

We're on our way to Mexico?

July 14, 2008 – July 24, 2008

Monday, July 14th

Everyone on the team arrived to the church on time at such an early hour in the morning 3:30 am. We weighed our bags, made last minute copies, and just finished getting prepared to leave. We were all set when we were informed of the terrible news that the flight to Atlanta was canceled! Everyone started praying and believing that we would still get out to Guadalajara that day. Meanwhile Todd was making calls to work everything out. The decision to wait at the airport for something to open up was made and we piled into some vans and headed out to the Buffalo airport. We were told that the earliest we could depart was Thursday, and that just wasn't going to work for us or God. Finally, we were informed of a flight departing from Toronto to Chicago, which would then have a connecting flight to Guadalajara. More calls were made and Pastor Pat, Brad Connors and Pastor Mark came to the airport to quickly get to the Toronto airport. To make a long story short we were blessed to be rushed in with the 10:10 flight, even though at first the airline workers said we were too late. Making it through international customs in a short 20 minutes!!! We made our connecting flight and what was a disaster in the morning turned out perfectly fine because God had full control of the issue.

Upon arrival we were introduced to some of the Pastors and people we will be working with over our stay in Mexico. Headed to the hotel we will be staying at while in Guadalajara, which is beautiful, and unpacked. From the hotel we headed to a restaurant with the pastors, their wives, worship and drama leaders and the other people we will be working with. At the restaurant we were surrounded by the Mexican culture with a mariachi band and some cultural dancing. Everyone was exhausted and by the time we left there a little after 11 we were all ready to crash.

God has provided a way for us to be here in Guadalajara in so many ways. There is no doubt we are here for a reason. I feel so blessed to be able to keep you all informed of how God is working on this trip. We also now have the privilege of stating we were in 3 countries in 1 day!

Tuesday, July 15th

Hola everyone!!! It has now been day 2 here in Guadalajara and already the whole team is learning a little more Spanish, and putting to work the Spanish they learned in school. Unfortunately, I have not studied Spanish for very long and finding it very difficult to communicate but I am trying very hard to pick up what I can. I have to say all the youth are enjoying seeing all the punch bugs on our drives from place to place, especially Sarah S.!

At about 10:30 am we went to Pastor Armando's church to have our worship team meet with there's. We were trying to find songs for the Wednesday and Sunday service, which we will be playing with them for. It was difficult trying to find songs that they know, know how to sing, and that we know as well. Finally we found some songs and had the opportunity to practice them, with there team. We were there practicing music till 3:30. We ate lunch there and then went through a quick, funny drama with Oscar, the drama leader. We had to learn a little Spanish for that drama.

We then headed to Polanco to do some ministry work. Oscar's family dressed up as clowns to draw children in. We did his drama and many children migrated to us. We did the Healing Rain drama, which is the one we did on Sunday before we left for México. Some of us played worship music while the rest of the team was getting the children dancing to the music, and interacting with them. The children just loved it. We also were able to pass out some toys that we had brought down for the children. It started to drizzle as well, but God held off the rain for us!!! Many children accepted Jesus then in turn ran to get their parents. This then turned into a time where people were coming to expect Jesus, and receive prayer. Some even came who didn't have children down there and just wanted prayer. This was an awesome time that God used to move in the people of Polanco. Praise God for the new souls saved!!!!

Wednesday July 16th

We headed to Pastor Armondo's church again to have the worship team practice music for both Wednesday and Sunday morning service. The practice went amazingly well. Their worship leader Armondo Jr. is very gifted and is a great leader, so even with the language barrier everything went smoothly. I am so glad that some of the people here know a little English. For lunch we were able to enjoy street tacos, and no one got sick from them!!

From there we headed to Los Pintos (not sure how to spell that) to do some more outreach. Greg Corral had gotten sick on the way there, so he was taken back to the hotel. We set up in the middle of the town to do some drama, music, testimonies, and prayer. Oscar, the drama leader from Pastor Armondo's church, and his family dressed up as clowns again and got all the kids that came to see what was going on, involved. A man with a broken leg came and was listening, later he was prayed over and was completely healed. We have heard since that he is going around town knocking on doors telling people who had healed him, Jesus Christo. The children surrounded our bus and it was difficult to leave but we had to get to the church for the Wednesday night service.

The service went very well, the worship team played some songs in English and even though there was a language barrier the people of the church still entered into an amazing time of worship, the drama team did the Spirit of the Sovereign Lord drama, Todd preached on putting on the Armor of God, how we are completely covered by God and don't have to fear whatever the devil might try to throw our way, it was very good.

We then went out to dinner with a bunch of people and had the opportunity to meet a lot of great new people!

Thursday, July 17th

We went to help Pastor Jose's sister, Lisa, with building her house. The team worked very hard for quite a few hours, especially Josh, Ian, Scott, and Jaycen! I was amazed how much everyone chipped in and worked very hard, even in the heat.

This is the day we had to switch hotels due to a mix up in the days we had told them we needed the rooms. So from there we went to another hotel not far from there, however there was no Internet available unfortunately. This worked out well though because the next few days we were so busy I don't even know if I would have had the time to write.

After we went to the new hotel, we headed out to Salvador's ranch, Lisa's boyfriends ranch to ride horses and eat dinner.

Friday, July 18th

We went out shopping in the morning. Did you know it costs like 2 pesos to use the bathroom! The whole bartering thing is very difficult when there is only one person in a group of ten who knows the language. From there we went to the youth retreat, which was 1 ½ hours away. It was a long drive, however the view was amazing. Lots of mountains! The youth are all very friendly and just came up to talk with everyone. There weren't clicks like you see in NY! Todd spoke a bit on the salt covenant, played some worship, ate dinner, another lady spoke about using your candle to light the world, and we had a great time of prayer and fellowship afterwards. From there we had to drive back to the hotel.

Saturday, July 19th

We had a wedding to go to today that Pastor Jose was doing. Mexican weddings are so long! They go through every wedding in the Bible. It was interesting to see a cultural wedding though. From there we had to rush to the retreat because the wedding was longer than we thought it would take.

A fellow named Carlos spoke, Armondo Jr. lead some worship, we ate dinner and then Todd finished up the salt covenant. We also had the opportunity partake in communion together. This was an amazing time of unity between us and the youth from Guadalajara. We all took tons of pictures that night. We are going to miss everyone so much.

On the way back from the retreat that night the parents were praying the whole way because our bus was not in the best of working order. The youth however did not notice and were having a great time in the back of the bus playing games. We made it back safely though.

Sunday, July 20th

Todd called Crossroads....during the service back at home. The service at Pastor Armondo's church went very well. We had someone from Buffalo and someone from there share a testimony about the salt covenant. The drama team did another drama/ dance to the song "All I Want to Do". We did a special song during offering, Todd preached, our worship team joined theirs to play songs in Spanish and English. We even played "Friend of God"! How awesome is that. It's so cool to hear the worship songs that we know in another language.

After church we went out to eat with a bunch of people and from there headed to the market with some of our friends from the area, which was a great time of fellowship.