HoM
Hands of Mercy

Passion for Christ...
...Compassion for People

WHO WE ARE

Hands of Mercy trains people to participate in missions and fulfill "the great commission." We help churches start a "loft house" project in their parking lot, facilitate Baja weekend trips and provide cross-cultural short-term, ministry opportunities in Mexico as well as overseas.

Hands of Mercy administers the following activities:

- Trains churches in developing their own "loft house" ministry.
- Supports pastors in Mexico who provide spiritual support to the loft house recipients.
- Draws on HoM missionaries in Mexico to coordinate the U.S. church with Mexico ministry opportunities.
- Operates a camp/outreach center (Rancho Casitas) south of Ensenada on the Baja Peninsula of Mexico for use by Mexicans and Americans.
- Facilitates and leads periodic, short-term mission projects and trips to other parts of the world such as Ethiopia and Liberia.

Humble Beginnings: Hands of Mercy is a non-profit, 501c3 organization, started in 2004 by ordinary men and women who had a heart to see their gifts used by the Lord to reach the lost, touch the poor and motivate other ordinary people to use their God-given talents for the building of the kingdom.

WHAT IS A LOFT HOUSE?

Though not luxurious by any definition, a loft house gives basic protection and shelter from the elements.

A loft house is a 12-foot by 12-foot structure with 4 windows, a lockable door and a second story attic loft for sleeping that is reached by an interior ladder. The "kit-house," which resembles a garden shed, consists of prefabbed panels made from simple building materials, widely available at most home improvement stores: 2x4s, 2x6s, plywood and rolled roofing.

The house has a raised wooden floor, covered with linoleum, built on movable concrete pylons. This speeds construction time by eliminating extra days to pour and cure a cement slab. Additionally, crews can build loft houses on lots that would not be suitable for slab construction.

The houses are not wired or plumbed - but neither are most of the communities where they are built. What they do provide is a safe shelter from the wind, rain, mud and cold. For about $3,000.00, these homes exhibit a visible testimony of Christ's love to the new home owners and their entire community.

Hands of Mercy believes in supporting the local, indigenous church and relies on Mexican pastors to select the families that will receive the loft homes as a means to build relationships.

SHORT TERM MISSION TRIPS

Go International in a Weekend: On a separate weekend from the pre-fab build, a team of 12 to 25 people are assigned to each loft house to assemble it in a colonia, just outside of Ensenada. Typically, early on a Friday morning, drivers from your church trailer homes to the Mexican border. Hands of Mercy facilitates the crossing through Mexico Customs with required paper work. On Friday evening, the rest of the team (in vehicles with good ground clearance) caravans down to rendezvous with the trailers and stay overnight at our camp facility (Rancho Casitas), at a local hotel or other host facility. The following morning, the teams go out to the build sites and assemble the panels into a complete home in just one day. Workers look for other chances to interact with the Mexican family and neighbors. The team then prays for the family, dedicates the house and hands over the keys along with a Spanish Bible.

Once finished, the teams may go out for tacos at a local eatery or return to Rancho Casitas for an authentic Mexican meal. This can be followed by a time of worship and debriefing to process what the experience has meant to the team. After breakfast on Sunday morning, some teams elect to worship with a Mexican congregation, go sightseeing or head directly for the border

HOST A "PRE-FAB" BUILD

"All Invited" Outreach: Your church or organization can fabricate the panels of the loft house right in your parking lot. Construction of these simply designed panels requires only basic skills of participants. A small "pre-cut" team works on the Friday before the build to cut and mark lumber to precise measurements and angles for the panels. An advance team on Saturday morning can then lay out all the pieces that make each panel before the rest of the participants arrive.

A church "pre-fab" build is an "all-invited" event for the entire church family. Everyone from toddlers to grandparents can "pound nails." More experienced builders might provide chop saws, circular saws and framing squares; some may bring a chalk line or nail puller, while still others might just bring or borrow a hammer and a pair of work gloves. A church group with minimum instruction can finish the prefabbed panels in just a few hours. Then the panels are sandwiched upright onto dual-axle flatbed trailers (14'-18' long). Those who don't feel comfortable swinging a hammer may participate by coordinating different aspects of the project: purchase materials, organize pre-fab, plan trip details, prepare a "care package" for the Mexican family or sew curtains for the 4 windows (36" square).

People who feel uneasy attending a church service often accept an invitation to a parking lot pre-build.

RANCHO CASITAS

Like Visiting a Remote Mission Outpost: Rancho Casitas is a rustic, 120 acre camp located within a 600 acre working Mexican ranch, about 20 miles southeast of Ensenada. The camp is set among rolling hills of chaparral and a valley lined with mature oaks. Guests reach the ranch by a rough 9-mile dirt road off Highway 1. Low clearance vehicles are not advised.

Campers stay in loft homes, like the ones they build for Mexican families. A night without plumbing, electricity or insulation may help the guests understand some challenges these loft house recipients face each day.

The ranch's secluded setting allows short-term mission teams to bond, enjoy the beauty of the outdoors, and escape many distractions of modern life. The camp has deluxe outhouses, hot showers, a generator, and multi-purpose dining room for about 100 guests.

The camp is available for weekend or weeklong work teams that wish to do outreach projects in the surrounding Mexican communities or development projects for the camp. Rancho Casitas also hosts local Mexican churches.

For more information see website: www.handsofmercy.com
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