



# LA CASA DE CRISTO

## LUTHERAN CHURCH

# MEXICO MISSION TRIP 2027



Welcome to La Casa de Cristo's mission trip to central Mexico! Working together, we will continue to build on our great relationship with Mazahua Valley Ministries! We will work, play, and worship together alongside our brothers and sisters in Christ! We will be the family of God together!

### **LA CASA DE CRISTO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MAZAHUA VALLEY MINISTRIES**

La Casa de Cristo became involved with Mazahua Valley Ministries (MVM) in 2018 when a group from the church took a mission trip to central Mexico to work with MVM. A solid partnership was formed and another group returned in 2019 to continue the mission. That year, La Casa de Cristo helped support a new-start congregation in Atlacomulco, Mexico. Since then we have continued to foster our relationship through a virtual mission trip, financial support, and prayer. Most recently, a group from La Casa traveled to MVM in the summer of 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026 to continue our relationship. In 2026 group members initiated a pen-pal ministry to stay in touch with students at the mission school. We are very excited to build off of this great foundation for yet another Mission to Mexico! This year we will have the opportunity to meet the pen-pal students and participate in their school-year graduation!

### **OUR MISSION**

This trip is all about relationships. The first most important relationship is our relationship with God. This trip will help us all grow in our life of faith with our Savior. We will pray, worship, and praise God in all that we do. The second most important relationship is the one that we will build with each other and with our Christian brothers and sisters in the Mazahua Valley of Mexico. We will be celebrating that we are truly one family of God. Our mission is to strengthen the bond between all of our churches and thus strengthen the bond of the entire Christian Church on earth.

### **DATES**

This year's trip is July 3-10, 2027. We have been invited by the mission to come for the week of their school's graduation celebration, which will take place on July 9!

## **COST**

The price of the trip includes all ground transportation in Mexico, lodging in Atlacomulco at the mission site, all meals at the mission site, safe purified drinking water, and most importantly, mission support for the local church ministries in the Mazahua Valley.

Price: \$650 + participants purchase their own airfare.

*Special for High School students:* High School students who sign up for both Summer Trip *and* the Mexico Mission trip receive \$25 off of *each* trip, for an *additional* \$50 savings. Use discount code **highschool** (all one word) when registering for each trip to take advantage of this special.

## **FLIGHTS AND AIRFARE**

Participants must purchase their own airfare on these flights:

July 3, 2027

American Airlines Flight 501

Departs PHX 10:21 am

Arrives MEX 2:36 pm

July 10, 2027

American Airlines Flight 502

Departs MEX 3:36 pm

Arrives PHX 6:02 pm



Note: sometimes the flight times change slightly. The main thing is to look for flight 501 (outbound) and flight 502 (return). Contact Pastor Matt with questions.

## **PASSPORTS AND VISAS**

You need a valid passport that allows you to travel into Mexico from the United States of America and also return back out of Mexico and back into the United States of America. A visa is not required for visits under 180 days in Mexico. Upon arrival into Mexico City you will go through customs and immigration. Just let them know that you are traveling to Atlacomulco in the State of Mexico for one week and you receive a stamp in your passport allowing you to enter the country. Make sure your passport has at least one blank page for a stamp. We will be traveling as a group through this process so you have nothing to worry about.

## **SPANISH/ENGLISH**

Not being able to speak Spanish is *not* a barrier, it is an opportunity... an opportunity to connect with someone in ways beyond language. Don't let language stand in the way of you connecting with the people we will meet.

## **VACCINATIONS AND HEALTH**

No specific vaccinations are recommended for Mexico outside of what your doctor already recommends for you. If you have any questions about vaccinations or health-related inquiries please speak with your doctor. Please make Pastor Matt and the group aware of any health issues that may potentially effect the trip. Label clearly any doctor-prescribed medications that you are bringing with you.

## **TEAM MEETINGS**

Preparation meetings are an important part of the mission. We will be preparing ourselves as a team and planning our mission projects together. All registered participants will receive notifications of the meetings.

## **HONEYBEE CAFE**

There is a coffee cafe on-site at the mission campus which serves a variety of drinks and sometimes pastries. It is a great place to enjoy a drink and conversation with someone. Personal purchases at the cafe are at additional cost.



## **MEALS**

All meals, while we are at the mission site in Mexico, are included. If you have special dietary needs please share them with Pastor Matt at registration and with the Mission Directors on site.

Food that is safely prepared and safe for consumption will be shared on the trip. Meals in airports, in transit, or at restaurants not at the mission site are not included. There will be restaurants and opportunities for snacks as we travel.

## **SCHEDULE**

The exact itinerary can change based on needs that come up or weather circumstances, but a general outline of our week may look like this:

*Saturday* - Arrive into Mexico City and drive to the mission site by van/bus.

*Sunday* - Church day at Mazahua Valley Ministries, possible Atlacomulco city visit that evening.

