

# MISSION NEWS

*Foundation for His Ministry - Transforming communities in Mexico starting with kids.*



## Life in Oaxaca: A Global Pandemic

Worldwide, we are living in tough times. But it can be difficult to conceptualize the reach of a global pandemic when you haven't left your living room in weeks. When you live in a different country than the rest of your family, quarantine hits a little differently.

In both the United States and Mexico, all dine-in restaurants, schools, and gyms are closed.

And all public events have been cancelled. Even still, life in Oaxaca does look different than quarantine in the states. Why? Why is Mexico not taking the same measures as the United States?

Because Mexico is not the United States.

Imagine your town or community relies solely on a farmer's market for food. That's true, for a large portion of Oaxaca. Except no more public gatherings. Imagine a family whose sole income is selling crafts to tourists in the city center. Except now there are travel bans. Imagine communities so isolated in the mountains that they may not see the coronavirus.

But with no public transportation, their food storage is running low.

Here at the children's home, we are blessed and grateful to have plenty of food, our own water source, and vehicles to make those essential trips. However, many people in the valley don't share that reality.

I fear for my Oaxacan community if commerce and trade run per usual. And yet, I fear for my community if they don't. In a race of COVID-19 versus starvation, how do you stay ahead? How do you keep so far away from family when all you want to do is give them a hug? I don't have the answer. God has not yet decided to give me those answers. But He did give me faith.

Faith, like the coronavirus, can't be seen. But faith, like the coronavirus, is contagious. If faith can move mountains, and split seas, then why can't it stop a global pandemic?

The whole world has been dealt a very difficult hand. But let us understand that God was not surprised by COVID-19. Even more than that, God has already beaten COVID-19. And we get to share in that victory!

**Kyle DePatis**  
*Missionary in Oaxaca*



## COVID-19 Update from our Oaxaca Mission

### WHAT WE'RE DOING:

Mexico is running a week or two behind the United States on the progression of the coronavirus, so we just began implementing increased safety measures last week and this week are tightening things up even more. The staff has been very respectful and understanding of what we are asking of them. It is our plan to sit down with the children as well in the next few days, to do our best to answer all of their questions and doubts.

### Measures we're taking here at the mission base include the following:

- *Mission life and outings:* Apart from a few exceptions approved of by administration, no visitors or staff from outside the home will be allowed to enter the property. Shopping and medical outings are permitted, but everyone needs to communicate well where they're going, take precautions while they're out, and disinfect themselves and the vehicle well upon their return (we're suspending use of public transportation during this time). Additionally we've asked staff to take their rest days here on the base, and have made the visitor center available for them to use for this purpose.

- *Schooling:* The children who attend school here on the base will continue classes normally, and we have special activities for the children (mostly teenagers) who do not have classes during this time.

- *Outreach and the church:* Staff members involved in outreach who live on the base will be helping in a different area. Staff members involved in outreach who live off base will follow indications of authorities and take extra precautions. We will suspend normal church services, but find a way to continue to meet together with those of us who live here on base.

### HOW YOU CAN BE PRAYING:

#### *Prayer for Oaxaca:*

- Oaxaca is one of the poorest states in Mexico and does not have the medical resources to respond to a pandemic. Please pray for medical personnel to have increased wisdom and knowledge and strength. Pray for the health of the people here.

- Oaxaca's main economy is tourism and it's hard to imagine how greatly this will impact everyone here. Pray especially for the poor, who live day to day on what they are able to sell.

- Pray for the government of Oaxaca. They have already implemented good restrictions on public gatherings, closing museums, markets, bars, movie theaters, etc. Pray for our governor, Alejandro Murat Hinojosa, during this time.

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### ***Prayer for the church:***

• May the church know how to respond with wisdom and love in these times. May we know how to meet the great needs that will arise. And may we shine with hope at a time when many in the world and in our surrounding communities are beginning to panic. (Jon Tyson's sermon on "The Church in the Time of Coronavirus" is really good and we're using it as a guide for living here at this time.)

