ANABAPTIST BORDER
MINISTRIES

Jesus said… Come unto me and I will give you rest. Matthew 11:28
SEEKING THE LOST AND POINTING TO JESUS

SAN JUAN, TEXAS July-August-September 2025

Cross-Cultural Internship -*by the CCI Students*

Why am I here on this earth? Am I truly interested in knowing the people around me? How important is my neighbor's spiritual condition to me? Do I really believe that people who die without Christ are lost for eternity? Can people say that I truly love and care for them? Is evangelism an event or a lifestyle? How did Jesus bridge the gap between cultures?

In Acts 26:15-18, Saul said, "Who art thou?" And Jesus said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, **to open their eyes**, and to **turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith** that is in me." As a child of God, I am called to the work. What is my response going to be?

Singing in Casa Migrante

With a desire to know more about God's will for His people here on earth, we entered the six-week Cross-Cultural Internship. The above questions and the call out of Acts were shared during the course by various speakers.

Our weeks were filled to the brim with learning how to live together in harmony on the base, spending time with the migrants in Mexico, receiving the Word and lots of teaching during class time, street witnessing and experiencing different cultures through food, singing, and more. The atmosphere, similar to a greenhouse, was very conducive to growth and learning. Everyone was valued—not for what you could do, but for who you were: a person, created by God, with gifts to be discovered and something to offer. We are thankful for God's plan of redemption, all that He has done in our lives, and the opportunity to immerse ourselves in this life-giving environment the last six weeks!

Class by Steve Esh in session

Life on the Base

Together Each Accomplishes More

A very vital aspect of CCI was doing life together on the base. This was expressed in many different forms. Tuesday was the day for everyone to stay at the base. Lawnmowing, weed eating, cleaning vehicles, weeding flowerbeds, doing

Discussion after class

maintenance, and weekly shopping were all a part of the normal routine, along with a team meeting in the afternoon. Everyone was valued and needed to keep things flowing smoothly. Tuesday and Friday evenings we'd have supper together then play volleyball afterwards. If the weather was unfavorable for being outdoors, we'd enjoy worthwhile fellowship indoors, talking, singing and playing games.

We were tremendously blessed with rich teaching and instruction on various subjects. The first week Steve and Martha Esh came from Dickson, Tennessee. He explained the nuts and bolts of culture, how to relate to different cultures, the call to go (even at home), and the answer for all cultures. Jesus is the Answer and the perfect Example. Humility is essential in reaching the lost.

The Abe Neufeld family came the second week. One of the many questions he challenged us with was, "Are you living the American Dream or Kingdom Reality?" He gave us a good overview of the two-kingdom concept and how to live cross-culturally in 2025.

The third week brought us John Ray Millers from Crossville, Tennessee. This week we heard a lot about relationships, dwelling with your team according to knowledge, what to do when relationships hurt, and how to resolve the pain.

Paul and Brian were our teachers in the fourth week, giving us direction on angels and the covered head, prayer and fasting, and the reality of spiritual warfare, including how to fight victoriously.

Mervin and Ashley Schrock from Dickson, Tennessee, joined us the next week. "Servanthood" was the general theme. Am I dedicated or distracted? How do I handle burnout? Accountability is very important!

Here are some of the inspirations that stuck from the teaching:

*** You can pray without fasting, but fasting without prayer is just losing weight.**

*** If you are in a ministry, you'll know God in a way you never have before. The more you minister, the more you get to know Christ. As we exercise ourselves in the kingdom we become more like Christ.**

*** Mission work is 10% hands on, 90% "other stuff."**

*** Our enemy is Satan, not other people. Satan tries to make us believe that the battle is against our fellow human beings, but that's a lie!**

*** If you're going to do the Lord's will, the devil will make sure it costs.**

*** As we minister to and share with people, it is essential that we present the Gospel, not as a method to follow on Sunday by going to church, but as a surrender to Christ and his will every day, all the time. It is doing what Christ would do in every situation.**

