

# 2024 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 nearly 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 somewhere near 270 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 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. 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. If you travel with the group, we will leave Eugene Friends Church around 6:00 AM on Thursday March 21st and we will return Saturday March 30th. The duration of the trip is about 10 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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 2024 trip is \$890.00 per individual. Everything possible has been done to hold costs to a minimum without making things so tight that the trip is unbearable. The \$890 covers a \$30 registration to *GAGA* (which gets you your T-shirt, manuals, and allows the ministry of *GAGA* to continue), \$250.00 is used to purchase building materials for our project, and the balance covers your share of the transportation for 3000 miles, meals for ten days, the cost of support vehicles, insurance for vehicles, and a motel stay on the way home. We also have an insurance policy that covers personal injury and liability while we are in Mexico, this costs \$30 for each person. 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. Family prices are as follow: 3 from the same primary family - \$2350, 4 - \$3100, 5 - \$3750 If you as an individual, or if you are part of a group not traveling from Eugene, then there will be an adjustment in price based on transportation costs. The amount is yet to be determined for this year. We do not adjust for meals on the road.

## **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 \$175, plus the cost of a picture, by the time you have paid all of the fees. A Passport Card is around \$75 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 will be traveling together in a caravan of whatever vehicles are needed to get us and our gear there and back. Our travel time puts us all together and gives us a chance to get to know each other before we get to Mexico. We will have a support vehicle to carry luggage and to be available for running errands while in Mexico. Drivers will be needed for vehicles.

## **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 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. 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 - no need to bring backpack showers.

## **WHAT KIND OF FOOD WILL WE EAT?**

On the road to Mexico, please bring your own sack lunch for the first day. The first evening meal will be at a fast-food place, where you will be given money to eat. Breakfast will be at the church where we spend the night. On Friday's travel to Mexico, you will be given money for a fast-food lunch and dinner. In Mexico, our breakfasts are prepared by friends that are 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 several evenings, while other evenings meals will be prepared in camp by local friends who cater for us. The trip home follows the same pattern as the road trip to Mexico. As much as possible, we try to accommodate special eating requirements.

## **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 travel and living together. We will also divide responsibilities on a daily basis for covering 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. While on the road you might want some for munchies and some for buying pop or goodies in Mexico. We will have shopping time in a tourist market area so you can bring money for this as well.

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 us. This large bag will need to be at Eugene 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 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.

## **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.

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 for cool nights.

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

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

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

Spending money (Consider \$49.57 as a starting point)

Personal tools you are responsible for: Hammer, nail apron or tool belt, tape measure, utility knife and carpenter's pencil and a paintbrush. (We will post a list of additional tools we will need. If you are able to bring them along you may sign up to do so.)

### **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 15th. We need all monies by March 1<sup>st</sup> 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 - 2024

This form & \$200 must be returned to the EFC office 3495 W. 18th Ave. by January 15th. 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: \$890 per person. \$2,350 for a family of three. \$3,100 for a family of four. \$3,750 for a family of five.

Dates: March 21, 2024 through March 30, 2024. The group will depart from EFC, Thursday Mar. 21st at 6 am. The actual work time in Mexico is Mar. 23rd through Mar. 28th. There is a reduction in registration price for those who arrange their own transportation.

For more information, check out Eugene Friends' Church's website [eugenefriendschurch.org](http://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](mailto: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 21, 2024 through March 30, 2024. 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

