

# Juarez Spring Break Mission 2008

Let me start by saying we are so very excited for this year's Spring Break Mission trip! Together, I truly believe that this is going to be the best mission trip we have ever been on! Our goal as a Senior High Youth Staff is to provide the youth a very *Safe, Meaningful, and Fun* trip! And most importantly, a trip *where the Holy Spirit can be felt*. This will take all of us.....staff, parents, and especially the great youth of HPUMC!

It is my hope that the following document will answer any questions you might have regarding the trip! For more information, please feel free to call Tova at 214-523-2239 or Phil at or take a look at Amor Ministries' web site ([www.comebuildhope.com](http://www.comebuildhope.com)).

**If you need to contact us during the trip (emergencies only, please)**, call Tova Sido at, Phil a or Amor Ministries at (619) 662-1200. During business hours, state who you need to contact, the name of our group (Highland Park UMC), and tell them that we are in Juarez. After hours, leave a message with the same information. The Amor staff will make contact with us immediately. Saturday the 15th and Friday the 21st we will be staying at First United Methodist Church in Midland, Texas located at 305 N Baird St. Midland, TX 79701. The phone number there is (432) 682-3701. **Now.....to hopefully answer your most important questions.....**

**Q.: What's this mission all about?**

**A.: The Juarez home building mission**, organized through Amor Ministries ([www.comebuildhope.com](http://www.comebuildhope.com)), is a short-term mission (trip) based on serving the local church in Mexico and creating cross-cultural understanding through direct exposure to the Mexican culture. We do not want the group to just build a house in a developing nation. We want the group to understand the conditions of poverty through immersion – and to familiarize them with the great people there.

## The AMOR House Project

An AMOR house is a simple design, built according to the standards of the community so that a group without skilled labor or power tools can still complete the project. Amor doesn't allow the use of power tools or generators on the worksite. We want every member of the mission trip group involved in the house building process and power tools do not foster that environment. We realize that there are other methods of completing the building project more quickly, but we want everyone to experience the culture, get to know the family you are building for, and play with the children. Our building projects for this trip will include 2 double houses (for larger families).

## Location

Ciudad Juarez is located directly south of El Paso, Texas. Ciudad Juarez is a typical border city with tourism playing a big part in the economy. There are several border crossing points used seven days a week by both Americans and Mexicans.

In the communities we work, families purchase, on average, a 20' by 40' lot from the government to live on. The typical home that is constructed on the lot is from used garage doors, shipping pallets, and cardboard boxes with a dirt floor. When it rains, the family ends up living in a house with a floor that turns to mud. The structure usually contains the bedroom, kitchen, and living room in one or two rooms.

The communities that Amor Ministries build in are on the outskirts of town. The roads are dirt; there is no running water, no electricity, no streetlights, no garbage collection, and no mail service. The government has been trying to improve the living conditions in these areas but the progress is slow.

#### How Families Receive A Home

Families are selected to receive homes by the Mexico Ministry Planning Board (MMPB). The selection process begins with the pastors discerning the need within their own communities. Any family within a community can potentially be selected to receive a home, but the family must own their land. Amor and the MMPB have agreed that a family doesn't have to be saved or even attend the church within that community to receive a home, because we believe that the house becomes a powerful evangelistic tool and opens a relationship between the community's church and the family. The pastors present their nominations at board meetings and those families selected will then receive an Amor home built by mission trip participants.

#### The Mexico Ministry Planning Board

The Mexico Ministry Planning Board (MMPB) are not employees of Amor, but an integral part of the Amor team, because they provide vital support in Baja California, Juarez, and Puerto Peñasco, Mexico. The board is made up of Mexican pastors who volunteer to serve alongside the AMOR staff because they share a vision of ministry to the people of Mexico. These tireless, self-sacrificing men interview prospective families, create biographical sketches on each family, determine the families in the greatest need for house building priority, and return to the family again and again after the house is complete to remind them that the God who has provided the house will provide salvation for all eternity. The MMPB sets the tone for service by their consistent involvement with outreach programs, medical clinics, and attendance at Amor campfires. **Q.: Is it safe?**

**A.: Absolutely!** In the 13 years HPUMC youth have participated in this mission, we have never encountered a safety or security-related issue. Travel safety: All travel vehicles are new and all driving is done by our adult leaders. The travel portion of the trip is organized to minimize driver fatigue.

Camp safety: The mission teams camp in a high-fenced campground on the outskirts of Juarez that is staffed by Amor personnel 24/7. Site safety: We strictly enforce Amor's policy of leaving work sites before dark. The areas where we camp and work are inhabited by honest, but needy people – crimes against persons are very rare.

#### **Q.: Are there any medical considerations?**

**A.: Some.** We are well equipped to handle most medical emergencies. However, should one

of the adults or youth need advanced medical attention, several El Paso hospitals are a very short distance away.

It is important to know that the desert environment in northern Mexico is very dry and very sandy. Windstorms often kick large amounts of sand and dust into the air. Persons with asthma or other bronchial conditions may need to take precautions. These precautions include wearing dust masks as appropriate and ensuring all potentially required medications are readily available.

Additionally, on the medical form you will receive at the first information meeting, please include and describe **ANY** and **ALL** pre-existing medical conditions including behavior conditions and medication-related allergies. This information will be held in the strictest confidence, but is required in case treatment of related or non-related conditions is necessary.

