

Megan in Mexico Update

a special New Year edition - December 2011 & January 2012

good-bye 2011...

If you've been following my journey, you probably know that this has been quite a year!

The beginning of 2011 saw me back in MN, uncertain if I would be returning to Mexico. During that time, God confirmed to me that He indeed was calling me to Tijuana. Since I've returned to my life & ministry here, there have been no lack of highs & lows, but God has continued to both grow me & confirm that I am exactly where He wants me to be...

welcome 2012!

This year is starting out quite differently...

If you haven't heard the news, I'm engaged! Armando asked me to marry him in December after God made it clear to both of us that He had brought us together for His good purpose. We plan to be married on April 14th*, so this year will not be without it's own excitement, challenges & changes! I'd like to devote the this update to sharing with you what this new year will bring for our lives & our ministry...

But first, let me introduce you to Armando!

We first met 3 1/2 years ago, soon after he returned to Tijuana after living in the States for almost 9 years, but I've know his family for much longer. Though I hardly remember our first encounter, he says that ever since he's been praying & waiting for me! Armando is originally from León, Guanajuato, Mexico; he came to Tijuana with his family when he was 21 years old. He's now 38 years old. Armando has worked many jobs throughout his life, but at heart he's really a businessman/salesman. Starting when he was 7 years old, he has sold everything from lollipops to newspapers to peanuts to tacos to shoes to cactus. Right now, he makes his living selling donuts (which he makes himself, a trade he learned from 12 years

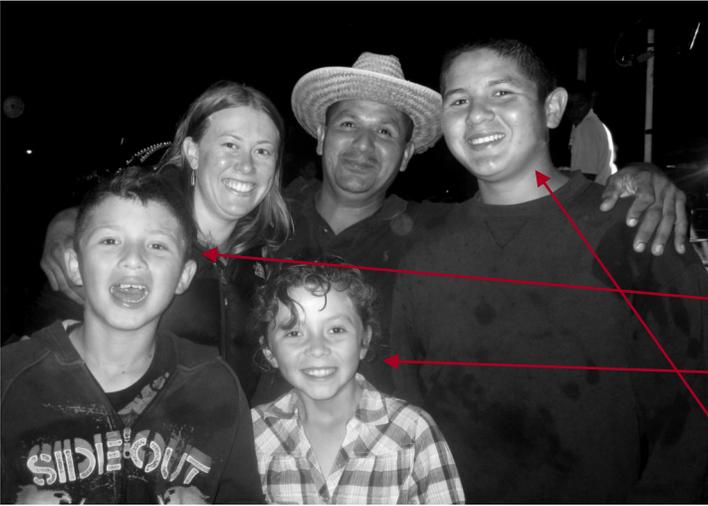


**wedding information to follow soon!*

of working in a bakery in his hometown), Mexican cheese & chorizo sausage. Armando strongly values hard work & has a heart for vocational training so that people can support themselves & their families. Armando has 3 children here in Tijuana: Pricila (9), Brayán (12) & Edgar (13). They live with their mom during the week & with Armando on weekends & vacations. His mother recently passed away, but Armando faithfully provides for his widower father. Armando has a deep love for the Lord & his life is a testimony of the transforming power of God & the Gospel. He is currently is serving with me in the children's ministry at our church & together we are building relationships with the kids in our neighborhood. One of Armando's dreams is to begin a feeding center for the many children here who go to school & bed hungry...

Don't miss page 2! Keep reading for an important ministry & support update →

meet my new family-to-be!



Armando & I with his children on Mexico's Independence Day:

Brayan (12 years old),
Pricila (9 years old), &
Edgar (13 years old)

a VERY important ministry update... PLEASE READ!

You may be wondering how my upcoming marriage will affect 1) my ministry & 2) my support. LAM requires both a husband & wife to be LAM missionaries, but only one spouse needs to be serving in full-time ministry. Armando has begun the process to become a LAM missionary, but he will continue with his secular job (both because we will need the income & because we believe it is important for him to be an example to the men in our community of a husband/father/son who works to support his family). I will continue to serve full-time in ministry at our church, & Armando will continue to serve within the ministry as he is able. That said, LAM also requires that when a missionary marries, they take a one-year service leave in which they focus on building the foundation for a strong marriage/family; the Biblical basis for this comes from Deuteronomy 24:5 - "If a man has recently married, he must not be sent to war or have any other duty laid on him. For one year he is to be free to stay at home and bring happiness to the wife he has married." This service leave is also to be used for communicating with supporters as well as raising more financial support if needed. Armando & I will remain here in Tijuana during this service leave, as he does not yet have a U.S. visa & because his children are here. He will continue to work & we will continue to be involved in our local church, however I will not be doing full-time ministry nor will we be committing to any new ministry opportunities until after a year of marriage. Our focus will be on our new marriage/family, continuing to build relationships with the neighborhood kids & support-raising. It will also be a time for Armando get to know (albeit from afar) LAM & my support team! And of course we will be praying about & planning for my/our ministry involvement once our leave is over! On the next page, I'll share about our current support needs, so PLEASE KEEP READING...

Questions?!? Please don't hesitate to ask! Email me at rigmeg@bethel.edu

Don't stop now, there's still page 3! Please keep reading re: our support needs →

So what does this mean for financial support, you ask? Well...

- I'm glad you asked! 😊 Essentially, not much will change. As per LAM policy, we will continue to receive our monthly stipend during this year of service leave.
- Those of you who support me monthly (or quarterly or annually) don't have to do a thing if you want to keep supporting my/our ministry with LAM here in Mexico.
- **We have, however, been encouraged my LAM to increase our monthly support levels.** We are currently budgeting to support our family on my stipend (\$1,363/month after health insurance) along with Armando's income (which varies depending on sales), but the truth is that it is going to be difficult financially, especially if God sees fit to bless our family with more children! In order to free me to do full-time ministry & for Armando to devote more time to ministry once our service leave is over, **it would be extremely beneficial if we can increase our monthly support.** If you're willing to give monthly (or increase your current gift), you can set that up [here](#) (as a recurring gift)!
- Also, it is *imperative* that we rebuild our ministry funds & our residual support fund (which was depleted as I wasn't receiving enough monthly support for a time). I am currently paying for any ministry expenses out of my personal budget, which has put quite a strain on me financially. I can be reimbursed for any ministry expense, but I currently have no extra funds. **If you're willing to give a one-time gift, you can do so online [here](#)!** (Click "support this missionary," then the "special gift" tab.)
- **I do also have a special request regarding a financial support need...** The retreat for LAM Mexico missionaries is March 8-11. LAM has invited Armando to come as well, in order for him to get to know the LAM President, Personnel Director, Member Care Director & of course LAM's other missionaries in Mexico. This will be so important for Armando to feel like a fellow LAM missionary, versus just the husband of one! However, I currently do not have the funds to attend myself, much less for Armando to come along. We would need an estimated \$500 for the retreat itself & another \$800 for transportation from Tijuana to Cuernavaca. **If you feel led to give special gift to help us attend this LAM missionary retreat together, you can do so [here](#)!**
- Finally, please pray that we would trust God to continue providing for us financially & that He would give us wisdom & peace as we seek to steward our finances.

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