

Day 6

Today was our last full day of our mission trip. We began our day with our usual breakfast at the hotel, and then studied Colossians 1: 1 - 14 as a team. Our team reflected on how the Lord had been so faithful and merciful to our team during this amazing week of missions. In addition, each member of our team provided one observation that we could take away from our time here in Oaxaca. It was wonderful to hear how the Lord had been working in the heart of each team member as they shared during this time together.

As we began our day, our very own Rich Delano and Chris McReynolds, held a meeting at the IPAP church with Pastor Josias and his Deacons, to provide some welcomed support for the work of "MoviPres". "MoviPres" is a wonderful ministry of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, led by Pastor Josias (the Evangelism Chair), which is meant to strengthen churches and train pastors and laypeople to disciple others.

Meanwhile, the rest of the team took a shuttle bus to the UNESCO World Heritage Site, home to the famous Mount Alban. This historical landmark rests on top of a mountain overlooking the whole city of Oaxaca and its surrounding suburbs; containing the archaeological ruins of the Zapotec civilization (circa 500 BCE). The team stood astonished as we learned about this indigenous people group of Mexico, who lived much different lives as we do. As we walked alongside the ruins, we were given amazing views overlooking thousands of homes in Oaxaca, and the Xoxo community. It was a wonderful place to pray for the Church and the people we had met throughout the week.

Later that evening, the team traveled to the home of Pastor Josias and his family for dinner. Pastor Josias graciously showed us around their home and their family estate. We learned about their family's influence by starting a church in their neighborhood, and at the same time experienced some laughter by being given the opportunity to interact with their talking sheep. After the tour, Ely Luna (Pastor Josias' wife) graciously welcomed us and her family served our mission team and select officers of their church to a wonderful home cooked meal that included a squash and pumpkin flower soup, homemade corn tortillas, tortilla chips, along with a charcuterie of local favorite meats and cheeses, followed by a delicious slice of cake. The whole evening was filled with fellowship, laughter, warm embraces, and the presence of God was clearly seen and felt that night. To cap it all off, Pastor Josias' family later provided us with personalized gifts for each member of our team, as a means to say thank you for our time visiting and serving with them over the last week. Their thoughtfulness and hospitality were beautiful blessings for each member of our team. Shortly thereafter, we said our goodbyes, and headed back on our way to the hotel to end the evening.

I end with a quote shared by our very own Eddie Chapa, regarding his (and our) mission team experience in Oaxaca, Mexico this past week.

"Overall, as a team we have grown together in a profound way. I have been on other mission trips, but the beautiful people of Oaxaca have so touched my heart. During this trip we have cried together, laughed together, and also have had profound moments with one another.

Rogelio (Elder), David (Young Adult/Translator), and other members of this community continually display a heart of prayer. The love they have for each other and the Lord is truly evident in Oaxaca.

Additionally, the amazing people of Xoxo; many who live in economic poverty and have less than what we have, have a joy for the Lord that is beyond economics, status, resume, and/or their education. They demonstrate a complete trust in God and depend on one another in their community. I hope to learn from this experience, admiring their values as seen in how they live out the Gospel, rather than focusing on the values we sometimes seek in America. Overall, though, I am grateful for those blessings." Thank you, Lord Jesus.

