

Get-Away Give-Away

EFC's Housebuilding Ministry in Mexico

(General Information & Registration form)

WHAT IS GAGA?

"Get-Away Give-Away" is a short-term missions project that began over 40 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 around 272 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 and those who participate do so with the understanding that 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. Our caravan will try to leave town around 6:00 AM on Thursday March 19th and we will return Saturday March 28th. The duration of the trip is about 9 days. If you are not traveling from Eugene, be sure to coordinate departure and return schedules so that we can get directions and connections arranged.

WHAT WILL WE BE DOING?

Our usual goal is to build two homes and work on another small project. The houses are 3 room single floor structures built with wood frame construction. Even if you have never done any construction work in the past you can make a great contribution to getting a family in a comfortable home. This is your chance to learn new skills as well as building for a family. Adult leadership is present at each site for direction in how to build as well as to supervise for safety and sanitation. The ability to do these projects is dependent on both financial supply and having enough people. About 30% 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?

This trip is not a youth trip as such. Anyone 9th grade and older is invited to participate. Younger team members are allowed provided their parents are along.

Though most of our participants are associated with various Friends churches we will have contingencies from other denominations and individuals from many parts of the country that hear about our trip through people like you.

WHAT IS THE COST?

The cost of the 2026 trip is \$750.00 per individual. Everything possible has been done to hold costs to a minimum without making things so tight that the trip is unbearable. The \$750.00 covers a \$50 registration to GAGA (which gets you your T-shirt, manuals, and allows the ministry of GAGA to continue), \$300.00 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 on the road, and your hotel on the trip home.

Prices are as follow: Adults 15 years and older pay \$750.00 each, and those under 15 pay \$300. each. This will cover food, insurance, & t-shirt. You must be 15 years and older to go on the trip without a guardian.

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 from each other, with the idea that caravanning is safer. Also, traveling together is a time of bonding. All vehicles will need to carry current proof of registration and they will need to carry Mexico insurance.

WHAT WILL OUR ACCOMMODATIONS BE LIKE?

While on the road we will be staying in churches that graciously allow us to sleep the night in their facilities. We indulge in one hotel 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. Our building work site will not be used for housing. You will need to bring your own tent unless you make arrangements to share with someone. Smaller tents are recommended due to space limitations and possible sandstorms. We have flush toilets available on our site, a shelter that will provide shade and a place to shower. We will have 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 generally stop at fast food places, in order to make good travel time. In Mexico, our breakfasts are prepared by a family that is paid for their catering. Lunches are packed for the job site and consist of sandwiches, fruit, chips, and cookies. This year we will go out to dinner in Mexico two or three evenings, while other evenings meals will be prepared in camp by local friends who cater for us. As much as possible, we try to accommodate special eating requirements.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME IF I GO?

Of primary concern for each participant is 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 Mexicans. 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 travel and living together. We will also divide responsibilities on a daily basis to cover 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 to bring those items you will need. We will have a

couple of orientation/work events in advance of our departure. Plan to make those meetings. After you register you will be informed of these dates.

As a group we will meet at sunrise and before bed. We will sing, we will pray, and we will listen to God. You will also have time before breakfast to spend writing in a journal.

WHAT ABOUT SPENDING MONEY?

You will be responsible for handling your own spending money. There will be costs for food on the road, and there may be time to shop before we leave Mexico.

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

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. All luggage, sleeping bags, and pads must be plainly marked with your name. Make sure that the label you use will not come off. Duct tape with your name written in Magic Marker works great. You will need to have a carry-on bag with enough clothing to get you to Mexico (2 days) that you bring with you when we leave. Everything else must be packed into a large bag that will travel separately from your vehicle in the back of a truck. A camp chair, a tool bag, a sleeping bag, and a pad will take up too much room for a shared vehicle. This large bag will need to be at Friends Church a few days before the trip. We will let you know the time frame for dropping off your big bag as the trip approaches.

SECURITY

We begin by encouraging you to put out of your mind that Mexicans are thieves. This stereotype is destructive to the design of this trip. Most of the sites we will be staying in are secure by Mexican standards and our experience is that your property will be respected as long as you don't foolishly leave things setting out. 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 on the bus 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. Any evening events or church services will require long pants, skirts, or dresses.

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.

GETTING READY

WHAT TO BRING

- Attitude of a servant
- Bible, notepad, pen
- Sleeping bag, pad (compact one), pillow (small one preferably) - 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.
- 3 plus sets of work clothes, work gloves, & 2 sets of nicer clothes for church and travel home
- Lightweight jacket for cool nights
- Couple pairs shoes (one closed toe solid shoe for work)
- Swimsuit and sandals (for showers)
- Sunscreen and a hat
- Flashlight/headlamp
- Water bottle
- Spending money (Consider \$75)
- Personal tools you are responsible for: Hammer, nail apron or tool belt, tape measure, utility knife and carpenter's pencil and a paintbrush.

WHAT NOT TO BRING

- Bad attitudes
- Clothing items someone might regard in poor taste (alcohol advertising or military themes)
- 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?

Send 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 money before the trip begins.

GET AWAY GIVE AWAY 2026 REGISTRATION FORM

This form and \$200 must be returned to the EFC office 3495 W. 18th Ave. by January 16, 2026. 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.

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 ages 15 and older. \$300.00 for those under 15 years old.

Dates: March 19, 2026 through March 28, 2026. Vehicles leave early March 19th from Eugene. The actual work time in Mexico is Friday, March 20 through Thursday, March 26, 2026.

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 and 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 19th, 2026 through March 28th, 2025. 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:
