



XPUJIL, MEXICO

February 15-20

WATER CISTERN MINISTRY

Rainwater Harvesting

Westminster took it's first team to Xpujil the summer of 2024 and we are set to take a second team **February 15-20, 2025**. Xpujil is in the southern portion of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula—close to Belize and Guatemala. Teams spend the week working alongside Ch'ol Presbyterian partners on 4 cisterns at a time mixing concrete to be poured into molds that form the water cistern.

Total Trip Cost: Between \$1,000 & \$1,300 / person

Final trip cost per person depends on the number of spots filled and the price fluctuation of flights and building materials. Maximum 7 spots available. We need at least 5 spots filled for the trip to happen. Trip cost includes flight, transportation, food, housing, travel insurance, and cistern building materials. **Registration open until filled. \$200 deposit. Deadline: December 1.**

Register on Realm or contact Scott Neely:
scott.neely@westpreschurch.org

Trip Specifics...

WHERE IS XPUJIL?

Xpujil is in the southern portion of Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula—close to Belize and Guatemala. It is a 3 hour drive from Tulum International Airport where we fly in and out of. Todd Luke, our direct contact and missionary, meets us at the airport with a rented vehicle, and we then drive to Xpujil. He is also our translator and cultural liaison during your entire stay in Mexico.

WHAT DOES THE MISSION TEAM DO?

For three days, from approximately 8:30 AM until 4:30 PM, we will work on four cisterns. We are led by Ch'ol Presbyterian partners. Our main task is to help mix cement. Mostly, we shovel seventy pounds of sand and gravel into five-gallon buckets. These buckets are carried and emptied into a cement mixer. We perform this activity in 45-minute spurts throughout the day. During down-time, we can interact with the cistern recipient families and our local coworkers. Lunch is eaten at the work site. Meals are prepared by our Xpujil partners who have over twenty years of experience feeding Americans work teams.

WHERE DOES THE MISSION TEAM STAY?

Groups stay in Xpujil on Todd's property in guest rooms. Each room has two twin beds, one hammock, a ceiling fan, air conditioning, a floor fan, and a bathroom with a shower. Hot water is available.

WHAT ABOUT FOOD AND WATER?

Breakfast, lunch, and dinner are prepared by our Xpujil partners. Bottled water is always available. Meal times: Breakfast 6:00 or 7:00 am, Lunch between 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, Dinner between 6:00-8:00 pm.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

- Daytime temperatures normally reach the mid 80's and mid 60's in the evening in February.
- Bring \$50 to convert to pesos to purchase snacks during the trip or use a credit card. Two small general stores are only a one-minute walk from the Guest House. Todd Luke will help the group exchange dollars for pesos if needed.
- We will visit a couple of significant Mayan ruin archeological sites. We may visit a bat cave where millions of bats fly out at dusk.
- Americans traveling under the age of 18 should have a signed affidavit from both parents permitting travel to Mexico.
- Passports are required for travel to Mexico.
- Make sure your tetanus immunization is up-to-date. Washer and dryer on site. Try to pack everything into one carry-on suitcase and a backpack.

The Cistern Ministry—A Rainwater Harvest

Each cistern is family-owned. Cisterns are reinforced concrete tanks that collect and stores the rainwater that falls on the roof of the family home. Their local crew, and mission teams, work side by side with 4 families at a time. Each cistern has a 6,300 gallon capacity and provides the owner-family with a year-round supply of potable water. They began building cisterns in 2002. Those are still in operation. Cisterns are expected to last for many decades with minimal maintenance and upkeep.

Measurable Results

Through partnership, 650 family-owned cisterns have been built in twenty-six villages. Constant use and seasonal rainfall enable the cisterns to empty and refill more than twice each year. This means the cisterns have the potential to supply families with around eight million gallons of rainwater annually.

Front-loaded Investment/Long-Term Dividends

\$3,500 dollars will build a cistern that will provide an abundant and easily accessible source of clean water for decades. The design has one moving part—the outlet faucet located at the bottom of the cistern. Gravity delivers and dispenses the rainwater. The low-tech design creates easy and affordable maintenance.

A Family Commitment

Each cistern-owner family invests time, materials, and income into the building process. Family members help build their own cistern and the cisterns of three of their neighbors during the building process which takes about two weeks from start to finish.

Each Cistern is a Unique Micro-Loan Opportunity

The cistern owner family agrees to repay, over time, the cost of materials needed to build the cistern. There is no signed contract, collateral, or interest rate on the loan. Each family is asked to repay the equivalent of \$50 US dollars per year. When the loan is repaid, the owner may request another cistern.

All the villages want more cisterns. Unfortunately, we have limited resources. Local partners decide where to build in the future based, in part, on which towns have the highest percentage of cistern-owner families making annual loan repayments.

A Grassroots Water Harvest Partnership

Mexican partners can build cisterns building from start to finish with the families that lack the financial resources to purchase the construction materials. American helpers lighten the load by dozens of tons, raise the spirits of our Christian Mexican work crew, and reflect God's love to all who pass the worksite and see this unusual sight.

photos 

XPUJIL, MEXICO WATER CISTERN MINISTRY

Photos from 2024



For more information:

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