2079 or cell: 619-251-7087

## ❑ **Commissioning Service**

Work with the pastor and/or missions committee to put together a commissioning service on the last Sunday before the team leaves for Tijuana. That will impress upon the team members that they really are doing missions and upon the congregation that they really are sending the team out. It can be a very meaningful time.

## ❑ **Reporting Meeting**

Work with the pastor and/or missions committee to put together a reporting meeting soon after the group returns. Use both testimonies as well as slide/video presentations. These have proven to be times of significant spiritual growth for both the team members and the congregation.

## ❑ **Contact Information**

Mexico Caravan Ministries

374 E. H Street, #A317

Chula Vista, CA 91910

011-52-664-646-2732

Email: [carabana@telnor.net](mailto:carabana@telnor.net) (please cc: [caravans@cox.net](mailto:caravans@cox.net))

Website: [www.mcministries.net](http://www.mcministries.net)