



Casas por Cristo
short term missions

Spiritual Outreach Guide

Although our main goal is to serve God through building homes for families, we encourage teams to participate in additional evangelistic efforts. This guide will provide you with tips, suggestions, and resources to aid you in your planning. Our Spiritual Outreach Department would be glad to assist you in planning and coordinating your outreach event. We ask that you remember that building the home is the first priority, but encourage you to keep things simple and bring enough people to complete both the construction of the home and any additional activities. Please remember to plan plenty of time for both the build and your activity.

Pray!

Whether you choose to do one of the listed ideas, create your own, or simply build the home, the best thing that you can do is pray. Pray for the family for whom you will be building. Pray for the pastor and the congregation of church in which you will be staying. Pray for Juárez, Acuña and México. Pray for your Casas por Cristo staff leader and for your team members.

Time Frame

When the home is completed: Upon completion of the house and dedication, teams may spend the remainder of that day and/or an extra day doing additional community activities.

During the construction of the home: Teams may bring additional people to participate solely in community evangelistic efforts. These individuals typically stay at the church while the team is at the worksite. (Please be aware that there will NOT be a Casas staff leader with these people at the church. It is important that you feel comfortable leaving a group behind. This is strongly discouraged if working in Juárez.)

At night or during “siesta”: Groups may do additional projects during their down time. “Siesta” typically falls between 12pm and 3:30pm during the summer, and at the end of the work day (5:00 pm) during the rest of the year. When planning these activities, please be sure to leave enough time for the group to rest, relax, and recuperate.

Four Featured Ideas

1. Kids’ Club

Description: A Vacation Bible School (VBS) program. This can be done a number of different ways.

1. 1-2 hours per day on the site of your building project.
2. 1-2 hours per day at the church in which you are staying.
3. 1-2 hours per day at the sponsoring pastors’ church.

We recommend that the kids’ club is kept simple, with easy activities and an easy lesson to teach to the children. It is also important to remember that schools and school calendars operate differently in México. Most kids attend classes in either the morning or in the afternoon; therefore you may only reach some of the kids in the area if you do the club at the same time each day. Consider alternating between morning and

afternoon sessions to try to reach all kids. As far as school calendars, kids typically attend school through the middle of June and start back again in early August.

As a group you will need to:

- Work with the local pastor to pass out fliers in the neighborhood. Use the first day to let the neighborhood children and parents know you will be offering activities for kids during the rest of the week.
- Order and/or bring all of the materials needed for your kids club with you (any materials for activities and any lesson materials in Spanish). If you have materials shipped to the Casas por Cristo office, remember to pick them up when you meet at the office and before you cross the border.

Casas por Cristo is willing to:

- Make an early contact with the pastor with whom you will be working to ensure their support and connection to the kids' club.
- Help make fliers for your kids' club with pertinent information, such as times and locations.
- Answer any questions you may have and point you in the right direction for materials and lessons.

2. Sports Outreach

Both soccer and baseball are very popular in México. Juárez definitely favors soccer, but Acuña and the people there have fallen in love with baseball. Both of these sports present an opportunity to open a door for evangelism. Many churches are located in close proximity to a soccer / baseball field or a park. If none of these exist in the area, a dirt road or an open lot works just as well!

As a group you will need to:

- Work with the local pastor to pass out fliers in the neighborhood. Use the first day to let the neighborhood children and parents know you will be offering activities for kids during the rest of the week.
- Bring all of the materials needed for your sports outreach with you (balls, gloves, cones, etc.) for your activities and any instructions/materials in Spanish.

Casas por Cristo is willing to:

- Make an early contact with the pastor with whom you will be working to ensure their support and connection with the sports outreach.
- Ask the pastor to come out each day to share a lesson with the community members during the sports outreach.
- Help make fliers for your sports outreach with pertinent information like times and locations.
- Answer any questions you may have and point you in the right direction for materials and lessons.

3. Community Outreach Dinner

If your group is ambitious, planning a meal for the church and its neighbors is a great way to reach out to the community. Word usually spreads fast, so plan for a large group of attendees! The meal should be fairly simple, as some of the kitchen facilities are not equipped with all of the amenities and utensils to which you are accustomed. Grilling hamburgers and hotdogs is one idea that works well when feeding a large group with limited resources.

