

EASTSIDE GLOBAL COMPASSION

Baja Mexico Mission Trip

Rosarito • 2026

"You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world."

— Matthew 5:14 (MSG)

4-Day Long Weekend • All Ages Welcome • Family Friendly • 300-Mile Round Trip

A NOTE FROM GENE APPEL

Welcome to Global Compassion

Thank you for unleashing compassion on a Global Compassion adventure with Eastside. This is so much more than a weekend trip. Our prayer is that this trip will be catalytic as God reveals His plans and purposes, and that He will give you a new vision for how you can be a light back home.

So many Eastsiders look back at trips like these as defining moments in their spiritual walks. Before God can do something through us, He's got to do something in us. This trip may be the vehicle that God uses to give you a vision of His plans and purposes for your life.

WHO WE ARE

Our Mission, Vision & Values

Mission: We transform the world by inspiring people to follow Jesus, deepen their faith and reflect God's heart through tangible acts of kindness.

Vision: We exist to provide transformative experiences that serve others and inspire everyone to take a next step on their spiritual journey.

We value:

- Loving others and sharing Jesus with them.
- Partnering with high-capacity national leaders committed to the ministry of the local church.
- Championing global partners who are effectively reaching their communities.
- Investing in a child's life as our best hope for the future.
- Pursuing sustainability and acts of service that honor God.

WHO WE SERVE WITH

Our Ministry Partner: Tijuana Christian Mission

Tijuana Christian Mission (TCM) was started in 1965 as a church plant in Tijuana, Mexico. At the request of a San Diego-area church, Sergio and Marta Gomez moved from southern Mexico to pastor a new church. It soon became clear that a children's home was needed in the community.

In 1972, the City of Refuge Children's Home (Ciudad de Refugio) opened. It has truly been a refuge for the needy children of Tijuana ever since. In 2006, the Rosarito campus — Hacienda Victoria — opened its doors. Today, an average of 75 children plus staff call TCM home.

TRIP OVERVIEW

At a Glance

LOCATION Rosarito, Baja Mexico	DURATION 4-Day Long Weekend	COST (ADULT) \$130 per person	COST (CHILD 5-12) \$90 per person
TRANSPORT Self-drive caravan	AGES All ages with parent 5 and under not recommended	MEET POINT Home Depot, San Diego	MEET TIME 2:00 PM Thursday

Note: Due to uneven ground and property hazards, children under 5 are not recommended. All registration fees are tax-deductible donations to the ministry and are non-refundable.

SCHEDULE

Day-by-Day Itinerary

Thursday Day 1	Meet at 2pm at Home Depot, San Diego (950 Dennery Rd, 92154). Caravan as a group across the border to the City of Refuge. Orientation, shared dinner with ministry partners, campfire worship, testimony from a ministry graduate, and briefing for Friday's workday.
Friday Day 2	Morning devotion and breakfast. Full workday: building projects (constructing homes for families in need), completing projects for the local church or school, community outreach (food baskets for needy families), and hosting events like carnivals, birthday celebrations, sports and beach outings.
Saturday Day 3	Morning devotion, breakfast, and workday orientation. Build project plus additional projects, lunch, community outreach, kids programming, and closing gathering with devotion and debrief. Optional evening campfire or departure before dark. Recommended: depart Saturday evening or very early Sunday.
Sunday Day 4	Pack up and depart for the border as early as possible. Sunday border lines are typically shorter than Saturday night — plan accordingly. Safe travels home!

WHERE YOU'LL STAY

Accommodation Options

<p>Tent / RV Camping</p> <p>Group campsite with restrooms and showers. Bring your own tent, sleeping bag, and gear. Spaces reserved first-come, first-served.</p> <p>NO EXTRA COST</p>	<p>Bunkhouse</p> <p>40+ bed bunkhouse on-site, separated by gender. Bring your own sleeping bag and pillow. Reserved first-come, first-served.</p> <p>NO EXTRA COST</p>	<p>Puerto Nuevo Hotel</p> <p>~8 miles from the site. Book at puertonuevohotelyvillas.com using promo code EASTSIDE2025.</p> <p>ADDITIONAL COST</p>
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WHAT YOU NEED

Requirements for All Travelers

Background Check: Required for each adult traveler before the trip.

Passport / Passport Card: Must be valid for at least 6 months past the return date. Check your expiration date now. Apply at travel.state.gov.

Minors (under 16): May present an original or copy of birth certificate when traveling by land from Mexico. If not accompanied by a parent, a signed permission letter from both parents plus copies of both parents' driver's licenses is required.

Mexican Auto Insurance: Required by Mexican law for each vehicle. Obtain at mexicoinsurance.com before crossing.

Toll Road Cash: Bring \$10–\$15 USD. No bills larger than \$20 accepted.

PREPARE TO PACK

Dress Code & Packing List

Modesty is of extreme importance. No underwear showing, no bare midriffs, no form-fitting or low necklines.

