



## ***Interested in a Mission Study Trip To the US/Mexico Border? (and possibly the Mexico/Guatemala border)***

Would you like to learn more about what happens when immigrants try to cross the US – Mexico border and about church ministries that serve along the border? Would you be interested in experiencing the real border without the filter of the news media? Would you like to meet mission co-workers who serve in the border ministry? Would you consider taking a longer trip with travel to the southern Mexico state of Chiapas to meet farmers who grow Café Justo's coffee beans and to see life along the border between Mexico and Guatemala?

The Mission and Outreach Committee is planning a trip to Mexico in October or November. It would be an educational visit to learn about the border, migration to the US from Central America and Mexico and how it is changing, and the ministries that serve the border area. The trip would be a way to demonstrate genuine interest in the people and the ministries, and to show Christian love instead of the sentiment depicted too often in today's rhetoric. We have some connection through sale of Café Justo coffees. Mark Adams, the US coordinator of the Frontera de Cristo ministry, visited and spoke at our church in June, 2017. Dave and Sue Thomas served as PC(USA) mission co-workers in Mexico for over 11 years. Dave has offered to lead the trip.

We are considering two alternatives and would pick one based on the level of interest. One trip would spend five days in Sonora, in northern Mexico, to gain an appreciation of the border between the US and Mexico and to learn about the ministries of Frontera de Cristo and the operation of Café Justo that was established with Frontera de Cristo's assistance, and to see a different ministry in Nogales. We would stay four nights in Agua Prieta, across the border from Douglas, Arizona, and one night in Nogales, Mexico. Accommodations would be in dorm style housing or in a local motel, depending on the group's wishes. Cost, including, meals, travel and accommodations in Mexico, would be \$400 to \$500 per person, not including travel from Estes to Tucson.

The other option is based on a trip that Frontera de Cristo offers each year, where we would spend two days in Agua Prieta, then fly to Chiapas for four days with the Café Justo coffee cooperative. This trip would use Café Justo as a vehicle to learn about migration north from Central America, the nature of the two borders, and the ministry work of Frontera de Cristo. Accommodations are in the Lily of the Valley church in Agua Prieta for two nights, one night in a motel in Hermosillo, five nights with families in Chiapas, and possibly a night in Agua Prieta upon return from Chiapas. Cost of this trip is \$1,700 per person, again not including travel from Estes to Tucson, but including meals, accommodation and travel in Mexico.

The following pages show possible itineraries for the two trips. We need sincere expressions of interest from at least 10 people to take this from concept to actual plans. If you are interested, please contact Lisa Plaut of the Mission and Outreach Committee or Terry Brigham at the church office, by Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Representative Itinerary for US/Mexico Border Mission Study Trip

This option is a five-day trip to the US/Mexico border, staying four nights in Agua Prieta, across the border from Douglas, Arizona, and one night in the Mexican city of Nogales. The itinerary is tentative and, with guidance from the Frontera de Cristo Mexico coordinator, will be developed into a final version that incorporates the wishes of the participants. The trip will include study sessions in Estes before departure.

- Friday** Arrive on your own in Tucson and stay overnight at an airport area motel  
(If you drive, you could leave your car at the Tucson airport garage during the days in Mexico)
- Saturday** Drive to Douglas in rented van that can be driven in Mexico  
Welcome and Biblical reflections at the border, lunch at restaurant in Douglas  
Meeting and conversation with US Border Patrol, tour of border infrastructure (if allowed)  
Cross to Agua Prieta, settle into dorm style accommodations or local motel (to be determined)  
Dinner at Migrant Shelter, followed by group reflections on the day
- Sunday** Breakfast, Biblical reflections on the day ahead  
Worship service at Lirio de los Valles church  
Orientation to ministries of Frontera de Cristo, lunch and visits to ministries  
Dinner, followed by group reflections on the day
- Monday** Breakfast, Biblical reflections on the day ahead  
Visit to other ministries of Frontera de Cristo, lunch  
Tour the Café Justo roasting facility  
Dinner with Café Justo, followed by group reflections on the day
- Tuesday** Breakfast, Biblical reflections on the day ahead  
Orientation to migration trends; walk migrant trails and the border, lunch in the desert  
Visit the Migrant Resource Center  
Walk across the border to the US; Healing Our Borders Prayer Vigil at the border  
Dinner in Douglas, group reflections on the day and return to Agua Prieta
- Wednesday** Breakfast, then drive to Nogales, Mexico (about 2 hours west of Agua Prieta)  
Visit Compañeros en Misión (Partners in Mission)  
Visit Grupo Beta, a Mexican migrant protection agency  
Lunch, dinner and accommodations in Nogales  
Group reflections on the day and the overall mission trip experience
- Thursday** Breakfast, then drive back to Tucson for return travel per individual arrangements



