

Looking back at the past year is similar to viewing life in a rear view mirror—it's hard to believe we went down that road. There were many new limitations to our ministry and yet an equal amount of opportunities.

As I often remember, during his last year of serving on the board of directors, our late founder Loran Long was asked what he considered to be the key mission of Mexican Medical Ministries. He responded, "It is all-encompassing." He would be pleased with the vast amount of food that was distributed in Jesus' name this year and that so many families received free face masks. Even with a diminished staff, Hospital El Buen Pastor still performed 576 surgeries by August. And, one of my favorite highlights is that, after countless delays, a whole shipping container (filled with nonperishable food, hygiene items, adult diapers, vitamins, and more) finally made it to Havana, Cuba. With the increasingly extreme shortages the Cuban people have been facing, these items are valued like gold.

There was not just one mission accomplished in 2021; there were numerous. We heard many testimonies of one-on-one divine appointments where our missionaries were able to provide folks with the items they needed just as the need arose. In a migrant camp, a whole new church was birthed because diapers, despensas (food aid), and the gospel were shared in love. Over the past few weeks, many baptisms took place (and were viewed on social media—another new paradigm for our ministry).

Lastly, 2021 was also a year of great loss. One of our founders passed away, a beloved missionary went home to be with Jesus, one missionary family saw the passing of an adult daughter, and many of those we minister to had losses of their own, as well.

So, though we grieve with extreme sorrow over our losses, we praise the Lord that we will see many at the great feast of the Lamb when Jesus returns for us all. We rejoice in how we have seen God move in 2021 and look forward to all He will do in 2022.

Cuba Shipment

By Amy Fuller

Cuba has had food supply issues for quite some time--shortages, high prices, long lines, and other difficulties. In addition to these ongoing issues, the situation is especially grave right now, in part due to pandemic-related economic shutdowns.

Because of Covid restrictions on travel into Cuba, we have not been able to take any missions trips there in 2020 or 2021. During this time, however, we have still been able to help support local churches as they minister in their communities—thanks to generous financial gifts from many individuals and churches, we were able to send a shipping container filled with food and other essentials, which will make a huge difference in the lives of those most at risk.

After a very lengthy process of receiving permissions from various government agencies in the US and Cuba, we were finally able to ship our container in July 2021. It arrived in Cuba in early September, and, in a huge answer to prayer, was released by customs in just one day!



Cuba church volunteers unload the container

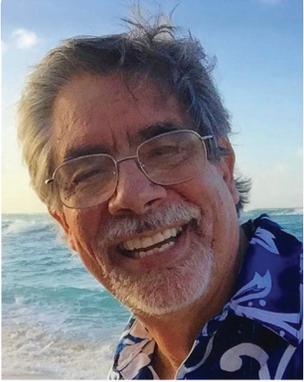
All the contents of the container made it there intact and undamaged (about 7,500 lbs. of beans, 350 lbs. of powdered milk, 3,000 lbs. of rice, 900 lbs. of laundry detergent, 130 packages of adult diapers, dozens of cases of hygiene items, and much more).

The local church has wasted no time in distributing items to the neediest in their community as well as sharing with churches and ministries in other provinces. (They sent us a beautiful 3½-minute video update this fall, which can be viewed at tiny.cc/ContainerInCuba)

Please join us in thanking God for this opportunity and in praying that many lives in Cuba would be impacted for eternity through this tangible demonstration of His love and care.



Man in Havana



Our dear friend, missionary Vince Trujillo, (pictured left), went to be with the Lord this July after a 2½-year battle with cancer. He was 68. Vince is survived by his lovely wife Gail, their six beautiful children and six precious grandchildren, and many other cherished family members and friends.

Vince had a deep love for the Word of God and was passionate about teaching it not only clearly and accurately, but also interestingly and creatively, as well.

After receiving a Bachelor's degree in Christian Education and a Master's in Religious Education, he was ordained as a pastor and served for a decade in youth ministry and as a minister of education in Arizona and California.

In 1989, he and Gail were appointed as missionaries to the Philippines, where they served for 10 years. When they returned to the US, they continued in missions for over 20 years with Mexican Medical Ministries, serving in Tecate, Baja, as well as other parts of Mexico.

The heart of Vince's ministry in both the Philippines and Mexico was teaching and mentoring pastors, church leaders, and other missionaries, nurturing and encouraging them in their ministries.

Serving cross-culturally drove him to find innovative ways to teach in unique situations. For example, in Central Baja, some who attended his classes couldn't read or write and he was able to adapt his teaching methods to equip them to share God's Word. His ingenuity and out-of-the-box thinking in how he communicated the Scriptures fostered a connection with those he taught in deeply impactful ways.

All of us who knew him have been blessed by his wonderful example of living a joyful life characterized by deep dedication to the Lord and great love for those around him.

A Year of Transitions, Fulfillment, & Growth

By Craig & Kristi Libby

As the world transitioned to a new normal, the Tijuana Medical Brigadas (medical outreaches) quickly adapted and didn't miss a beat. Thanks to years of working with teams of volunteers that were made up of both Mexicans and Americans, the transition to a Mexican volunteer team has gone smoothly. We set a goal of 1,000 people in Tijuana coming to know Christ as their Savior through the Brigadas in 2021.

