



## **Gloria al Padre Ministries** by Joan Barrett

I am grateful for supportive administrators and faculty who sub for me so that I can continue to support GAP Ministries in Chihuahua, Mexico. Some faculty have expressed that they enjoy contributing to the ministry in this way. Thanks to Ann Westbrook who invited me to give a brief overview of the organization and some details of our April 2024 trip, a series of medical day clinics (Brigada médica).

Gloria al Padre Ministries is a 501c3 non-profit organization established in 1995 in Texas [www.gloriaalpadre.org](http://www.gloriaalpadre.org). Its purpose is to share Christ in partnership with collaborators in the US and like-minded volunteers in Chihuahua, Mexico.

**Mission Statement:** Gloria al Padre (GAP) sets as its foremost goal the spreading of the gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord, to North, South, and Central America. This association of Christian individuals and churches embraces the 1963 Baptist Faith and Message and is dedicated to project ministries.

**Statement of Purpose:** Gloria al Padre (GAP) is a missions support organization which links churches and other volunteers with current project needs. The gospel is shared via various avenues, including the construction of medical facilities and church buildings, health and spiritual education and agricultural support. *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* Matthew 11:28

The projects and programs proposed, funded, and managed by partners and volunteers, are coordinated by nine elected board members. I have served for 20 years as Executive Director after the sudden death of the founder, William Parmer, my father, in 2004. The Board coordinates activities with a sister non-profit group called GAP Mexico, A.C. in Chihuahua, Mexico chaired by Dr. Hugo Irigoyen, professor and medical doctor. With generous donations from churches and collaborators, four compounds are in daily use in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico to share Christ with others in a variety of ways. Rocio Landoll, the artist who sets up the Día de los Muertos displays in Waco, knits caps and scarves for the children each winter. Veronica Pacheco, who assists Dra. Hardin in Medical Spanish is a translator who supports in many ways. We have constructed and supported orphanages, schools, churches, and pastoral homes and have contributed to disaster relief efforts in Mexico.

**Clínica Aldama** (with volunteer lodging, sanctuary, caretaker home, storage, etc.) was built in 2003. Patients and minor surgeries are scheduled weekly here. A new dental suite with three dental chairs was built in Spring 2023, supervised by our board member dentist, Dr. Jody Yarbrow, who has served with ministries in Mexico for 40+ years and in Ecuador, Africa, Guatemala, and other world missions. The caretaker couple in Aldama grew up in the *sierra* compound where her parents have been the caretakers for 20+ years. Wendy just earned her

LVN and works in the clinic on site. They maintain the buildings and help with groups that come to work on projects.



Aldama



WRP

**Clínica W. R. Parmer, our largest facility,** was begun in 2006 with support from the Piper Foundation and CIOS from Waco and serves the northern area of Chihuahua City, in an underprivileged part of the city. Medical procedures, clinic visits, a pharmacy, a dental suite, a surgical suite, MRI, and community events are centered in this facility. GAP holds Brigadas médicas here on a scheduled basis. Construction crews from Texas recently rebuilt the living quarters on the compound (October 2022).

**Ciénega Prieta-Clínica GAP** is in the Sierra Tarahumara some eight hours away from Chihuahua in an isolated pueblo called Ciénega Prieta. We have continuous patient records dating back 11 years in this village. Caretakers live on site and were the first converts in the area in 2008. Medical visits are made by a doctor from Chihuahua on a regular basis. In April 2024, we held a “Brigada médica,” on days one and two of our medical and dental clinics here. This Tex-Mex team, including Dr. Steve Alley from Lubbock and Dr. Irigoyen, saw patients and offered exams using a portable sonagram machine. With two dentists, a dental hygienist, triage group, translators, and mechanic support, we had a full two days of clinics. Patients walked from the canyons for hours to see the doctor/dentist as few have means of transportation.



**Guachochi** missionary house was built in 2004. The most recent missionary family has lived on site for over ten years. They have a family of five, and the daughter, who was six when we met

her, will start medical school next year. That congregation has outgrown their meeting place in the upper floor of their home, and so in Oct. 2023, we built the first “edificio multi-propósito”(multi-purpose building) on the same piece of land. Day 4 of our recent “Brigada médica” was in Guachochi when we held the first medical clinic in this building in April 2024. The local indigenous congregation now worships in this newest structure on Sundays.

**Batopilas**-The Guachochi missionary has extended his ministry and has reached out to indigenous groups in the Batopilas Canyon (Copper Canyon) area (four hours from Guachochi). They have begun a congregation among the five villages that come—walking over the mountains and up the canyons—to meet at the riverbank to hold services on a regular basis. Day 3 of the Brigada was in the canyon under a tarp at over 100 degrees Fahrenheit (clinic under tent). This group does not have a permanent facility but meets outside in the canyons beside the river. Many speak some Spanish, but most speak Baja Rarámuri, an indigenous dialect of the Uto-Aztecan language.

#### BATOPILAS CANYON



The drive from Waco to our final destination, the Batopilas Canyon, was a 22–23-hour drive, but we broke it up over three days, holding clinics in the various sites along the way. Thanks for your support and for the opportunity to share about this work. *Kuira bá!* (Good evening in Tarahumara/Rarámuri language)

Joan Barrett

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aiGs8PzKYFo>