**2019 Mexico Mission Trip *Fact Sheet***

**What will we be doing in Mexico?**

We will build small houses for needy families, do ministry with children, and we will deepen our relationships with people in the area and who are involved with local Lutheran churches. We will send down money ahead of time to buy all of the building materials for the houses, and these materials will be delivered to the building sites. The children’s ministry will be in the neighborhoods of the homes and may include crafts, singing, active games, stories or other activities with the kids.

**What is expected of Mexico Mission team members?**

Team members will **attend planning meetings** leading up to the trip. If you are unable to attend a meeting, it will be expected that you participate by reading minutes of the meeting and communicating with trip leaders. A **fundraising dinner** will be held on SaturdayMay 4th. All team members will be expected to help prepare for this and work at the event if at all possible. In addition, we will be having a brief weekend retreat before the trip for planning, team building and preparation. We will be living in close **community** on the trip, and a **covenant** will be signed by each of us, expressing commitment to serve however needed, to be flexible, work cooperatively with other team members, attend daily devotions and participate in team activities, be respectful and tolerant of others, and to be a role model in behavior during the trip.

**What are the exact dates of the trip? June 21st- 29th**

All participants need to arrive in San Diego by 10am on the morning of June 22nd It is recommended that you arrive on Friday, June 21st. We will cross the border into Mexico on Saturday afternoon, June 22ndand return to San Diego on the afternoon of Friday, June 28th. The group will gather on the beach in San Diego for a farewell dinner on the evening of the 29th. Most people will return home on Saturday, June 29th; if you need to return home on the evening of June 298h, please do not book a flight before 7:00p.m.

**How big is the group, and who can join us?**

The size of the group varies from year to year and we plan our house building goals accordingly. Participants must be entering high school (9th grade) in the fall of 2019, or be older. This is an inter-generational trip, and youth under 18 will be expected to be with a parent or designated guardian. Participation will be at the discretion of the leadership team to ensure that everyone will be safe, and that we have enough experienced people to complete the work. Please fill out and return an interest form to Sarah or Melanie or the church office.

**Who will be leading the trip this year?**

Sarah Sherry and Melanie Summerour will be the trip facilitators, and Rebecca Shjerven will be the pastor for the trip. Other leadership roles may include building team captains, meal coordinator, children’s activities lead, and health advisor. If you’ve been on the trip before and want to help, please let Sarah or Melanie know which of these you might be interested in helping with.

**How much will it cost?**

You are responsible for your round trip travel to San Diego (if you book early you might get a round trip flight under $300). There may be an option of traveling in the church van to and from San Diego for free. Food and lodging in Mexico will be around-$200 (we will let you know). Also, you will need to budget for about six meals while in San Diego (depending on how early you arrive and leave –before/after our time in Mexico). Financial assistance may be available to those who need it. Please let the leaders know if you would like to discuss this option.

**Where will we be staying?**

Free accommodations in San Diego are offered on June 21stand again on the evening of June 28th. We will sleep at La Jolla Lutheran Church which is near many beautiful beaches. There are no beds available, so you may choose to bring an air mattress or camping pad.

While in Mexico, we will stay at a Lutheran Border Concerns facility, in an eastern suburb of Tijuana. After crossing the border at Otay (just east of San Diego) it is only about 20-30 minutes away. The center has running water and electricity(you will bring your own bedding). There are showers and bathroom facilities, and we plan to cook some of our meals in the kitchen. Although it is nicer than most of the homes in the neighborhood, it would be considered rustic by our standards.

**What should I bring?**

Soft luggage is the easiest to pack, and we want you to get by with one piece to check through at the airport and one “carry on”. The “carry on” should be some kind of day pack that you take with you to the building sites, etc. Nearly all the tools that we need are available at the site, but you might want to bring a hammer and some kind of tool belt if you are going to help with the houses. We will provide a list of what to bring later.

**What about spending money and valuables?**

Please take as few valuables and as little cash as possible. Expensive electronics, jewelry, etc, should be left behind. It is good to have one credit/debit card that you can use to get cash when you need it. This can be done in San Diego and also in Mexico. It is wise to call your credit/debit card company ahead of time and tell them the dates you will be using your card in Mexico.

**What kind of travel documents or medical documents do I need?**

Everyone going on the trip needs a current passport. Youth under the age of 18 need a notarized document signed by the parent(s) who are not accompanying them on the trip, and a signed medical release form. Everyone will also need a current health insurance card.

**What kind of medical care is available?**

We will have First Aid Kits and you may want to bring a small one of your own. We are less than one hour from many hospitals in San Diego and we would try to go there for any medical emergencies. Everyone needs to fill out the medical questionnaire, and see a health care provider before the trip if there are any medical conditions at all. You may want to purchase supplemental medical insurance for Mexico.

**What kind of safety concerns are there?**

You are likely aware of stories of violence in Mexico. This is real, but is primarily focused on drug traffickers. We have not seen any increased risk for mission groups who go to serve. We conduct ourselves sensibly (not leaving valuables unattended, staying in groups, not flashing money or valuables) and will look out for each other. It is crucial that we all follow safety rules on the worksite and take care of our own health.

**What kind of ground transportation will we have?**

We rent reliable vehicles from adealership in San Diego to travel across the border and to worksites.

**How can I be reached in Mexico?**

People trying to reach you in an emergency would call the office of Lutheran Border Concerns in San Diego (619-286-2445) and they will forward a message to the center or church by telephone. Cell phones work as well, if you have an international calling plan (or obtain a temporary plan) that includes Mexico.