

2026 Get-Away Give-Away

EFC's Mexico Housebuilding Ministry

Information & Registration

WHAT IS GAGA?

"Get-Away Give-Away" is a short-term missions project that began 42 years ago out of the ministries of Eugene Friends Church. It was initially seen as a one-time endeavor but has grown beyond anything we ever dreamed. Presently we have built somewhere near 274 houses and a couple dozen churches. Over the years a number of churches and individuals have joined us in our work. GAGA (Get-Away Give-Away) is not an official ministry of Eugene Friends Church and all that participate do so understanding that in total we are a loose affiliation of people working toward a common goal. We share in projects, the cost and implementation of them, the transporting of our group and in decisions related to our ministry.

WHY DO WE MAKE THIS TRIP?

Our belief has always been that those who follow Jesus are to love the things and people God loves. This trip grew out of a desire to grow in our understanding of the lives of people who live in a vastly different context than we do and to come alongside them as Jesus would. The values of this trip are distinctly shaped by our being followers of Jesus. Our commitment to serve includes serving each other. Each day begins with a time of worship and listening because we want to honor the One, we serve. It is not a requirement for participants to be Christians, but everyone should be aware that the trip is structured as a Jesus focused time of service and ministry.

WHERE ARE WE GOING & WHEN?

This year we will be returning to build homes in the city of San Luis Rio Colorado. To find San Luis on the map you would look directly south of Yuma, AZ. You will find it right on the border and in the Northwest corner of the state of Sonora. Our campsite is in a small farm town by the name of Islita, about 5 miles south of San Luis. The site where we camp has electrical service and water at the tap for showers and washing. All drinking water is bought from a water purification plant. Flush toilets round out the luxury accommodations.

WHEN ARE WE GOING?

The week of Spring Break is our tradition. A caravan of two or three vehicles will leave town around 6:00 AM on Thursday March 19th and will return Saturday March 28th. The duration of the trip is about 10 days. We will make sure that you have transportation if you are traveling with the caravan. If you are flying into Yuma, or Phoenix, you will need to make it to the border on your own. If you walk across the border at San Luis, make sure and coordinate with Clyde or others for transportation to Islita.

WHAT WILL WE BE DOING?

Our usual goal is to build two homes and work on another small project. The houses are usually 3 room single floor structures built with wood frame construction. Prior construction skill is not necessary, as there are house leads who will offer basic training for any work we do. This is your chance to learn new skills as well as building for a family. Adult leadership is present at each site to help answer other questions. The ability to do these projects is dependent on both financial supply and having enough people. About 50% of your registration cost goes to buying materials for the houses but this only covers about half of our building budget. The larger the group the more resources are available. The rest of the money we must raise through donations and fundraising. We welcome your help in promoting the projects to your friends and neighbors by asking them if they would be interested in helping fund these houses even if they are unable to go with us. You might even consider doing a fundraising event to help in this regard.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THIS TRIP?

Anyone 9th grade and older is invited to participate. Younger team members are allowed on the trip, provided a parent or guardian accompanies them.

Eugene Friends Church is an open and affirming church. Everyone is welcome on this trip regardless of sexual orientation or religious and political beliefs. Our focus is on the mission and our love for Jesus and one another. We should be courteous and careful in our discussions with each other, knowing that we may not share similar points of view. We have contingencies from other denominations and individuals from many parts of the country and we hope that word of the trip will continue to spread.

WHAT IS THE COST?

The cost of the 2026 trip will be \$750 for adults 15 years and older and \$300 for those 11 to 15 years of age. The cost for infants to 10 year olds will be \$50, which is the cost of personal travel insurance and miscellaneous, but parents or guardians are expected to cover their Mexico restaurant costs. There are no t-shirts in x-small sizes unfortunately. Everything possible has been done to hold costs to a minimum without making things so tight that the trip is unbearable. The \$750 covers a \$50 registration to *GAGA* (which gets you your T-shirt, manuals, and allows the ministry of *GAGA* to continue), \$350.00 is used to purchase building materials for our project, and the balance covers the costs of personal travel insurance, support vehicles with trailers, and food in Mexico. You will pay your share of travel costs (gas and Mexico vehicle insurance). You will also pay for your own food and hotels on the road.

The insurance policy we purchase covers personal injury and liability while we are in Mexico, which is important since most health insurance policies do not cover us when we cross the border. Additionally, it adds a liability piece should we damage property or cause injury.

DO I NEED A PASSPORT?

Yes! Another possibility is a Passport Card. Both are available through your local post office. They take a month minimum to get. A passport will cost you about \$165, plus the cost of a picture, by the time you have paid all of the fees. A Passport Card is around \$65 plus the cost of a picture. If you are in a hurry you will need to add an expediting fee.

HOW WILL WE BE GETTING THERE?

