La Cosecha Café

Who are we?

Creel, Chihuahua, Mexico is where we call home. Hello, we, Phil and Darlene Reiff, along with our seven children, joined Greater Heights Mexico Ministries in May of 2023, as a support to the church planting team. Creel is a medium-sized town, home to about 7,000 people. Creel is situated just inside the Sierra Madre Mountain range. It is the last sizable town before getting deep into the mountains, and is a supply town for the many small towns and villages beyond it. Creel is also a tourist hub as it provides easy day trips to attractions in and around the famous Copper Canyon.

Our purpose

The main purpose for our team being here in Creel, is to be a clear and consistent testimony in a community of much confusion and darkness. Part of this endeavor is to plant a biblically solid church, that will be, Lord willing, locally led in the future. We as a team, along with our board, feel that a certain amount of integration into the local community is essential in this endeavor. Some ways that this is currently happening within our team is through an electronics store, a thrift store, and small excavation projects.

One way that Darlene and I have enjoyed ministering is through food and hospitality, and have shared the vision of using a café as ministry for a number of years now. The Creel team operated a bakery for a few years and experienced the impact it had. We've been excited about carrying on and expanding that vision. We are receiving direction and insight from Extend Cafés, and with their recommendation and agreement by our board, we plan to make this a for-profit business that potentially will help support us as a family. We feel that this approach gives a natural connection with the community, gives an example of a Christian run business, provides potential employment for locals, and contributes to the community as a whole.

Name of future café

La Cosecha Café (Spanish); The Harvest Café (English)

La Cosecha Café's written statements

- Vision: To provide a 3rd place for the community to relax, savor excellent cuisine, study, make connections, and search for truth. Also, for our team to feel honored and lead towards growth.
- Mission: We commit to serving our guests with exceptional food and hospitality, providing an atmosphere of interconnection and Christlike care that causes them to return.

Who is Extend Cafés?

"Extend Cafés is an alliance of cafés whose mission is to inspire and equip kingdom café initiatives."

Extend Cafés' co-founder and director Bryant Martin is the owner of Sower's Harvest Café in State College, PA. Also, Extend Cafés' assistant director, Joe Kurtz, is owner of Coronation Café in Amherst, MA. Extend Cafés has a growing number of cafés under their umbrella, some at conception, others fully operating, and is equipped to assist in every step of the way.

How has Extend Cafés assisted in La Cosecha Café up to this point?

Extend Cafés has been a crucial part of the process along the way, and will continue to be. They allowed us to do hands-on training at Sower's Harvest, directed us in looking for a location, encouraged and helped facilitate the purchase of the property, assisted in renovation planning, and much more! Please visit their website at extendcafes.com.

Backstory/history of the café building

Soon after arriving here, Albert (our team leader) and I went exploring possible locations. We found an old, abandoned stone and adobe building at the edge of town with the windows blocked shut, and a barely visible Bed & Breakfast sign. We immediately felt that this was a potential location as it is located beside a gym and small college. The building was built approximately 100 years ago and has some historical significance. We were eventually able to contact the owners who live 3½ hours away, and found that they were indeed looking to sell, not only the building, but also the 3 acres deeded to it. This was a much bigger project than we were initially looking for, and we felt a bit disheartened.

Shortly after finding the abandoned property, we began to hear about its sad history. Beginning as a house, and then growing into a hotel it initially served a worthy purpose. However, over the last number of decades, it served as a prostitution center, bar, etc. Stories of fights, homicides, and ghosts still circulate among the locals, and the place had been shut down and boarded up for approximately

fifteen years. As we learned more about the history of the property, we felt a real passion to redeem this place from darkness, pain, and death, and transform it into a place of light, life, and peace!

Future plans for café

We were invited to share the vision publicly on Strength to Strength podcast, in November 2023. An older Anabaptist couple with years of experience in business, ministry, and with a vision for Hispanic ministry showed interest in assisting with the property purchase. After much prayer, seeking advice, negotiating, and feeling the Lord's clear hand of direction, we were able to sign a written contract on the property in March of 2024. The couple who assisted in the purchase are 95% owners of the property, and we as a family are the other 5%. There has been a number of different options discussed to structure the project, fund the needed renovations, and purchase the café equipment in order to get up and running. After consulting with Extend Cafés' financial advisor (from Anabaptist Financial), we feel that we have a way forward.

Advice from financial advisor

- Subdivide off the building and needed land for the café.
- Separate the partnership to allow for two separately owned properties.
- Raise the needed funds for building renovations and equipment through a mix of donations, low interest loans, and personal cash.

Proposal by majority property owners

The majority property owners have supported this advice, and are putting out a generous proposal. If we are able to raise 100% of the funds needed for the building renovation, and 50% of the funds needed for the café equipment in the ways mentioned above, they are willing to donate the needed ½ acre lot with the building in exchange for our 5% investment, as well as the work put into the property purchase and clean up.

They are also taking into consideration that the property was purchased under current market value. This would potentially make a seemingly unattainable project attainable, if the Lord wills.

Projected costs

- Building renovation: $150,000.
- Café equipment and furniture: $50,000.

These are the estimated costs using a combination of donated labor and local contractors.

Potential questions

- **Are gifts tax deductible?**
  No, unfortunately not. With the counsel given by Extend Cafés, we are initiating a for profit, "business as missions" endeavor.
- **What happens if the project fails, or if the property and business need to be sold?**
  We have developed a Business Exit Strategy, available upon request.
- **How can I get involved?**
  1. Pray for the project, those involved, and its future impact in the community.
  2. Give toward the project.

To request more information, or to contribute, please contact one of the following:

—Phil Reiff
(717) 275-5873
2010forever1@gmail.com

Extend Cafés' admin team:

—Bryant Martin
(814) 329-1987
bjmartin83@gmail.com

—Joe Kurtz
(413) 207-1500
extendcafes@gmail.com

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