**If your youth takes ANY medications**, it's important to note that we will "take those up" and will have an adult whose sole responsibility is to manage the medications during the trip. This is for the safety of all the youth. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Tova.

**Do not for any reason discontinue prescription medications** (including any behavior-modifying medications) during the trip and ensure an adequate supply is available for the trip.

**Q.: What about food?**

**A.: All meals are organized and prepared before we leave including our own water supply** (eliminating the chance of "Montezuma's Revenge"). We will be asking for volunteers to help prepare some of the meals. All meals for the week are provided **except** meals eaten "on the road" (in transit to and from El Paso) and include two lunch and two dinner meals. Youth will need to bring extra money for meals on the road.

**Q.: What are the sleeping arrangements – both in Midland and Juarez?**

**A.: Cots & sleeping bags!** In Midland we will be staying at First United Methodist Church, where we will be sleeping on the floor – so cots and sleeping bags are a must! In Juarez we will be camping. Youth (and adults) can choose who they would like to "tent" with – tents can be as large or small as they would like. Just make sure whatever they plan to sleep in is warm and sturdy. It can get very cold and very windy! Mountain Hideout on Lovers and REI are both great places to buy camping equipment.

**Q.: What do I need to bring?**

**A.: We will be "camping out" in the high desert** area outside Juarez. **Daytime temperatures generally range from 65F to 80F and nighttime from 25F to 45F – plan clothing accordingly – It can be VERY COLD in the evenings and through the night** ("layering" is highly recommended). For those of you involved in Scouting, this will be

very familiar territory. Please feel free to bring additional camping-related comfort items.

Documents (very important – don't leave home without them – We WILL collect these before we leave):

1. PASSPORT
2. PARTICIPATION FORMS – both Amor Ministries and HPUMC (minors must have this signed by parent)

It's important to know that everything you bring will get VERY dirty, dusty, and probably won't be anything you will want to wear again in public. A great suggestion is to **put clothes for each day in a large zip-lock bag**. That way they won't get too dirty or dusty before you wear them.

Gear:

1. Tent
2. Sleeping bag, blanket, and pillow
3. Foam/air mattress or camping cot
4. Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, brush, soap, and shampoo)
5. Flashlight (bring extra batteries) the new LED type have very good battery life
6. Water bottle or canteen
7. Lawn chair or campstool
8. Sunglasses and hat/visor
9. Work gloves (leather is best)
10. Work shoes (two pair. Need to be sturdy and ones you don't mind getting dirty.)
11. Work clothes (**no** dresses, shorts, or tank tops)
12. Bathing suit (**no** bikinis) and cover for showers
13. Socks & Underwear for every day we are there
14. Long sleeve t-shirts (layering is a good idea – it's REAL cold at night & in the mornings and warmer during the day)
15. Warm clothes for evenings
16. Long johns
17. Jeans for work (old that you don't mind getting REALLY dirty)
18. Shower and camp shoes
19. Jacket(s) and sweatshirt(s)/fleece(s)
20. Rain gear
21. Bible, journal, and pen
22. Spending money (for meals)
23. Camera and film (disposable cameras are great)
24. Towel(s) and wash cloth
25. Sunblock and lip balm
26. Insect repellent
27. Aspirin, Tylenol or ibuprofen

**\*VERY IMPORTANT\*** - For the first night in Midland, youth will need to pack a **BACKPACK ONLY** with their overnight clothes, toiletries along with their sleeping bag and pillow, all of which they will have in the van they drive in. They will need to pack A **SEPARATE BAG** for the rest of the week (which will go into a "cargo van" – that they will

NOT have access to on Friday night). Their cot, tent & camp chair will also go in the cargo van.

## **Mission Schedule**

**Friday, March 14, LUGGAGE & TENT DROP OFF!!!** Please bring your bag for the week and your cot to the church between 4:00-5:00pm. These items will be loaded and you will NOT have access to them until we get to Juarez.

**Saturday, March 15, 11:00am-1:00: Lunch, Registration & Check-in – please have your documentations ready to turn in as well as any medications.** Meet in the lobby just outside of Cornerstone. **PLEASE do not be late!** It is essential that we start on time for this trip. We will leave promptly at 1pm and drive to Midland, Texas where we will stay the night.

**Sunday, March 16, 6:00am:** Pack up, worship, have breakfast in Midland, then off to El Paso. We check-in with Amor at 3pm and will cross the border shortly after that.

**Monday, March 17 - Thursday, March 20:** Work, play, and grow in Mexico. Our daily schedule looks something like this:

6:45am-Wake up call!  
7:15am-Breakfast  
8:00am-Morning devotional and prayer  
9:00am-Prepare to leave for worksite  
noon-ish-Break for lunch  
5-6pm-Break for the day, return to camp  
7pm- dinner  
8pm-campfire, worship, small groups  
11:00-tent time!!!

**Friday, March 21:** Clean up campsite, pack the vans, say goodbye to our new amigos! We'll hop in the vans and then we're off to Midland. We'll stay at FUMC Midland where we'll get some well-deserved showers and have great food catered. We'll stay the night in Midland.

**Saturday, March 22:** Leave Midland after breakfast, and head back to HPUMC. ETA is 3:30pm (if we'll be significantly earlier or later, we'll call parents).

**Sunday, March 23:** Meet at the Easter Sunrise service and WEAR YOUR MISSION SWEATSHIRT!