Our travel time together is an important part of the GAGA experience. We have folks who will be driving their vehicles to Mexico and they will transport all who have registered. Every attempt will be made to keep these vehicles within close distance of each other on the road for safety reasons. Our travel time is also an opportunity for us to get to know each other before we arrive in Mexico. Tents, tools, and camp chairs should be sent earlier if possible with Clyde and the trailer, but there will also be room in the back of a couple of trucks. ALL drivers will need to carry current proof of vehicle and trailer registration, and they will need to carry Mexico insurance. **Adviso at 1-800-909-4457** is the number to call for vehicle insurance. It is possible to call and obtain this insurance while on the road.

WHAT WILL OUR ACCOMMODATIONS BE LIKE?

While on the road to Mexico, we will stay in a church that graciously allows us to sleep overnight. We indulge in one motel stay on the way home so that we can get a hot shower and sleep in a real bed.

In Mexico we will be staying in a tent city of our own making at Clyde and Wendy's property in the town of Islita. You will need to bring your own tent unless you make arrangements to share with someone. Smaller tents are recommended (but not mandatory) due to space limitations and possible sandstorms. We have flush toilets available on our site, an outdoor kitchen, and a shelter that will provide shade. There is a men's and women's shower structure with piped in water.

WHAT KIND OF FOOD WILL WE EAT?

On the road to and from Mexico, we will be eating fast food so that we might travel efficiently. In Mexico, our breakfasts are prepared by friends who are paid for their catering. Lunches are packed for the job sites and consist of sandwiches, fruit, veggies, chips, and cookies. There will be Gatorade and water at each work site. We will probably eat dinner at a wonderful local Islita restaurant once or twice, and at casual San Luis restaurants once or twice. Other evening meals will be prepared in camp by local friends who cater for us. As much as possible, we try to accommodate special eating requirements. There are two refrigerators in the outdoor kitchen area if you need to store special items.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME IF I GO?

Be aware that this is not a vacation trip. Our team is being assembled as a ministry team. As a team member it is important for each participant to realize that we are not only serving people in Mexico but other members of the team as well. We will actually have more time with each other than we will with local folks due to the amount of work we must do. The attitude of team members would best be described by the words of the Apostle Paul, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 2:4,5)

Everyone is expected to take on their share of responsibility in traveling and living together. We will also divide responsibilities on a daily basis for handling our needs. No one is expected to be able to do everything, but everyone is expected to find the work they can do. Here is a chance to try some things you have never done before. You will be responsible for loading and unloading all your gear while we travel and for bringing personal items and small tools that you will need. We will have one **work day on February 21st**, in advance of our departure, to load the trailer. A yard sale fundraiser will also happen that day at EFC. Your participation is highly encouraged. The Quaker Faire in December is our other regular fundraiser. Help for both fundraisers is greatly needed.

As a group in Mexico, we will meet at sunrise and before bed. We will sing, we will pray, and we will listen to God. After we meet each morning, you will have time to reflect alone and to journal. There will be a call to breakfast and then a post-breakfast meeting to chart the course for the day.

WHAT ABOUT SPENDING MONEY?

You will be responsible for handling your own spending money. \$25 per day might be enough for food on the road. If we eat out at a San Luis restaurant, you will be given some food money. You may want to purchase more than what is allotted to each person. We usually attend church on Sundays, so bring money for the offering if possible. We may have some shopping time at a market or your group may want to stop at border stores as we leave town. Bring what you think you might need.

Exchanging dollars for pesos is not necessary since most merchants take dollars in San Luis. It is a good idea to avoid bills over \$10 since not all establishments will be able to make change for larger bills.

LUGGAGE, TOOLS, TENTS, SLEEPING BAGS, CHAIRS

If at all possible, all luggage should be soft-sided or duffel bag style. Luggage must be kept to a minimum - one large bag allowed. On the road, you will need your bag, a pillow, a sleeping bag, and a sleeping pad. It is best to mark your items with your name in permanent marker on duct tape. You will be encouraged to pack a camp chair, a tent, and your tools and have them travel early with Clyde in the covered trailer. There are some folding chairs at camp in Islita, but extras are helpful to have. While you may caravan with trucks, they may not have canopies, in which case your items will be exposed to rain or theft at travel stops.

SECURITY

We begin by encouraging you to put out of your mind that you will encounter more dishonesty in Mexico than at home. This stereotype is destructive to the design of this trip. Most of the sites we will be at are secure by Mexican standards and our experience is that your property will be respected as long as you don't foolishly leave things sitting around. At the same time, don't take things that you cannot afford to lose - this is the smart thing to do on any church trip or retreat. We have found that most damage to personal property happens during travel so be careful to secure and protect your things.

DRESS and CONDUCT

Here again we ask you to examine your motives for making this trip. If a tan and comfort are your motives, please reconsider. While in Mexico we will ask you to dress much more conservatively than while we travel. Short pants will be allowed but please avoid short-shorts. Capri or other below the knee pants are preferred. Boxers/underwear will not show above pant lines and shirts will overhang pant lines. Although change in dress styles is gradually happening in Mexico, we ask that you be conservative enough not to offend. It is respectful to wear our best clothes to any church service we might attend.