See these websites for information

about the Frontera de Cristo ministry:  
<http://fronteradecristo.org>

and the Café Justo Coffee Cooperative:  
<https://www.justcoffee.org>

## Representative Itinerary for Border to Border Mission Study Trip

This option is modeled on the border to border trip conducted by Frontera de Cristo each year in November. Normally, Frontera de Cristo limits the number of individuals from a single church to one or two people. However, if we have 10 participants, Frontera de Cristo has offered to duplicate the trip for our group. This is the likely itinerary. It would also include study sessions in Estes in advance of the travel.

- Thursday Arrive on your own in Tucson and stay overnight at an airport area motel  
Note: if you drive, you could leave your car at the Tucson airport, where covered parking is available for less than \$10 a day, for the duration of the Mexico trip
- Friday Pick up at your motel and drive to Douglas (approximately 2 hours south-east of Tucson)  
Welcome and Biblical reflections at the border  
Lunch at restaurant in Douglas  
Meeting and conversation with US Border Patrol, tour of border infrastructure  
Cross border to Agua Prieta, settle in at Lirio de los Valles church  
Dinner at Migrant Shelter  
Overnight in dorm style accommodations at Lirio de los Valles
- Saturday Breakfast at the church, Biblical reflections  
Walk in the Sonoran Desert and along the border  
Return to the church for a rest  
Tour the Café Justo roasting facility  
Dinner with Café Justo  
Overnight in dorm style accommodations at Lirio de los Valles
- Sunday Breakfast at the church, Biblical reflections  
Visit the Migrant Resource Center  
Worship service at Lirio de los Valles and lunch  
Drive to Hermosillo (4 ½ - 5-hour drive SW of Agua Prieta), evening arrival at airport hotel, dinner and overnight in Hermosillo
- Monday Fly from Hermosillo to Tapachula, Chiapas, near the Guatemala border, with plane change and opportunity for lunch at the Mexico City airport, late afternoon arrival in Tapachula  
Drive to Salvador Urbina, welcome, meet host families, dinner with families  
Overnight in home of host family (1-2 couples per host family)
- Tuesday Breakfast with host family, Biblical reflections  
Visit with farming family, see coffee plant nurseries  
Lunch with family, afternoon rest and additional visit to their farming operation  
Dinner and overnight in home of host family
- Wednesday Breakfast with host family, Biblical reflections  
Visit to migrant shelter on Mexican side of Mexico/Guatemala border  
Visit to migrant shelter in Guatemala  
Dinner at restaurant in Tapachula

- Thursday      Breakfast with host family, Biblical reflections  
 Short hike to Mariposa Waterfalls  
 Visit one of the coffee growing cooperatives  
 Lunch with a coffee cooperative family  
 Meeting with Café Justo cooperative  
 Dinner and overnight in home of host family
- Friday         Breakfast with host family, Biblical reflections  
 Visit with farming family to see coffee bean drying operation  
 Lunch with farming family  
 See coffee processing operation  
 Farewell dinner  
 Overnight in home of host family
- Saturday       Early morning drive to Tapachula (depart at 4:00 am), then fly to Mexico City, with connecting flight to Hermosillo or alternate travel arrangements per individual plans; breakfast at Mexico City airport on your own  
 For those returning to Tucson, flight to Hermosillo, lunch there, followed by drive back to Agua Prieta with late evening arrival (about 8:30 pm)  
 Accommodations in Agua Prieta
- Sunday         Breakfast, then drive back to Tucson