*** When Jesus walked on this earth, He was busy but not in a hurry. He had time to do mission work as he went.**

*** Fitting into a culture doesn't have to come at the expense of Bible principles.**

Team Building Activities

*** Be flexible or be miserable.**

*** In your ministries, try to make good memories.**

*** A servant's primary purpose is to do the will of his Master.**

Language Techniques

Occasionally we'd divert from the normal routine with various educational activities. One afternoon two of the ladies prepared a few teambuilding activities. First, we had six teams of two people on a team. Each team tied their legs together and blindfolded one person. Then we had to carry water with small containers and fill a pail which had a ping pong ball in it. Every other time we needed to pour it over our backs. The goal was to be the first pair to get the ping pong ball out of the pail, which you were only allowed to do by filling the pail. Afterwards, we went "fishing." We numbered off, then we had to feed our teammate a gummy worm over our back. The worms were tied to a broom handle with a string. Working together takes lots of effort and patience! The team activities ended with a water fight among us ladies and children.

One evening Lyndon and Brian set up the speaker system in front of the house. We all gathered on the lawn and listened with great interest as they shared their "language in context" skit. A lot of phrases that are used in the English language are very difficult to translate into other languages, especially idioms. Ariel and Angie gave us an interesting language technique class one afternoon. Everyone drew a picture on a letter size sheet of paper, then Ariels hung them on the whiteboard. They taught us the Spanish phrases for the pictures, and we taught Ariel the English ones.

Liberian Tea Shop

A nice diversion was going to the market one day with baked goods, lots of tracts, and other literature. We set up two stands, with a few of us watching the stands while the rest went walking through the market, talking with people, giving literature, and occasionally taking time to pray for someone who was having an especially hard time.

We spent one day in San Antonio, touring the Alamo and the famous Riverwalk.

A highlight was going to the Santa Ana Wildlife Refuge, which borders the Rio Grande. We hiked to the top of the lookout tower where we sang a few songs in the drizzle before the bugs chased us down. On our way to the river, we passed a few small lakes. We were pleased to see a few unusual bird species for the north, ibises and spoonbills being the main ones. Before hiking back to the van, we spent some moments on the bank of the river that separates the United States and Mexico.

Taking a ride down Rio Grande was an experience to be remembered. Our guide told us many interesting facts, with Mexico on our one side and the United States on our other. Both countries are allowed to use the river but they only dock on their side. We ate a delicious lunch at a restaurant on the banks of the river. Some of the girls had to wait for their food quite a while as the cooks forgot their order. The waitress gave them a 50% discount to make up for it.

When Mervin and Ashley were here, they set up a Liberian Tea Shop on their front porch. They served us egg sandwiches with mayonnaise and "Gold Roast Coffee," a mixture of instant coffee, sweetened condensed milk, powdered sugar, and milk. They served us with real Liberian plates.

Middle Eastern Culture

One of the last days of CCI we went to Progresso, a tourist town on the border. We each loaded up with tracts and Antorchas, (a Spanish quarterly) and passed them out as we walked the streets.

One street vendor was painting beautiful pictures with only spray paint, plastic bags, and cardboard.

Weekly Highlights.

Every week we had a focus culture including Liberia, the Middle East, Tanzania, Latin America, and Kenya. We would do various things throughout the week from the culture. We sang Creole, Spanish, and some English songs that are sung in Liberia and Kenya. The African people speak English, although with a different twist to it, which makes it harder to understand. They get very lively with their singing as well. One evening a few of the couples sang a song in Swahili. A very neat experience!

Kenyan Culture

On Friday evenings we would have a cultural meal. This included cross-cultural practices like sitting on the ground to eat, eating with spoons made from Ugali (a thick cornmeal mush), washing your hands while the host pours water and holds a bowl underneath, eating out of the same bowl as the rest of the people at your little table, and using toilet paper for napkins. For the last Friday evening, each of us students got to pick a country, design a poster with facts and pictures, and prepare a food from that country. Some of us dressed in the traditional clothing of the country we picked. Then everyone got to taste the different foods!