You will see and smell things that may have never graced your senses before. Care should be taken not to complain or react negatively to what is seen or smelled so as not to offend our hosts. We are going to serve and not to be treated differently than those we serve.

WHAT TO BRING

Attitude of a servant

Bible, notepad, pen

Sleeping bag, pad, and pillow - all labeled with your name.

Personal toiletry items: soap, deodorant, toothbrush, razor, towel, washcloth, etc. Leave as many things like blow dryers at home as possible, team with a friend.

2-3 sets of work clothes, work gloves, & 2-3 sets of nicer clothes - we will wear nicer clothes for all church functions. Lightweight jacket or sweatshirt for cool nights.

A couple pairs shoes (one closed toe solid shoe for work)

Swimsuit and sandals (for showers or hotel), sunscreen and a hat. Flashlight/headlamp

Water bottle (tight lid so that you can have this with you while we travel)

Spending money (Consider \$89.57 as a starting point)

Personal tools you are responsible for: Hammer, nail apron or tool belt, tape measurer, utility knife and carpenter's pencil and a paintbrush. House leads and others bring larger tools.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

Bad attitudes

Clothing items someone might regard in poor taste (alcohol advertising or military themes)

Valuables

Things you can't stand the thought of losing or getting broken.

No headphones are allowed while outside of tents. Our goal is to interact with each other.

Cell phones are your responsibility. Be aware that without an international calling plan both calls and data can get expensive.

HOW DO I BECOME A PART OF THIS TRIP?

Complete the following registration form to EFC with your \$200 deposit by January 16th. We need all monies by March 1st so that they can be disbursed to those responsible for using it. We are hoping for better than 40 participants this year. If more than 40 register, we will make further spots on a space available basis. Register right away! Refunds are subject to the date of cancellation. We spend much of the monies way before the trip begins.

GET AWAY GIVE AWAY REGISTRATION FORM - 2026

This form & \$200 must be returned to the EFC office 3495 W. 18th Ave. by January 16th. All money must be paid by March 1st. An additional \$50 will be added to late applicants. PLEASE FILL OUT THIS FORM COMPLETELY. We need it for travel insurance in Mexico and for ordering shirts.

NAME _____

DOB _____

ADDRESS _____

ZIP _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

T-SHIRT SIZE _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT/PHONE # _____

DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS? _____

THIS YEAR'S TRIP:

Price: \$750 per person 15 years and older. \$300 for 11 to 14 year olds. \$50.00 for infants to 10 year olds. Checks should be written to Eugene Friends Church with GAGA registration noted.

Dates: March 19, 2026 through March 28, 2026. The group will depart from EFC, Thursday Mar. 19th at 6 to 7 am. The actual work time in Mexico is Mar. 21st through Mar. 26th.

For more information, check out Eugene Friends' Church's website eugenefriendschurch.org or call Clyde Parker at 541-915-4694. Registration forms can be dropped off at the EFC office 3495 W. 18th Avenue, Eugene, OR 97402 or emailed to eugenefriends3495@gmail.com. You will be placed on an email list for updated information, meeting times and places.

PARENTAL CONSENT SECTION:

NAME OF CHILD _____

ADDRESS _____

BIRTHDAY _____ GRADE IN SCHOOL _____

PHONE _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN _____

PHONE _____

To Whom It May Concern:

The undersigned does hereby give permission for our (my) child, whose name appears on this form, to attend and participate in the mission trip to Mexico sponsored by Eugene Friends Church called "Get-Away Give-Away" from March 19, 2026 through March 28, 2026. It is with my permission that they cross the border into Mexico.

We (I) authorize an adult in leadership of this event to consent to any x-ray, examination, anesthetic, medical, surgical, or dental diagnosis or treatment, and hospital care, to be rendered to the minor under

the general or specific supervision and on the advice of any physician or dentist licensed under the provisions of the Medical Practice Act on the medical staff of a licensed hospital, whether such diagnosis or treatment is rendered at the office of said physician or at said hospital. If it is not feasible for treatment to be undertaken in the U.S., I consent to treatment in the best possible facility in Mexico that adult leadership has available

The undersigned shall be liable and agree(s) to pay all costs and expenses incurred in connection with such medical or dental services rendered to the above-mentioned minor. Should it be necessary for our (my) child to return home due to medical reasons or otherwise, the undersigned will assume all transportation costs.

I also hereby give my permission for our (my) child to ride in any vehicle designated by the adult in whose care the minor has been entrusted while participation in this trip.

SIGNATURE OF PARENTS:

Printed Name: _____

Signature_____

Printed Name _____

Signature_____

Legal Guardian Printed Name _____

Signature _____

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Your child's insurance carrier _____ Policy # of carrier _____

Emergency phone numbers _____

List all allergies, special food needs, medical issues, or prescriptions that your child may have:
