



PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

Revised 2021-09-29

McAllen, TX

FLOODING – 2018 / BORDER HUMANITARIAN DISASTER – 2021

LOCATION

The Rio Grande Valley is located in the southernmost tip of Texas on the northern bank of the Rio Grande River, which separates Mexico from the United States. This region's population is one of the fastest growing in the United States.

Two popular tourist destinations in the Rio Grande Valley are Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge and the Port Isabel Lighthouse.

MDS volunteers will be staying at First United Methodist Church in Weslaco, TX.

DISASTERS

Flooding: In June 2018, a sudden severe storm dumped heavy rains on the mesas north of McAllen, TX, and swept into the tributaries to the Rio Grande River. This freak storm created flooding where not typically expected, as the affected homes were not in a typical flood plain.

Border Humanitarian Disaster: An increase in migration of asylum seekers at the U.S./Mexico border has resulted in an ongoing humanitarian disaster and a need for shelter. Asylum seekers are people facing violence and political or religious persecution at home.

MDS RESPONSE

MDS will build new homes in response to the flooding events. In addition, we will build three homes for [La Posada Providencia](#), a local ministry that offers hospitality to asylum seekers who have begun the legal immigration process and are in need of shelter as they await their next steps.

Time will be set aside each week (Wednesdays, 2:00-5:30 PM) for learning about immigration and the border, including information and stories from service providers, immigrants, and local churches.

BORDER TOUR

An optional Saturday border crossing experience will be offered for groups who want to learn more about issues related to immigration. Interested groups will need to coordinate this experience separately and will be responsible for their own accommodations and transportation. The contact for arranging Saturday border tours is Ada Schmidt-Tieszen: adast@bethelks.edu, 316-842-9751.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Physical Address

First United Methodist Church
521 S Illinois Ave
Weslaco, TX 78596

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 8293
Weslaco, TX 78599



Telephone

(717) 413-5349 (Office Manager)
(717) 413-5445 (Project Director)

Email

mcallen@mds.org

TRANSPORTATION

It is the responsibility of weekly volunteers to plan, schedule, and pay for their transportation to and from the project. If you choose to fly in or take a bus, you will need to be sure to arrange for transportation from the station to the project, as MDS is not able to pick up weekly volunteers. If you have questions about this, please call the Coordinator for Weekly Volunteers at 800-241-8111.

- McAllen International Airport is the closest airport, about 2 miles away. Rental cars are available through several organizations (AVIS is one and can be reached at 1-800-633-3469).
- Greyhound has a bus station in McAllen, about 2 miles from the project site, and can be reached at 800-231-2222.

DIRECTIONS

Use Google Maps to direct you to First United Methodist Church. MDS' housing is across the street from the large church. There is a large parking lot with ample parking. Look for the MDS sign to identify the accommodations.