

# SUMMER 2024

# INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

# Xpujil, Mexico June 17-23



Informational  
**zoom** Meeting

Wed., February 21  
@ 6:00 pm

**CLICK HERE!**



## MEXICO CISTERN PARTNERSHIP

A clean water, community building, job skills training, self-help, micro-loan partnership with indigenous Ch'ol Presbyterians in Mexico's southern Yucatan Peninsula.

### **COST:**

\$750/Adult, \$600/Youth  
(minimum age 14 w/ parent or guardian)

### **DEPOSIT DEADLINE:**

\$200 by March 10

### **MAXIMUM 8 TRAVELERS:**

If all slots fill, we can put you on a waiting list.

### **QUESTIONS:**

Scott Neely,  
Director of Mission & Community Engagement  
scott.neely@westpreschurch.org



To save your spot, **CLICK HERE**



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## **WHERE IS XPUJIL?**

Xpujil is in the southern portion of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula—close to Belize and Guatemala. It's a six-hour drive from Cancun International Airport. A 3 hour drive if flying into Tulum International. Todd Luke, our main contact, will meet us at the airport with a rented vehicle, and drive you to and from Xpujil. He will be your driver, translator, and cultural liaison during your entire stay in Mexico.

## **WHAT DOES THE MISSION TEAM DO?**

For three days, from approximately 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM, we will build three or four cisterns. We are led by our Ch'ol Presbyterian partners. Our main task is to help mix cement. Mostly, we shovel seventy pounds of sand and gravel into five-gallon buckets. These buckets are carried and emptied into a cement mixer. We perform this activity in 45-minute spurts throughout the day. During down-time, we can interact with the cistern recipient families and our local coworkers. We may eat lunch at the work site. Meals are prepared by our Xpujil partners who have over twenty years of experience feeding Americans work teams.

## **WHERE DOES THE MISSION TEAM STAY?**

Groups stay in Xpujil at their four-room Guest House. Each room has two twin beds, one hammock, a ceiling fan, a floor fan, and a bathroom with a shower. Hot water is available.

## **WHAT ABOUT THE FOOD AND WATER?**

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are prepared by our Xpujil partners. Bottled water is always available. Meal times: Breakfast 6:00 or 7:00 AM, Lunch between 11:00AM-1:00 PM, Dinner between 6:00-8:00 PM.

## **WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?**

- Daytime temperatures normally reach the high-80s (upper-90s April-August). Overnight temps may drop into the low 60s in the winter, and low 70s in the summer.
- Bring \$50 to convert to pesos to purchase snacks during the trip. Two small general stores are only a one-minute walk from the Guest House. Todd Luke will help the group exchange dollars for pesos.
- We will visit a couple of significant Mayan ruin archeological sites.
- We may visit a bat cave where millions of bats fly out at dusk.
- Americans traveling under the age of 18 should have a signed affidavit from both parents permitting travel to Mexico.
- Passports are required for travel to Mexico.
- Make sure your tetanus immunization is up-to-date.
- Washer and dryer on site.
- Try to pack everything into one carry-on suitcase and a backpack.

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## SHORT LIST OF ITEMS TO PACK

*We will talk more about this as a group before we leave.*

- Work Gloves
- Band Aids
- Hand Sanitizer
- Passport
- Sunglasses
- Aspirin/Tylenol/Ibuprofen
- Ear Plugs
- Hot (sun protection)
- Long pants
- Shorts
- Sun Block
- Snacks (store in ziplock)
- Sleeved Shirts
- Tennis Shoes / Sneakers
- Mosquito repellent
- Toiletries
- One nice shirt/blouse
- Water bottle
- Games
- Socks

## Extra Info

- Flights are not set yet, but the plan is to fly out of Greensboro and into Tulum International and return the same way. Flying in and out of Tulum reduces driving time to Xpujil to 4 hours.
- Tentative Schedule:
  - Monday - Fly into Tulum. Drive to Xpujil (about 4 hours). Settle in.
  - Tuesday - Workday mixing concrete for floor pours
  - Wednesday - Workday mixing concrete for 1st wall pours.
  - Thursday - Workday mixing concrete for 2nd wall pours. Visit bat cave at sunset.
  - Friday - Visit the ruins at Becan in the morning. Later afternoon, back to worksite to mix concrete for 1 or 2 roof pours.
  - Saturday - Possibly drive to Tulum airport depending on flight time on Sunday.
  - Sunday - Fly home.
- No experience and all abilities welcome! There will be a place for you even if you aren't able to lift heavy buckets or mixing. Everyone finds their path and flexibility is key. Along with concrete work, engaging with the local families and kids is just as important.

## More about Xpujil and the cistern partnership

### Where We Work

The Xpujil region is in the southern part of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. Subsistence level farmers populate the dozens of small villages in this forested area that lacks potable surface and subterranean ground water sources. Water scarcity forces families to collect water daily. Illnesses caused by contaminated water are a part of life.

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## **The Cistern Ministry—A Rainwater Harvest**

We build family-owned cisterns. Cisterns are reinforced concrete tanks that collect and stores the rainwater that falls on the roof of the family home. We work with four families at a time. Our local crew works side by side with the families. Each cistern has a 6,300 gallon capacity and provides the owner-family with a year-round supply of potable water. We began building cisterns in 2002. Those are still in operation. We expect all our cisterns to last for many decades with minimal maintenance and upkeep.

## **Measurable Results**

Our cistern partnership has built more than 650 family-owned cisterns in twenty-six villages. Constant use and seasonal rainfall enable the cisterns to empty and refill more than twice each year. This means our cisterns have the potential to supply families with around eight million gallons of rainwater annually.

## **Front-loaded Investment/Long-Term Dividends**

\$3,000 dollars will build a cistern that will provide an abundant and easily accessible source of clean water for decades. The design has one moving part—the outlet faucet located at the bottom of the cistern. Gravity delivers and dispenses the rainwater. The low-tech design creates easy and affordable maintenance.

## **A Family Commitment**

Each cistern-owner family invests time, materials, and income into the building process. Family members help build their own cistern and the cisterns of three of their neighbors during the building process which takes about two weeks from start to finish.

## **Each Cistern is a Unique Micro-Loan Opportunity**

The cistern owner family agrees to repay, over time, the cost of materials needed to build the cistern. There is no signed contract, collateral, or interest rate on the loan. Each family is asked to repay the equivalent of \$50 US dollars per year. When the loan is repaid, the owner may request another cistern.

All the villages want more cisterns. Unfortunately, we have limited resources. Our local partners decide where to build in the future based, in part, on which towns have the highest percentage of cistern-owner families making annual loan repayments.

## **A Grassroots Water Harvest Partnership**

Our Mexican partners can build cisterns building from start to finish with the families that lack the financial resources to purchase the construction materials. American helpers lighten the load by dozens of tons, raise the spirits of our Christian Mexican work crew, and reflect God's love to all who pass the worksite and see this unusual sight.