

# JOSHUA & AMANDA ALLRED MÉRIDA, MEXICO



September/October 2020:

Dear church and friends,

It has been almost eight months since the state of Yucatán went into lockdown mode because of the coronavirus. For the last two months, we have been gradually reopening, but we are still being very heavily restricted. Shopping centers are still only allowing one person per family to enter at a time. Masks, hand gel, distancing, etc. are required everywhere we go. Some states in Mexico began to open, but are being locked back down again.

We have been able to open our churches back up, sort of. We are still not able to hold Sunday services, but we are able to hold Bible study classes throughout the week. Our classes are restricted to a maximum number of 35 people. Everyone must enter the church building through one door and exit through one different door. Everyone's temperature must be taken at the door and hand gel must be applied. Everyone is required to wear a mask. All gatherings are limited to 45 minutes or less. No one under the age of five or over the age of sixty is allowed to congregate. Everyone must be seated six feet apart. All chairs, doors, and bathrooms must be cleaned between every class. A disinfectant spray must be applied to each room before and after each class. Government officials may enter the building at any time to see if we are following the protocols and may close our building if they find that we are not in compliance.

In spite of the obstacles, we are ministering as best we can and we are seeing God grow His churches! We are evangelizing in small groups every week and are seeing people get saved on a weekly basis. Several have gotten baptized during special baptism services. Our Sunday services are still held online, but we are meeting in small groups throughout the week to teach discipleship classes. In this way, every church member has the opportunity to physically meet with a small group of believers every week to study God's Word. Since these are our only in-person meetings, we have been inviting visitors to the discipleship classes and several guests have been coming even though we still can't have regular Sunday services! It is unlikely that we will be able to use the church building for seminary classes, but we are preparing to convert the bottom floor of my parents' house into a seminary classroom so we can resume classes in January. The pastors are all faithfully serving and leading their churches. Two of our pastors' wives are pregnant! Erick's wife, Cristy, and Jesús' wife, Eli, are expecting, but both have had pregnancy complications in the past. Please be praying for safe pregnancies and safe deliveries!

Thank you for your steadfast prayers. We believe that God has been using this time to accomplish His purposes in the world and in His Church. We have been seeing that the trial has put a strain on some of our church members, but we know that God has promised never to put more on us than we can bear with Christ's help. Please continue to pray with us for the Lord to thwart the attacks of the enemy and use this time to strengthen our churches, to get the attention of the lost, and to bring glory to His name! May the Lord continue to bless each one of you!

Yours in Christ,  
Joshua, Amanda, & the kids