The team was called together and they were energized to get back to serving so that Christ's love could be shared with people who need to experience it. God has brought together a core team of about 50 Mexican believers who are committed to joining with us for each event. Together, under the leadership of Craig & Kristi Libby and Octavio & Maria Luisa Peralta, this team will have given out thousands of services (eye glasses, medical and dental consults, foot care, nutrition education, lab services, dentures, legal advice, haircuts, and more) this year. Pray with us that the goal of 1,000 salvations is reached by the end of the year.

The heart of the Brigadas is to strengthen churches and encourage pastors. This was visibly fulfilled with the first Brigada of the year. Pastor A's church had 80 people attending before Covid, but was now down to 8. People from the church were returning to work, and shopping in the market, but not coming back to church. Our goal was that the church would be strengthened by getting people together again, and that the pastor would be encouraged. He had recruited 40 of the members of his church to come out and get involved in the Brigada, including serving in the prayer tent where they led people to the Lord.

The next day, Sunday after the Brigada, there were 108 people in church, 30 of whom came to church for the first time as a result of the previous day's outreach! The pastor was so excited that he has since come to help at subsequent Brigadas for churches in other parts of the city.

There is no shortage of invitations from congregations who would like us to serve in their community. The Lord is opening doors to new locations and new Mexican partners. We have missed the blessing of working with a bicultural team of American and Mexican volunteers, and pray that the border soon opens completely so that the multicultural body of Christ can serve together again. In the meantime, we are excited for this growth as we wait expectantly to see how God will continue to work through the Tijuana Medical Brigadas.



Prayer tent at Tijuana Brigada



In Mexican Medical's 60-year history, we have had the joy of knowing many of God's heroes of the faith. We have been blessed by so many pastors and laypeople committed to supporting the work in Mexico and encouraging the missionaries and staff.

I believe that none, however, were as colorful and outstanding as Pastor Ray Hahn (pictured left). A state boxing champion in his teens, a WWII veteran, and a missionary in the 1950s to pre-Castro Cuba, Ray was here at the beginning when Mexican Medical was incorporated and he served on the board during four different seasons. Pastor Ray probably accomplished more in fundraising than any other donor because he always encouraged his congregants to bequeath something to missions when it was their time to go to heaven.

Ray lived to be 99 and he filled all his years encouraging us, visiting the field and the office, and using his plumbing skills in Mexico on volunteer construction sites into his 90s! Though he passed away this May, we know that his love for Mexico and Cuba will leave an eternal impact that most of us can only aspire to. He would encourage us to do all we can for the Kingdom—he often said, "I have been trying to out-give God my whole life, and I just can't do it!"

Give Thanks to the Lord

By Dr. Rita González

During this time of pandemic, God has confirmed His purpose for the medical ministry in many ways here at Hospital El Buen Pastor (San Quintín, Baja California, Mexico).

In 2020 and 2021, contributions from Mexican Medical Ministries and others funded medical care (including emergency care, medications and surgery) for 155 of our patients with the greatest needs. We are so grateful and blessed by all of your generosity of time, talents, resources and prayers.

We also were able to pay the unexpected construction costs of extra restrooms and other sanitary measures required by the government to help prevent the spread of Covid. There continues to be great progress on the OR renovation project, with beautiful new antibacterial flooring installed already and steel work soon to be completed.

One of our biggest recent challenges was to secure enough oxygen tanks and drugs for anesthesia that were also being used for the Covid patients in the area. Also, in spite of strict preventive measures, 30% of our personnel came down with mild Covid, and four with pneumonia. These staff members and others at high risk were sent home. (As a private institution, we didn't receive any early priority for the vaccine, and only two months ago did 87% of the staff get fully vaccinated.) Looking back, we are amazed at God's provision for a small hospital with decreased personnel and a tremendous increase of emergency patients.

We have also been blessed by supply runs from Flying Samaritan volunteers and MexMed missionary Kristi Libby. Other great news includes the renewal of our airstrip's authorization (a 15-year permit!), connecting with a missionary surgeon in San Diego who desires to begin monthly visits, contributions and encouragement from the local ministerial alliance, and the countless other ways we have seen God provide.

The community really missed Colorado Airlift Outreach's two eye clinics, which had to be canceled due to being scheduled for times when Baja California was at high risk for Covid. Despite the uncertain health conditions, Flying Sams was able to provide two specialty clinics in both 2020 and 2021, serving patients with very significant medical needs. Praise the Lord! Please be praying for both group's 2022 schedules and that they are able to continue their marvelous work.

Due to medical reasons, Dr. Alejandro Gonzalez (age 70) has retired from surgical work. However, he is involved in the hospital administration and continues to be the medical director until the young surgeon, Dr. Javier Guerrero, is ready to take his place as the Lord confirms.

Our foremost desire is for you to pray for more Christian doctors and nurses to build upon the Christian foundation of the many dedicated missionaries and friends who are now receiving their reward in Heaven, and for God to receive all the glory as we attend to very needy patients in Christ's name.