*Monday* - Projects / School work / Sports Activities / Devotions / Possible church visits

*Tuesday* - Pastor's Conference on campus / Projects / School work / Sports Activities / Devotions / Possible church visits

*Wednesday* - Projects / School work / Sports Activities / Devotions / Possible church visits

*Thursday* - Projects / School work / Sports Activities / Devotions / Possible church visits

*Friday* - Harmony School Graduation Activities

*Saturday* - Drive to Mexico City and depart on flight back home to Phoenix.

## **SLEEPING ROOMS**

The mission site has different rooms with multiple bunk beds in them. You will claim a bed for yourself and make it your home for the week. There will be a separate male and female room.

## **BEDDING**

Beds and bedding are supplied for you by the mission site. Full bedding, with a pillow, sheets, and a blanket will be waiting for you on site. If you have your own favorite pillow or anything that you need, you are free to bring your own along.

## **OUTLETS AND ELECTRICITY**

You do not need a travel adapter for the outlets. Their outlet shape is the same as ours. You will be able to plug in phone chargers and others things without a problem. Keep in mind, many of the outlets are two-prong not three-prong. Most modern devices (computers/phones) will not need a voltage adapter. Just don't be getting wild with your super-turbo-2000 hair heaters and stuff like that. It is not uncommon that the electricity can go out, especially during a storm. The outages typically do not last long and kick back on quite quickly.

## **BATHROOMS AND TOILETRIES**

Bathrooms with toilets, showers, and sinks are located directly adjacent to your sleeping rooms. Bring your own soap or whatever you need for bathroom use. Toilet paper is supplied. It is advisable to also bring your own extra roll of toilet paper; sometimes if we are visiting somewhere off-site they don't always have toilet paper in bathrooms. We typically carry extra toilet paper in our day bag for occasions like this.

## **WATER**

Safe drinking water is available on the mission campus at all times. It is usually in the form of a large 5-gallon bottle. Bring your own refillable water bottle so you can take advantage of staying hydrated. Do not drink water from any other source. The tap water is not suitable for drinking.

## **ILLNESS**

Sometimes people experience minor stomach discomfort or gastrointestinal issues. This is typically not because of anything particularly unsafe but more because our bodies are adjusting to a sudden change in diet or bacterias that we are not use to. The food at the mission site is safe and properly prepared. It is also delicious! You are going to love it!

It is advisable to take extra precautions with any food that you encounter *off* of the mission site. That food is not guaranteed to be prepared safely (i.e. vegetables are not washed, etc). It is not suggested to eat street food in the city or anywhere where we cannot guarantee that it has been prepared safely.

## **PHONES AND WIFI**

Cell phone service has been weak in the past; we never know how it will be. Some people have found a certain spot on campus where they get just the right signal. But, it is improving all the time. Wifi is available on campus. When the electricity is on the wifi works great!

## **WEATHER**

Atacomulco sits at 8,430 feet above sea level. A combination of the high altitude and the proximity to the equator drastically effects the weather. Atacomulco commonly receives good rain and thunderstorms, especially in the time of year that we will be there. Usually rain will roll in in the afternoon. A rain jacket is advised. The next hour might bring full sun. So be prepared for a variety.

Lows: It can get cold at night. Expect temperatures to drop into the low 50s, with dampness/wetness from the rain. The sleeping rooms can be quite cool/cold. The sleeping rooms have blankets, but please come with proper sleep attire suitable for chillier temperatures.

Highs: At peak time, with full sunshine, it can be quite warm. Expect daytime temperatures to hover in the 70s. Remember, because of the location, the intense sun can cause even lower temperatures to feel warmer. Likewise, one cloud blocking the sun can change the feels-like temperature significantly as well.

## **DEVOTIONS**

We will gather together as a group and do a nightly devotion. We will read Scripture and reflect on the day. This is a good time to share "God Moments"; moments where we saw God that day. Everyone in the group will be assigned one devotion to lead. Begin with Scripture and then simply share reflections on the Scripture. The devotion can be a simple sharing or interactive or however you wish to do it. If you need assistance with this please reach out to one of our church pastors.

## **CRAFTS**

Everyone is responsible for brainstorming and brining the supplies to lead 1-2 craft projects. We will have opportunities to lead crafts with children of all ages while we are there.

## **EMERGENCY CONACT**

Tell your friends and family: If there is an emergency while you are away and you need to be contacted, they can always contact the church office and they will be able to contact us. La Casa de Cristo Church Office: 480-948-1234, [info@lacasadecristo.com](mailto:info@lacasadecristo.com)

## PACKING LIST

### Clothing:

- Layered clothes for different temperatures
- Jackets / sweatshirt / sweater
- Rain Jacket
- Socks
- Underwear
- Sun hat
- Pants / Skirt for church days
- Pajamas
- Shoes (when it rains it gets muddy)
- Sunglasses
- Clothes for sport (baseball/pickleball/basketball)
- Saturday - Casual traveling clothes
- Sunday - Church clothes
- Monday - Casual clothes
- Tuesday - Casual clothes / Clothes for the pastors conference
- Wednesday - Casual clothes
- Thursday - Casual clothes
- Friday - Clothes for the Graduation ceremony
- Saturday - Casual travel clothes.

