

Dear Parents,

2019 is coming up quickly and with a new year comes another opportunity to love our neighbors through a mission trip to Mexico. Our trip this coming year will be from February 16-23, 2019. This large document contains much of the information you will need to make an informed decision about whether your child will participate, but please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any additional questions.

Particularly if this is your first time sending your child with us to Mexico, I want to be as transparent as possible regarding the details of the trip and to address concerns you may have regarding safety associated with travel in Mexico. Each year we've taken this trip (17 years and counting) we have emphasized to students and parents that there are known added dangers when traveling to Mexico. We, however, also focus on the fact that in cooperation with the organization we travel with, Amor Ministries ([www.amor.org](http://www.amor.org)), we can take steps to prepare for and control much of the risk.

Amor Ministries works with the governments of the U.S. and Mexico and is constantly reassessing and customizing its safety measures to the current circumstances. They have never been told to cease mission trips in Mexico. Amor has contacts in communities all over the greater Tijuana area and will not allow us to build anywhere near trouble spots.

Amor representatives meet us in San Diego, escort us over the border and caravan with us to the secure campsite in the countryside east of Tijuana. Guards at this camp are on watch 24 hours a day. Amor escorts us to our work sites and maintains contact with us throughout the work day. Amor does not allow us to drive at night and we must leave our work sites well before sunset. We do not drive anywhere in Mexico other than the routes to and from our campsite and work site.

Thank you for taking the time to review this information and, again, for the trust you place in us. We take it seriously and know that you do as well.

Please don't hesitate to talk with me further if you have any concerns not yet addressed or if you'd like clarification or materials from Amor Ministries.

Sincerely, Steve Fainer

Director of Youth Ministry

# PCLG High School Youth Group

## Mexico Mission Trip 2019 Info

### Where Are We Going?

Our trip will take us to Tijuana, Mexico. We will be taking this trip in cooperation with Amor Ministries. Amor has been building homes in Mexico since 1980. We will be staying in Amor's camp with many other groups from American churches who are also building homes throughout the Tijuana area. This is our 17th year in a row of making this trip to Mexico with Amor, and of course, we now do it twice a year.

### Why Are We Going?

We are taking this trip to put our faith into action. We are taking this trip to open our eyes and use them to see the world around us. We are taking this trip to get our hands dirty and our bodies tired for someone else's good. We are taking this trip because we want to experience love in a different way. We are taking this trip to grow closer to each other, to God, and even to ourselves. We are taking this trip to expand God's kingdom a little further. We are taking this trip because God meets us. We are taking this trip because this is something we *can* do to make people's lives better. We are taking this trip because it's fun and we look forward to it almost every day of our lives.

### When Do We Need To Decide If We're Going?

The date for your student to decide if they will be participating in the mission trip is **December 16**. This is a Sunday! On December 16, students must have turned in their **Mission Trip Covenant**, **Medical release**, and **\$450** made payable to PCLG, or paid online at [pclg.org](http://pclg.org). Fees can be paid in installments. An online Amor participation form must also be filled out. 18 yrs +: <https://bit.ly/2NMuumk>  
17 yrs -: <https://bit.ly/2LsoRwQ>

Follow link or ask Steve/Carlo to text it to you.

### When Are We Going?

Our trip will run from February 16-23, 2019.

### What Are We Going To Do?

As stated above, we will arrive at the Amor camp on Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup> where we will set up tents, kitchen and community space. On Monday, an Amor staff member will escort us to our building site where we will meet the family or families who will be living in a new home at the end of the week. We will be at the site for four days (Monday – Thursday). The home will be 11' by 22' and will be two rooms with a concrete slab floor and stucco finished exterior. Depending on the number of students going, we may build more than one house or a double-wide.

## How Much Does It Cost?

The trip will cost **\$450** per student ... although all students need to also participate in the fundraising for the remaining costs. Our fundraising efforts will be focused on the Pancake Breakfast on Sunday, January 27. Please let coaches and others know students won't be available on January 27 before 1 p.m.

In fact, Amor has been raising their organizational fees the last few years, so just to participate with them is now \$325 per person. Half of what we need to raise per person does not include our food, transportation, shelter, tools, van rentals or anything other than supporting Amor and providing materials for house-building. The **\$450 is due December 16**, but you are invited to pay in installments if you would like. Also, if the cost is a concern, please speak with Steve (before the due date) ... don't let this stop you from participating!

## Who's Going With My Kids?

At least (with experience in parenthesis):

Steve Fainer (20+ trips) Carlo Panighetti (20+ trips) Jackson Bordelon (10+ trips)

Rev. Erica Rader William Lasher

Several more adults are presently working out their schedules for work. This is not nearly a complete list.

## Schedule for Mexico Prep and Trip

| Date  | Event                                 |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| Sunday, Dec. 16   | Forms & Money Due                     |
| Sunday, Jan. 6 – 7:30 p.m.  | Mexico Team Meeting                   |
| Sunday, Jan. 13 – 7:30 p.m.   | Mexico Team Meeting – Passport Check! |
| Sunday, Jan. 20 – 7:30 p.m.   | Mexico Team Meeting                   |
| Saturday, Jan. 26 – 5:00 p.m.   | Pancake Breakfast Setup               |
| Sunday, Jan. 27 - 7:30 a.m.   | Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser          |
| Sunday, Feb. 3 – 7:30 p.m.  | Mexico Team Meeting                   |
| Sunday, Feb 10 – 10 a.m.  | Church Commissioning during Worship   |
| Sunday, Feb. 10 – 11 a.m.   | Packing Day #1                        |
| Sunday, Feb. 11 – 7:30 p.m.   | Mexico Team Meeting                   |
| Friday, Feb. 15 – 4:00 p.m.   | Packing Day #2                        |
| <b>Saturday, Feb. 16 – Saturday, Feb. 23</b><br><b>Feb. 16 arrival: 6:30 a.m.</b> | <b>MEXICO!</b>                        |
| Sunday, Feb 24 – 11:30 a.m.   | Cleanup                               |
| Sunday, March 3   | Worship Planning                      |
| Sunday, March 10 or 17 – 9 a.m.   | Mexico worship service                |

## What Needs To Be Done Before We Leave?

**Meetings:** As we have the last several years, we will hold our Mexico team meetings on Sunday evenings during the normal youth group time. Not all students in our youth group will be able to go to Mexico this year, but we know the mission team is a portion of a larger community sent out by their church and friends. It is *mission critical* for students going to Mexico to be at every meeting in January and February as we prepare for the trip.

Students will help organize supplies. Students will learn how to hammer a nail. They will learn how to build a wall. Hopefully, they will learn a lot more. They must be there and are expected to be there at the meetings. Communication is critical to our success and without students being present, communication is a major pain. Students should inform Steve ASAP if they know they will not be in attendance at a meeting.

**Fundraising:** We need to raise at least \$4000 during January to fund the expenses for the trip. We have scheduled our Annual Pancake Breakfast for Sunday, January 27 with two mealtimes at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Students will be expected at PCLG from 7:30 a.m. to approximately 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 27 (we hope to be done sooner on Sunday, but helpfulness will determine completion). We will also be setting up for an hour or so on Saturday the 26th at 5:00 p.m.

**Vehicles:** Although we will be renting a cargo van, we are in need of at least five or six more high capacity vehicles (suburbans, etc.) which parents or other church members (usually parents) would be willing to loan us for the week. Mexican insurance is purchased for the car out of our budget.

**Passports:** Passports are required to reenter the U.S. from Mexico. We will have a passport check on January 13. There are numerous sources online to help you get your child a passport quickly. Also, there is an office in San Francisco that has a very quick turnaround if time gets out of hand.

**Packing Day #1:** We will have non-perishable shopping done one week ahead of time so we can pack a great deal of stuff on Sunday, February 10 with the mission team – we call this day “Packing Day #1” and it involves checking over and cleaning our equipment as well.

## What’s the plan for the trip?

On Saturday February 16, please arrive at PCLG by 6:30 a.m. so we can depart shortly thereafter. The vehicles will be packed on Friday, February 15, from 4 p.m.

until we are done. We call the Friday before Mexico, "Packing Day #2". Everyone will need to have his or her bags at the church by 4:00 on Friday afternoon.

We will drive to Southern California all day Saturday, February 16th and stay at Geneva Presbyterian Church in Laguna Hills. Sunday morning we will drive to San Diego to meet the Amor Ministries team before crossing the border. Sunday night through Thursday night will be spent at the Amor camp outside Tijuana in Mexico. On Friday, February 22nd, we will return to stay at another church Southern California. We will plan to arrive home at PCLG between 3 pm and 5 pm on Saturday the 23rd. When we are about an hour away we will call a contact in Los Gatos who will let everyone know of our arrival time through a phone tree. Phone tree lists and emergency contacts will be distributed on the morning of our departure. If you are a parent interested in helping with this phone tree, please email Steve at [fainer@gmail.com](mailto:fainer@gmail.com). Generally, we just ambush you at 6:30 a.m. the day we leave.

## **Safety**

We are aware of and closely monitoring the situation in Tijuana, Mexico this year. Amor is constantly reassuring group leaders about the safety of participants and the deliberate choices Amor makes about neighborhoods in which to build, how to transport groups, etc.

## **Other Details**

1. Students are expected to come on February 24 to help clean up after the trip.
2. Students will be expected to participate in the worship service wherein participants in the trip share their experience with the whole congregation and run the entire worship service on March 10.
3. Parents will be contacted if their student becomes a problem on the trip.

## **Additional Information ...**

Please feel free to call Steve Fainer at 408-472-0208 (mobile phone, office and voicemail). Or email at [fainer@gmail.com](mailto:fainer@gmail.com). I will be glad to spend some time going over the trip in more detail as you decide about whether your child can/will participate in the mission trip.