### ***Prayer for the mission:***

- Children and staff who were looking forward to spending time with their family over spring break will now no longer be able to. Please pray that they might feel comfort and peace in this time.
- We have several staff members who just passed through a serious illness and have compromised health. Please pray for the health of everyone here, but especially for them.
- Pray for unity and peace here at the mission. It is human nature for division to occur when a group of people are closed off from the outside world. Pray that our love for each other would increase, that the Holy Spirit will help us to resolve conflict early and well, and that we can use this as a blessed time to grow in our faith and trust in God.

### **WHAT WE SEE GOD DOING RIGHT NOW:**



We ended our staff meeting today by making a list of all the things we have to be thankful for during this time. Here are some of them:

- That we are able to continue with our normal jobs in a time when so many are facing uncertainty in that area.
- That we have a large property here in which the children (and staff) can run around and play in. Also that we are naturally in a more remote location.

- That we can be fairly certain that we will continue to have access to food and clean water, thanks to our wells!
- That we have each other, and are people of a shared faith who can encourage and support each other in our walk with God during this time.
- That we have the resources to be able to reach out and encourage people beyond here (via phone calls, messages, positive/hopeful posts on social media).

I am personally very thankful for how things are going at this point. We have come up with a weekly schedule to maintain some structure to our week. And even though the teenagers weren't very excited at first to do a work project at the home, they all really jumped in and participated with positive attitudes. When I've had to ask staff to not go see family on their rest days, and even cancel their vacation, they have been very understanding and responsive.

The hard decisions we've had to make have been confirmed by decisions made a few days later by the government, and I feel like the Holy Spirit is guiding us through this time with wisdom and unity. The snowbirds were all able to successfully travel back to their homes (one of those decisions that was made even before the government mandated it). I'm even thankful that we recently went through a great deal of illness and are now on the tail end of that, rather than passing through those illnesses now and wondering if it is coronavirus.

One night last week I woke up at 3AM to an earthquake, and then I couldn't fall back to sleep thinking about all the plans we needed to make. After quite a while, I realized I needed to shift my focus to God and how He is in control and will provide. I quieted my mind to listen to God, and the words came to me right away, "Laura, I love you." I was delighted and wanted to hear more, but nothing else came. So I returned to meditate on those words, and promptly feel back to sleep. He is our hope, our provider and our protector.

**Laura Rodriguez**

*Oaxaca Mission Administrator*



# FOUNDATION FOR HIS MINISTRY

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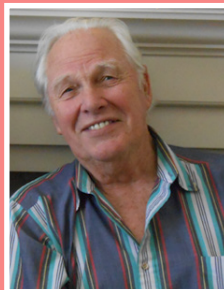
May 2020

Would you like to receive our newsletter by email?  
Simply email us at [info@ffhm.org](mailto:info@ffhm.org) or return your address label with your email address in the enclosed envelope.

## Thank you, Father, for those who care!

### WE'RE SAVING MONEY!

Historically, we have relied on retired volunteers to mail out our newsletter. Chuck Perea has been our champion of this project and has put in countless hours selflessly serving in this way. When COVID-19 hit and people were not allowed to gather we became concerned about this and how we were going to be able to mail out the newsletter.



Gregg McNelley in the US office began to explore direct mail companies that could print and then mail out our newsletter for us. We discovered by switching to a shorter format and using a mailing service, we would be able to save a significant amount each year! We are thrilled at these savings and the opportunity to be good stewards of the finances entrusted to us.

We hope that you enjoy this new format and are encouraged by the stories of how God is at work in Mexico.

Give a gift in memory or honor of someone special. The individual's name will be mentioned below. A card can be sent to the individual's family. Donate online [www.ffhm.org](http://www.ffhm.org) or call Linda at (949) 492-2200.

### IN MEMORY OF:

- Jenny Mora**
- Rodney Johnson**  
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- Barbara Coe**  
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- Chuck & Phyllis Mills**  
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- John Leonard**  
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*By Michiko Kus*
- John & Eleanor Cowpersmith**  
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*By Brian O'conner*

### IN HONOR OF:

- Chuck & Charla's 70th Wedding Anniversary**  
*By Shirley Golnick*  
*By Ken & Bev Liskum*
- Dorothy Adler**  
*By Rose Adler*
- The Marriage of Jeremy & Manisha Tikkanen**  
*By the Leighton, Sheridan & Bohn families*

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