



# JOSHUA & AMANDA ALLRED MÉRIDA, MEXICO



July/August 2020:

Dear church and friends,

Greetings from Mexico! We made it home safely and are so glad to be back in our own hammocks! We appreciate your prayers during our travels and are happy to report that we were able to fly back to Mérida on August 14<sup>th</sup> as scheduled. Our furlough trip was a tremendous blessing. Because of the pandemic, we were not able to visit as many supporting churches as we had hoped, but every visit we *were* able to make was uplifting and encouraging. We also got to see both sides of our family and make lasting memories with the children. As the old saying goes, “Home is where the heart is.” Our heart is to be here doing the work the Lord has called us to.

The work looks a little different right now as Yucatán is still under strict restrictions due to the virus. We were hoping for things to be reopened by the time we returned, but that was not the case. Last week, the governor put out new guidelines for a gradual reopening of the state. Churches will be allowed to resume religious services on September 15<sup>th</sup> (kind of). Every business or church that wishes to reopen must register with the government and follow a specifically designated protocol. The protocol for churches has not been published yet, but we have heard rumors that we will be required to check temperatures at the door, provide hand sanitizer, require masks, restrict services to 45 minutes or less, limit gatherings to 50 people or less, restrict children under 18 and adults over 60, only operate during certain times of the day and certain days of the week, etc. None of this has been confirmed and everything is subject to change from one day to the next. Also, the government here is notorious for arbitrarily enforcing its rules. So, we still don’t have the clear direction we would like to have. Of course, this is very frustrating for us, but we rest in the knowledge that God is in control and has a track record of using apparently bad situations for good!

In the meantime, we are going about the Lord’s work in creative ways. We are still broadcasting the weekly services, evangelizing in small groups, and teaching discipleship classes in homes and office buildings. We were forced to postpone the first semester of seminary classes this year, but have made plans to resume classes in January whether we are able to use the church building by that time or not.

We reported in our last letter that we were able to purchase a building adjacent to the North Mérida Baptist Church. That building has been completely paid off and we are working to remodel a few of the rooms for church use. We hope to start putting the extra space to good use soon!

Thank you for your constant prayers and financial support. We know that these times are trying for everyone and your sacrifice has not gone unnoticed! As you pray for us, please remember our church members. We are doing all we can do to encourage them to remain steadfast in their walk with the Lord. But, we know that the devil loves to use times like these to discourage people. Please pray with us that the churches in Mérida would grow in their faith during this time and continue their service to the Lord in spite of the circumstances. We don’t want to see the devil win a single victory in a single person’s life because of this! Thank you for your commitment to the work here. May the Lord bless you!

Yours in Christ,  
Joshua, Amanda, & the kids

allreds2mexico@yahoo.com