### Toiletries:

- Personal Medicines
- Tummy Meds (if needed)
- Toilet Paper
- Soap
- Hand sanitizer / Hand wipes
- Sunscreen
- Personal Toiletries
- Ear plugs (if you like those for sleeping)

### Travel Items:

- Pesos (see below)
- Phone and phone charger
- Passport
- Bible
- Water Bottle
- Extra snacks (there will be plenty of food, but if you like your own snacks...)
- Umbrella (only if its small and easy for you to pack)
- Flashlight (great for when the electricity goes out or for getting across campus at night)

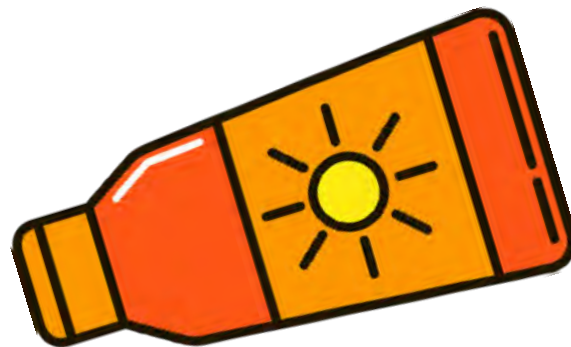
### For Fun:

- Pickleball Paddle
- Games (cards, other fun games to share with the group, optional)

## MONEY

Occasions you may want pesos for:

- Church offering
- Traveling snacks
- Honeybee Cafe (trust me on this one!)
- Atlacomulco visit (i.e. ice cream)



## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



### What ages can go on this trip?

Any age is welcome. Families are encouraged to join in mission together; this trip is purposely designed as a great opportunity for families. Kids need to have at least one parent join them. This year, we are doing a special push to have high school students involved.

### What is Mazahua Valley Ministries?

Mazahua Valley Ministries is a Christian evangelical mission that equips leaders to serve their communities and churches in a holistic way through theological and secular educational programs. MVM serves as a resource to the churches of the Mazahua Valley region of central Mexico. They have on-campus events such as conferences, worship services, and retreats, as well as off-campus activities working in partnership with the local pastors and churches to minister to the needs of the surrounding community. Both Pastor Jeff Ruby and Pastor Matt Knopf have worked with Mazahua Valley Ministries for over 25 years and they have a strong relationship with them.

### Where is this trip to?

This trip will take us through Mexico City and then up into the mountains of the State of Mexico. The Mazahua Valley Ministries campus is located in the Mazahua Valley outside of Atlacomulco which is approximately eighty miles northwest of Mexico City in the central highlands of Mexico around 9,600 ft. The climate is fresh during the spring and summer with heavy rains; and cold with some frost during the fall and winter.

The MVM ministry covers a radius of forty miles including five counties: Atlacomulco, Ixtlahuaca, San Felipe del Progreso, El Oro y Temascalcingo; reaching out to about twenty-four villages and thirty-five churches from different denominations. We will be doing most of our work in the area around Atlacomulco, which is just about right in the middle of the entire country of Mexico.



The red marker on the map to the left locates Atlacomulco, Mexico, just outside of Mexico City.

We fly from Phoenix to Mexico City and then take a private bus from Mexico City to the mission campus in Atlacomulco. It is approximately 2.5-3 hours from Mexico City to Atlacomulco.

**Who are the Mazahua People?**

The Mazahua people are one of sixty-two indigenous groups found in Mexico. Although Mazahua is their native language, they are quickly being assimilated into the national culture. Today, many of the young people only speak Spanish. The Mazahuas are generally farmers subsisting on small plots of land. Their main crop is corn used for making tortillas, the main staple in their diet.

Lack of employment has forced many to migrate to the cities, northern border areas, or the United States to find work as vendors, masons, or domestic employees. Most children have access to primary & secondary school, but very few go on to finish high school. Half of the population lives in extreme poverty on less than \$5 a day.

The Mazahua people are known for their gift of hospitality and service, close family ties, and community, therefore; visitation is a very important aspect of our ministry.

**What is it actually like on a trip?**

In 2020, a group of La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church members put together a Virtual Mission to Mexico. It is a 50 minute video that is available online highlighting what the background of Mazahua Valley Ministries, our church's relationship with them, and what it is actually like to go on a mission trip. It is an excellent resource for anyone wondering what a trip is like. You can find the video at [lacasadecristo.com/mexico](https://lacasadecristo.com/mexico)

**How do I sign up?**

An online registration form is available on [lacasadecristo.com/mexico](https://lacasadecristo.com/mexico)

**Who can I contact with questions?**

Contact Pastor Matt Knopf at La Casa de Cristo Lutheran Church, 480-948-1234

**Should I go on this trip?**

Yes, yes you should.