As a group you will need to:

- Work with the local pastor to pass out fliers in the neighborhood. Use the first day to let the neighborhood know you will be hosting a meal.
- You will need to bring all of the items needed for the meal with you, including food, drinks, silverware, cups, plates, serving dishes, etc.
- If you plan on having any other activities for the children, you will need to bring all of those items with you as well.

Casas por Cristo is willing to:

- Make an early contact with the pastor with whom you will be working with to ensure their support and connection to the community outreach dinner.
- Arrange for the pastor to prepare a “lesson” during or following the meal.
- Help make fliers for your outreach dinner with pertinent information, such as times and location.
- Answer any questions you may have and point you in the right direction for food, materials, etc.

4. Puppet Ministry

Puppet shows are a great way to catch attention and draw in kids from the community. We have found that it works well to use a Spanish puppet recording and play it over a portable system while performing with puppets. Though it may seem hokey, the majority of these kids have never seen anything like this and they really enjoy it. It is also a great way to share the Gospel message clearly without having to struggle to pronounce the words in Spanish. Obviously, if you feel comfortable with your Spanish abilities, feel free to organize the show without a recording.

As a group you will need to:

- Work with the local pastor to pass out fliers in the neighborhood. Use the first day to let the neighborhood children and their parents know you will be hosting puppet shows for kids throughout the week.
- Bring all of the items needed for your puppet show, including the puppets, materials, “stage”, sound equipment, etc.

Casas por Cristo is willing to:

- Make an early contact with the pastor with whom you will be working to ensure their support and connection with the puppet outreach.
- Arrange for the pastor to prepare follow up thoughts to share at the end of the puppet show.
- Help make fliers for your puppet show with pertinent information, such as times and locations.
- Answer any questions and point you in the right direction for any additional materials you may need.

Additional Information

It is important to get the local church congregation involved in your outreach activity, so that you can establish relationships in the community that will remain long after your team leaves. We will do our best to contact your host pastor prior to your visit to get him/her involved in your outreach activity. We ask that you inform us of your activity at the beginning of the month prior to your visit so we will have enough time to contact your pastor at the monthly pastor’s meeting. For example, if your trip is scheduled for the week of May 28th, please

let us know about your outreach event by the beginning of April. It is also important that whatever activities you plan to offer are simple enough to be organized in a short period of time.

It is a good idea to bring an informational flyer written in Spanish that you can hand out to the neighborhood surrounding your church and/or worksite. It should include the “when” and “where” details. If you need assistance, we are willing to make invitations to your event and deliver them to the pastor with whom you will be working. For greater impact, bring a translator. This will aid you in making plans with the pastor and church members, and will allow you to more effectively communicate the Gospel.

An effective and simple way to spread the name of Christ is to walk through neighborhoods and hand out gifts and materials with the Gospel message. Some ideas include:

- Soccer balls with Spanish bible verses
- Spanish books and bibles
- Tracts
- Beaded reminder bracelets
- Ziploc bags filled with goodies.
 - Candy, Dolls, Crayons, Spanish Coloring Books, Spanish Tracts, Matchbox Cars, Toiletries

Additional Resources

SAEM (Spanish American Evangelism Ministry)

915.852.2525

www.spanam.org

SAEM has a wide variety of Spanish Bibles, tracts, and other useful outreach materials. Many of the tracts are free of charge or of minimal expense. If you would like a catalog, feel free to contact them directly. SAEM will deliver all materials to the Casas por Cristo office.

SAEM also has pre-made evangelism packets available for only \$3.00 per packet. These packets include an Old Testament coloring book, crayons, New Testament, 4 Christian tracts, hard candy, and a small toy.

Casa Bautista de Publicaciones (Baptist Spanish Publishing House)

800.775.5958

www.casabautista.org

As with SAEM, Casa Bautista has a wide variety of Spanish books, Bibles, tracts, calendars, bookmarks, VBS and drama curriculums, discipleship development, devotionals, and commentaries. Call Casa Bautista for a catalog of available resources. When ordering, mention Casas por Cristo.

In conclusion, we are thrilled to partner with you as we strive to make Jesus known along the U.S./México border. Be creative as you seek to share Christ with the people you are coming to serve. And feel free to contact us with any questions or if you need any further assistance.

Many Blessings,

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