Work Clothing: Jeans, shorts, or activewear. Long shorts permitted. No tank tops or sleeveless shirts. Closed-toed, sturdy shoes. T-shirts or crew necks only.

Casual / Evening Clothing: Comfortable, warm clothes for after work. Bring a sweatshirt — temperatures drop at night.

Packing Essentials:

- Clothing (per dress guidelines above) + sweatshirt/jacket + hat
- Sunscreen, toiletries, towel, work gloves
- Closed-toed shoes for work; comfortable shoes for leisure
- Refillable water bottle labeled with your name (purified water provided on site)
- Sleeping bag and pillow (for bunkhouse or camping)
- Camp chair and ear plugs (barking dogs at night!)
- Camping equipment if tenting: tent, ground cover, lantern, air mattress, flashlight
- Camp chair, ear plugs (barking dogs at night!)

Do NOT bring: firearms, slingshots, fireworks, pets, alcohol, illegal drugs, tobacco, marijuana, or valuables. Eastside is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

YOUR SAFETY

Safety Protocols

There is inherent risk with international travel. We encourage all travelers to visit travel.state.gov for current US Department of State recommendations for Baja, Mexico. While Eastside cannot guarantee your safety, we are in constant communication with our in-country partners and will heed their guidance.

Precautions on every trip:

1. Travel during daylight hours only.
2. Caravan as a group from San Diego to the City of Refuge.
3. No stops between the border and the City of Refuge.
4. Travel on toll roads throughout the journey.
5. No authorized nighttime activity outside the City of Refuge (a fenced and secure property).

BE WELL INFORMED

On-Site Behavior Guidelines

- For safety purposes, stay on the orphanage grounds unless you are involved in a neighborhood project.
- Use common sense. Do not be in an isolated situation with a child or a national, and remain in public areas at all times.
- Do not enter the dorm rooms.
- If you are staying at the hotel, do not go off the grounds at night. Use the buddy system whenever you leave your room.

LANGUAGE TIPS

Useful Spanish Phrases

Your efforts to communicate in Spanish will be warmly welcomed and appreciated!

English	Español	Context
Hello / Hi!	<i>¡Hola!</i>	Greeting
Good morning	<i>Buenos días</i>	Morning greeting
Good afternoon/evening	<i>Buenas tardes</i>	Afternoon/evening
Good night	<i>Buenas noches</i>	Night greeting
Goodbye	<i>Adiós / Hasta luego</i>	Farewell
Have a nice day	<i>¡Que pase un buen día!</i>	Well-wishing
Have a good trip	<i>¡Buen viaje!</i>	Farewell
Bon appétit	<i>¡Buen provecho!</i>	At meals
Thank you	<i>Gracias / Muchas gracias</i>	Gratitude

You're welcome	<i>De nada / No hay de qué</i>	Response to thanks
Please	<i>Por favor</i>	Polite request
Excuse me / Sorry	<i>¡Perdón! / Discúlpe!</i>	Apology / excuse
How are you?	<i>¿Cómo estás?</i>	Informal check-in
I'm fine, thanks. And you?	<i>Bien gracias, ¿y tú?</i>	Response
What's your name?	<i>¿Cómo te llamas?</i>	Introduction
My name is ...	<i>Me llamo ... / Soy...</i>	Introduction
Where are you from?	<i>¿De dónde eres?</i>	Conversation
I'm from California	<i>Soy de California</i>	Conversation
Pleased to meet you	<i>Mucho gusto / Encantado(a)</i>	Introduction
I don't understand	<i>No entiendo</i>	Clarification
Please speak more slowly	<i>Por favor hable más lento</i>	Clarification
Do you speak English?	<i>¿Habla Usted inglés?</i>	Language check
Yes, a little	<i>Sí, un poco</i>	Language check
How do you say ___ in Spanish?	<i>¿Cómo se dice ... en español?</i>	Learning
How much is this?	<i>¿Cuánto vale?</i>	Shopping
Where's the bathroom?	<i>¿Dónde está el baño?</i>	Practical
How did you sleep?	<i>¿Cómo dormiste?</i>	Morning check-in
Are you okay?	<i>¿Estás bien?</i>	Concern
God bless you	<i>Dios le bendiga</i>	Blessing
Praise the Lord	<i>Alabado sea el Señor</i>	Worship
Let's pray	<i>Oremos</i>	Ministry
In Jesus' name we pray	<i>En el nombre de Cristo oramos</i>	Ministry
How can we pray for you?	<i>¿Cómo podemos orar por ti?</i>	Ministry
The Lord be with you	<i>El Señor esté con ustedes</i>	Blessing

MAKE A LASTING IMPACT

Sponsor a Child for \$50/Month

For \$50 a month, you can change a child's life. On this trip, you will meet children whose lives are greatly enriched through this simple act. The monthly amount covers meals, education, Christian staffing, clothes and uniforms, and more.