The following pages are particularly for Students.

**Hello. We're soooo happy you want to go to Mexico. We're excited to go with you.**

**Here is what we need from you:**

- 1. \$450 paid to PCLG by check or [online](#), via pclg.org.**
- 2. PCLG Medical Release signed by parent. See attached.**
- 3. Fill out Online Amor form: 18 yrs +: <https://bit.ly/2NMuumk> 17 yrs -: <https://bit.ly/2LsoRwQ>**
- 4. Finish these by December 16, 2018.**
- 5. Know what's expected, as outlined below. Read it. Memorize it. Be accountable to it.**
- 6. Your attendance and attention at related meetings and events.**

**Thanks.**

## 2019 SRHI MEXICO COVENANT FOR STUDENTS

It is important we have some things understood between all of us. These are our community expectations for Mexico participation.

1. I am responsible enough to know when meetings and fundraisers are and to show up on time at events. I release Steve from having to remind me every time I am supposed to be somewhere.
2. I understand border laws have changed and I will need to get a current passport, if I do not already have one. I understand the adult team will need to do a passport check at the **January 14** meeting and I will bring my passport. see [www.usps.com/international/passports.htm](http://www.usps.com/international/passports.htm) for information on how to apply for a new or renewed passport.
3. I understand that without fundraising we will not be able to take this trip. I agree to participate in raising money by working at the Pancake breakfast on **January 26 and 27**. ***Participating in this event is necessary for my participation in the trip to Mexico.***
4. I will participate in the PCLG worship service on Sunday, March 10 to share with the congregation what we did and to lead them in worship. This trip is a mission of PCLG and sponsored by the congregation. Young adults, even those who are not “members” of the church, are considered a part of this community. I understand that my participation in this service is an integral part of the mission trip and an expression of gratitude for this opportunity.
5. I understand participation in this year’s trip preparations also includes reading and thinking through devotionals provided by the leadership team. I’m responsible for making sure I get myself a copy, and I’ll read the necessary chapter before each meeting.
6. I am looking forward to this trip with an open heart and a willing spirit... ready to learn, work, and enjoy myself. I will be on time to all scheduled events and participate in all group activities.
7. I will be *flexible* when our schedule changes and our plans are modified. I will volunteer to help prepare meals, wash dishes, and other projects at the request of the leadership team.
8. I will drink lots of water, wear a hat and take breaks throughout the workday. I will let an adult know if I am feeling ill at any time.
9. I understand my parents may be contacted based on my behavior during the planning process or during the trip.
10. I understand I will be with a member of the leadership team at all times while in Mexico. I will not wander off without telling someone. If I need time alone, I understand I need to let Steve know.
11. As a member of the PCLG Mexico 2019 Team, I will participate in planning our mission trip. I understand being at team meetings is important to our growth as a mission team and to my friendships within the group. I will look at the following dates and talk with Steve if there is a problem for any of these dates, and I will do so **well** in advance.

12. *VERY IMPORTANT: I will not entertain the idea of bringing drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind into Mexico or on this trip. I realize doing so could jeopardize the safety of all the members of our team. I understand that if I have any of these items, my parents will be contacted immediately to arrange for me to return home at their expense. I will not make any attempt to purchase drugs, alcohol, or weapons of any kind at any time on this trip.*
13. *I will prepare for this trip over the next four months by refraining from using drugs and/or alcohol during the time we are planning for this trip (we take this seriously, and we are on social media). If I have a problem agreeing to this, or any of the requirements, I will talk to Steve to discuss the situation. Not only because it is an expectation, but also because he can help.*

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## MEDICAL INFORMATION & RELEASE FORM

### Presbyterian Church Of Los Gatos

16575 Shannon Road Los Gatos, CA 95032

(408) 356-6156- Voice (408) 358-4167-Fax

Youth Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Mobile Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Medical Care

Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Office Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Hospitalization

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Holder \_\_\_\_\_

Group Number \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Number \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment of Policy Holder \_\_\_\_\_

Special Health Problems (Allergies, medications, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

**My son/daughter has my permission to participate in the sponsored activities of the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos. As parent or legal guardian of the above youth, I hereby authorize any emergency medical and/or emergency medical and/or emergency surgical care, including diagnosis and treatment to be rendered to him/her by any licensed physician or surgeon, or by any licensed hospital, when accompanied by an adult (21 or older) leader of Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos. I assume full responsibility for such care, including prescribed medications and transportation by ambulance, and agree to make full payment for the same upon receipt of statement or fees. I do hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos from any and all actions, claims, demands, suits, or other liabilities which may result from the above named minor's activities as stated above.**

**I grant to the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos, its representatives and employees, the right to use my son/daughter's photographs associated with activities of the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos. I agree that the Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos may use such photographs of my son/daughter for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Here's that calendar again, detach for your convenience.

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