

## Centro Cristiano Hispano Mixtec Mission Work

Hispanic Mission work of the Pacific Southwest District, LCMS, began locally in Oxnard, based at St. John's Lutheran Church in the mid 1980's. Earlier, in the village of Santiago Naranjas, Oaxaca, México, Christian missionaries had reached out to Mixtec families of the village. The mission work grew slowly, due to a strong Roman Catholic culture in the village, yet the message of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus reached some families. One was the Velasco family. The mother of Juan Velasco, the father of our current pastors in Oxnard, Santa Paula, and Santiago Naranjas began to follow Jesus and study the Scriptures. She used to carry her granddaughter, Yolanda Velasco to and from worship on her back. Yolanda later immigrated to Oxnard along with her aunts and her brothers. They worked primarily in the strawberry and celery fields in the eighties and nineties.

In the mid 1980's, Missionaries Tara and Dennis Bradshaw began Spanish language home Bible studies in the apartment of Yolanda's aunts, and in other homes. As outreach expanded, the Oxnard Hispanic mission congregation was formalized as an LCMS congregation, Centro Cristiano Redwood. Evangelistic outreach in Oxnard, on the California-Mexico border, and in Oaxaca was constantly a focus of the mission work. Communication in the Mixtec language, side by side with Spanish developed over time.

Several of Juan's children and his sisters-in-law studied the Bible and worshipped together. Some were trained as pastors and evangelistic missionaries through Centro Cristiano Redwood Lutheran Church which met side by side with St. John's Lutheran, Oxnard. The mission outreach has extended to Carpinteria, Santa Paula, Moorpark, and other distant areas. In the past ten years many mission outreaches have been done in the village of Santiago Naranjas, Oaxaca.

The LORD has moved and opened doors. Land was donated for a multi-purpose mission facility in Santiago Naranjas. A building campaign was initiated with the support of LCMS congregations and various individuals. Mission events with children, families, seniors, as well as social ministries to the needy have been conducted on a regular basis over the past several years.

Our mission focused pastors, families, and outreach teams from several circuit congregations have supported the building of the facilities (done by local workers) with the total approval of the municipal leadership of Santiago Naranjas. Initial worship services have been conducted with baptisms taking place already. Mission organization and visitation trips occur on a regular basis throughout the year. Local members of the mission plant are being trained as Bible Study, Prayer Group, and ministry leaders through Centro Cristiano Hispano Lay Leaders Program, conducted with our PSD Spanish Lay Training materials, and the SEAN Pastoral Theology course.

Through the vision and diligence of Dr. Erik Wipf, working with the Santiago Naranjas Mission Team, a dental care clinic is part of the new facilities, and is now being completely furnished with necessary equipment to conduct regular dental care for the community which has no other local dental services. The facilities will be inaugurated in October 2022, and all social ministries will be conducted connected to evangelistic and Biblical ministries for all ages!

For more information visit: <https://www.facebook.com/centrocristianovidanueva.oax>

**Getting to know our Centro Cristiano Hispano missionary team members:**



**Juan and Isabel Velasco, parents of team leaders**



**Javier and Magdalena Velasco, missionaries**



**Yolanda Velasco, missionary/language tutor**



**Marcelino and Guadalupe Velasco, missionaries**



**Missionary Bradshaw leading SEAN courses**



**Food for the hungry of Santiago Naranjas**



**Pastor Marcelino's ordination/installation**



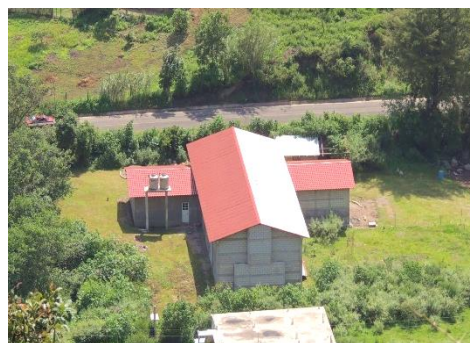
**Tu'un Savi (Mixtec) Language Team (CSUCI)**



**Meeting in Ensenada to plan mission plant**



**Mission Vida Nueva Launch Team**



**Multipurpose building for mission work**



**Current evangelism visit by Pastor Marcelino**



**Dr. Eric Wipf and Eliel in new dental clinic**



**Children's ministry in Santiago Naranjas**



**Graduates of Book 1 of SEAN Lay Training**