Unfortunate Happenings

One evening we were gearing up to play volleyball when the ball rolled down over the bank like it often did. Camo ran after it, not knowing it was close to a nest of honeybees. He soon came screaming and running up the bank with the bees swarming around him, injecting their poison into his body wherever they could. A few people ran to help Camo and the rest of us grabbed the children and went to the house. Paul and Mary took Camo to the emergency room and waited in the parking lot. They wanted to be close to medical help in case he reacted to the fifty-plus stings he got. Paul got one sting on his hand, Frances one on her lip, Katrina one on her foot, David one on his head, and Kendrick one beside his ear. Later Lyndon, Frances, and Irene took Katrina to the ER as she was breaking out with hives and not feeling well. Back at the base, the rest of the team had a prayer meeting for Camo and Katrina. It ended up that neither of them needed to see a doctor. Camo recovered rapidly and by the next morning we could hardly see where he had gotten stung. Katrina, too, felt better soon. Praise the Lord!

Cleaning Crabs

While preparing food one day, Lois sliced the tip of her finger on the mandolin. We could hardly stop the bleeding. She must have sliced the nerves, as the pain was excruciating. Two weeks later it is healing over nicely, and Lord Willing will only show a small scar. “Scars remind us… not that we were hurt, but that we are healed. They remind us of God’s faithfulness.” (Excerpt from a message.)

Playing with the children

Moments with Migrants

Amidst the sadness and disappointment that abound in the migrant camps, we heard stories of faith, hope, and patience. It was a joy to be there and connect with these people who have left home and country in hopes of something better. We, too, are seeking a better country, only not on this earth. It was an excellent point of connection. Four days a week we would fix our lunches, load up old faithful "Betsy" (the 15 passenger Ford van), cross the border, and spend time in four different migrant camps. Senda 2 was home to only fourteen people when CCI started. We would sit and visit with the migrants, then often move into a group Bible Study where each person would read a short portion of Scripture and share some inspiration. We spent a lot of our time chatting with Nisy and Jaylin, who, along with their dad, older sister, and younger brother, are staying in Senda 2. Their mom had already crossed the border and lives in Texas. Senda 1 has more people and more children. Here we would spend many hours jump roping, blowing bubbles, playing connect four and checkers, and coloring. The children always greet us with hugs and happy smiles. An older man who has one leg missing and gets around with crutches would often be playing music and singing along with "gusto" (energy). It was here that we experienced the delicacy of preparing and eating crabs for lunch. Camp Pumarejo and Casa Migrante are both in Matamoros, an hour's drive from the base. Here we would often have a short service. We would sing a few songs then one of the staff brothers would share a devotional. And of course, there would be lots of jolly games going on with the children. With our limited Spanish and Google Translate, we'd attempt conversations with the adults. Often a listening ear, a heart of compassion, and a word of encouragement were all it took to brighten their day. Many people are open to hearing the Good News, their hearts are tender, and they listen with interest. They have experienced so much heartache and some of them in their despair have already cried out to God. He is faithful in meeting each of us exactly where we are and leading us on. We were inspired many times by a migrant's expression of faith.

Listening to an immigrant's story

Coming home we'd often be faced with hours of waiting in the border line, the longest being three hours and thirty-five minutes. Poor Betsy overheated one day and needed to be pushed till we could cross and get to a gas station—which wasn't a surprise, as the temperature in Texas hung around the 90's most of the time.

Pushing Betsy through the line

With gratefulness to God and the team at ABM for all the hard work in making this experience possible, we return to our homes. We endeavor to take the truths heard and lessons learned and apply them to the work God has for us. May the seeds of truth sown at the camps bear fruit as God waters and tends the gardens of all the people we connected with.

Ephesians 3:20,21 Now unto Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Left- Right; Katrina Miller, Lois Bowman, Skyy Perrymond, Virginia Stutzman, Audrey Yoder, Irene Mast, Frances Yoder, Lyndon Yoder

WE ARE PLANNING ANOTHER CROSS-CULTURAL INTERNSHIP FOR THIS COMING WINTER. **Dates: January 6 – February 13, 2026. Tuition: $600 for the course. (If the cost is a hardship, please contact us.)**

If you are interested, please contact Paul Yoder at 956-603-6293 or at abm4god@outlook.com

If the Lord leads you to contribute to this work, please make your donation payable to:
"**Living Word Believers**" and send to: Lavern Kauffman; 7250 CR 4617; Wolfe City, TX 75496

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