Visit eastside.com/global to sponsor a child in Baja, Mexico. Be sure to include "Eastside Christian Church" in the Note or Special Instructions box. For questions, email: sponsor@tijuanchristianmission.org

When you first meet your sponsored child, take a few minutes to talk and bond before presenting any gifts. Your presence, love, attention, and respect matter far more than any gift.

Conversation starters:

- Tell me about your friends and what you enjoy doing together.
- Do you have a favorite Bible verse? (Share yours too!)

- What is a typical day like for you? (Tell them about yours.)
- What subjects do you enjoy most in school?
- What are some of your hopes and dreams for when you grow older?

Activity ideas:

- Bring blank paper and draw, color, or play tic-tac-toe together.
- Play! Kick a soccer ball, toss a frisbee, jump rope, paint each other's nails — have fun!
- Take a picture and enjoy looking at it together.
- Pray with your child before you leave — about the family, friends, hopes, and concerns they shared.

Important reminders:

- Keep all future correspondence within the protocols of Eastside.
- Do not exchange personal contact or social media information.
- Do not give money to children, parents/caregivers, or staff. All monetary gifts must go through official giving channels.

CULTURAL TIPS

Etiquette in Mexico

- Always take time to greet and say goodbye properly when someone arrives and before leaving. A hasty exit implies you did not enjoy their company.
- Show heightened respect to those noticeably older than yourself — give way to them in public, allow them to be served first, or offer your seat if all are full.
- Do not toss someone an object to pass it to them. Hand it to them directly and respectfully.
- Expect meals to last quite a long time, especially with multiple dishes and servings. The preference is to socialize over meals and not be rushed.
- Ask to be excused before leaving the table momentarily (con permiso).

ON SITE

Good to Know On Site

- The orphanage does not have Wi-Fi and cell reception is spotty. The hotel may have Wi-Fi.
- Toilet paper cannot be flushed at the City of Refuge or most parts of Mexico — please use the bins provided.
- If you are camping, please take quick showers to conserve water.
- Tap water in Mexico is not drinkable. Do not swallow it in the shower or use it to brush your teeth or rinse your toothbrush. This applies at the hotel too. Purified water is provided on site.
- Please help keep common areas clean by participating in your OTS (Opportunity To Serve) assignments. There is no housekeeping staff on the premises.

QUICK REFERENCE

For Your Information

TIME ZONE	COUNTRY CODE	CURRENCY	ELECTRICAL
PST	+52	Mexican Peso	110V (same as USA)

Phone & Data: Consult your carrier for international calling rates and plans. Turn off data roaming before entering Mexico to avoid unexpected charges.

Driving Directions: Detailed driving directions from the US/Mexico border to the City of Refuge are available in a separate document.

THURSDAY CHECK-IN

What to Present at Home Depot

Have the following ready to present when you arrive at the Home Depot check-in (950 Denney Road, San Diego, CA 92154) at 2:00 PM on Thursday:

- Valid passport or passport card for each person in your family.
- If applicable: birth certificate for children under 16 traveling by land.
- If a minor is traveling without parents: a signed permission letter from both parents, plus copies of both parents' driver's licenses.
- Proof of Mexican auto insurance for your vehicle.

COMMITMENT

Team Agreement

By registering for this trip, you agree to the following:

1. Attend all required trainings, meetings, and service projects; participate fully and be on time.
2. Expeditiously complete all requirements: passport, financial obligations, and documentation by all stated deadlines.
3. Submit to the authority of team leaders and staff; remain flexible to changes.
4. Guard your words at all times; refrain from obscene, insensitive, or derogatory comments regarding people, politics, religion, race, or traditions.
5. Avoid any isolated situation with a team member (outside immediate family) or national; avoid any amorous actions.
6. Use separate accommodations if not living out the biblical ethic of full sexual expression within marriage.
7. Participate in worship experiences as appropriate to your spiritual journey.
8. Travel with the team; remain part of the group at all times.
9. Dress modestly at all times (no short shorts, tank tops, low-cut tops, or exposed stomachs).
10. Do not accept invitations from nationals to participate in activities apart from the group without checking with team leadership.
11. Maintain a positive attitude and be willing to do whatever it takes to serve.
12. Understand that all funds raised are tax-deductible donations and are non-refundable if you are unable to travel.

“Let me tell you why you are here. You’re here to be salt—seasoning that brings out the God-flavors of this earth. If you lose your saltiness, how will people taste godliness? You’ve lost your usefulness and will end up in the garbage. Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill.”

— Matthew 5:13–15 (MSG)

Ready to Join Us?

Registration closes 2 weeks before each trip. All fees are tax-deductible donations.

REGISTER AT [EASTSIDE.COM/GLOBAL](https://eastside.com/global)