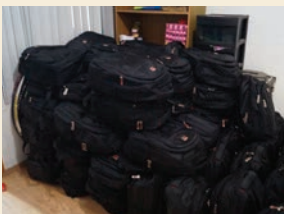




A Journey of Hope: Migrating Through Mexico

FOWM #257



DEAR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS OF WORLD MISSION,

The number of people migrating from Central American countries to Mexico has increased considerably. According to the National Human Rights Commission, in 2019 about 88,740 migrants were identified in Mexico, of whom more than 16k nearly 20% were under 18 years of age. Almost 7,000 were not accompanied by an adult.

What forces people to risk their lives crossing desert areas, exposure to inclement weather, uncertain access to water and food, and physical danger at the hands of extortionist gangs?

Central American migrants leave their countries of origin fleeing persecution, violence, extreme poverty, lack of job opportunities, corruption, and risk of death. They come looking for a better future and a safe place to live. Mexico is facing unprecedented displacement this year, predicted to exceed 100,000. How can the Covenant Church be more involved in alleviating the hardships of so many people's journey?

In the Gospel of Luke, we see Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem, likely exhausted as they looked for a place to deliver their first child. Joseph could only find a barn to rest in "because there was no guest room available for them" (2:1-7). Similar scenarios occur every day in Mexico and at the borders as migrants look for a place to spend the night with a clean mattress, food, and water, and where they feel protected.

It is our desire to minimize the risks they face through pastoral accompaniment, prevention, and information. That is why this past year the Misión DF Covenant Church (Mission Mexico City Covenant Church) decided to form a nonprofit called "Esperanza Migrante" (Migrant Hope) to extend God's compassion to displaced people.

Will you join us in prayer and financial giving so that migrants in Mexico can experience holistic care and the love of Christ?

For the sake of the whole gospel,

CURT PETERSON, Interim Executive Minister of Serve Globally
PIA & EUGENIO RESTREPO, Regional Coordinators for Latin America



Testimonies

WAYS TO GIVE...

- Give online at CovChurch.org/donate
- Charitable gift planning at CovenantTrust.com
- Monthly donations at CovChurch.org/resources/left-forms

Your regular gift to FOWM projects makes a difference. You can also endow your annual support through your estate plan. Contact our partners at Covenant Trust Company, (800) 483-2177, to learn more.

To make your gift today, please fill out and return the enclosed donation card in the return envelope, or mail to:

The Evangelical Covenant Church,
Attn: Friends of World Mission
PO Box 773420
Chicago, IL 60677-3420

For more information, visit CovChurch.org/fowm



In November 2018, the UN estimated that Mexico City was jammed by a large caravan of 7,200 people, many of whom would continue the march north. Inside a shelter during the caravan's stay in Mexico City, Rev. Miguel Ortiz had the opportunity to talk with several migrants. Here are two of those stories:

■ **A CHRISTIAN WOMAN NAMED BETSY** was traveling in the caravan to Mexico in 2018. She had worked for a telephone company in Honduras. Her life had not been easy; her husband physically abused her and on one occasion even burned her with boiling oil. Betsy reported him to the police, but they did little. Finally, her husband threatened to kill her. In that moment of desperation, she fled with her two young daughters. All she wanted was to be as far away from her ex-husband as possible so he could not harm her and her girls.

■ **EVERY MORNING WILFREDO WENT TO WORK** at a taqueria outside the shelter, where he found a temporary job. Wilfredo told me, "I need to work so I can send money to my wife and children." When asked why he left his country, he told me that although he made a good living there, extortions from criminal groups left him penniless. If he did not pay, they threatened to kill him or someone in his family.

He reported their threats to the police, but corruption prevented justice from being done. The night he left his house to escape to Mexico, his eight-year-old son begged to go with him, claiming that he could work too. That night, Wilfredo left his house not knowing when he would see them again. He told me with tears in his eyes, "I could not bring my family—the journey to the United States is too dangerous."

PROJECT #244

FOWM
UPDATE

CHURCH PLANNING IN INDIA

In a rural village in southern India, Anaya waited for 18 months to receive a risky surgery. A Covenant local partner shared the news of Jesus with Anaya while visiting the village hospital. This partner seeks to reach people in India for spiritual growth through community development and caring for the holistic needs of communities. Anaya heard the gospel message and the church prayed fervently for her. Thanks be to God, she was healed!

Thank you for giving to FOWM 244, which is helping our local partner be the hands and feet of Christ through holistic care for vulnerable people.

