

**MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY  
FOR  
MISSION VOLUNTEERS**

INFORMATION PACKET

**Offered by the First United Methodist Church  
200 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mercedes, Texas  
956-565-1301**

## **Hello and thank you for your interest in staying with us while carrying out missionary work!!**

We are a congregation dedicated to the mission outreach of the church. We want to support and encourage the continuation of mission and ministry activities that come to our area including building work teams, medical teams, etc. Our mid-valley location enhances the possibility of such groups being hosted in our campus buildings. We see this hospitality as a vital link in the mission emphasis of the church.

The following information is provided for groups of no more than 40 people seeking housing at FUMC-Mercedes in order to carry out mission ministries. While groups with United Methodist connections are obviously welcomed, other groups meeting the criteria are welcomed as well and may apply for housing. Approval will be granted on the recommendation of the Mission Committee.

If there are fifteen people or less in your group, then you may want to consider staying at **BOBBIE'S TEAM HOUSE** offered through our church. It is a farmhouse located south of Mercedes and about four miles north of the International Bridge at Nuevo Progreso, Mexico. Ask for information about this great facility for small work teams, medical teams, church group retreats, etc!!

### **GUIDELINES FOR WORK TEAMS AT FUMC**

1. Groups of forty or less must have as their primary focus a spirit of ministry and mission.
2. Jr. and Sr. High work groups must have continuous and appropriate adult supervision at all times. **All Jr. High groups must have a minimum ratio of one adult for every six Jr. High youth. Sr. High groups must have a minimum ration of one adult for every eight Sr. High youth.**
3. Groups may stay for a maximum of 7 days. Special approval is required for emergency extensions.

### **FEES**

1. A service fee of **\$8.00 per person per night** is required to defray utility and maintenance costs. Children 12 years and younger are not assessed a fee.
2. In addition, a building use fee of **\$10.00 per night per group** will be charged, regardless of the number of persons in a group.
3. A fee of **\$8.00 per night is charged for recreational vehicles**. There is electricity, but no sewage is available. Dumping is available in the nearby town of Weslaco.

### **DEPOSIT**

1. An **advance deposit of \$100.00** is required of all groups and must be included with the application form. Please send the enclosed application form to First United Methodist Church, 200 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Mercedes, Texas 78570. The deposit is not refundable after 30 days prior to the scheduled visit unless the church facility can be rented to another group during the time period scheduled. The deposit will be mailed back to you after your have left. Any charges for repairs, cleaning, and/or failure to return the keys to the FUMC office upon departure will be deducted from the deposit.
2. Each group and its sponsors will be held financially liable for any damage done by the group to the building or grounds that costs more than the amount of the deposit. The building and grounds must be left in the same condition in which they were found upon the arrival of the visiting group.

3. Each group will be held responsible for the cost of all indoor plumbing repairs resulting from
4. stopped up lines or damage to fixtures during their stay.
5. Each group must carry their own insurance. The church, its staff, and its memberships will not be held liable for any loss of stolen guest property.
6. All groups must be self-sufficient. We are not staffed or equipped to handle guests with health problems or other extenuating circumstances.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. When groups are housed over a Sunday or Wednesday, it is the group's responsibility to see that any rooms they are using are clean, orderly, and ready for church use. Our local church programming has priority in the case of any unavoidable conflict that arises, such as a funeral.
2. Groups will furnish and prepare all food and clean the facilities daily. Most cooking utensils, dishes, and appliances are available in the kitchen. This is no dishwasher.
3. **Groups must furnish their own:**

Paper towels	dish washing detergent	garbage bags
Toilet paper	laundry detergent	hand and bath soap
First aid kit		

In addition, personal items must be furnished by each individual in the group, such as

Sleeping bags	sheets, pillows	towels
Blankets	bath mats	alarm clocks

**4" foam pads and some cots are available at the church to sleep on.**

4. In the kitchen there are two refrigerators, two ranges and two sinks located right off a large Fellowship Hall and Parlor. There is another refrigerator located away from the kitchen, but close by. There is also a barbeque pit for your use. There is a washing machine and dryer available for your use. Please do not overload it! Adult supervision is needed. A clothesline is also available. A donation of 50 cents a load would be appreciated...you keep track!

### **BEFORE YOU ARRIVE**

1. We must have your \$100.00 deposit and application form before you arrive. Please send this to FUMC, 200 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street, Mercedes, Texas 78570. You must send your \$100.00 deposit and application form before you arrive.
2. Please notify us at least one week before your arrival date of the time you will need to be met at our church. Esther, our church secretary, can be reached at 956-565-1301 Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. She will give you the name and phone number of the host/hostess who will be responsible for meeting you upon your arrival. Esther will inform your host/hostess of your arrival time. Please be considerate of your host/hostess, and arrive at the time you indicate. This is very important, as in the past our host/hostess has waited for hours at the church for groups to arrive. Please make every effort to schedule your arrival before 8:00 p.m.

## WHEN YOU ARRIVE

1. Please do not park on the concrete patio area.
2. Your host/hostess will meet you and give you a tour of our campus and keys to the facility.
3. Long distance calls can be made on the kitchen phone using 1-800 + the number on your credit card. The kitchen phone number is 956-565-1301. There is an answering machine at this number so that you can receive messages from home.
4. The office phone is available for emergencies only at the request of the Team Leader. Please reverse the long distance charges.

## DAILY ROUTINE

1. Please collect trash daily from the classrooms, kitchen, restrooms, and church yard. Place it in the dumpster near the street. Trash pickup is scheduled for Friday mornings. The opening needs to be towards the street. The kitchen wet garbage can compost across the back street. Break down boxes to save space.
2. Wash and dry all dirty linens.
3. Sweep and mop the kitchen daily.
4. Rinse aluminum cans and place them in the trashcan outside marked "CANS ONLY".
5. A clothesline is located on the east side of the classroom wing. Clothespins are stored with the washing machine.
6. Keep the kitchen/fellowship hall in usable order since church groups occasionally will need to use the facilities during your stay.
7. Turn off all lights and lock all doors before leaving the church grounds. Do not unlock the sanctuary doors unless it has been arranged. The alarm will sound off!!! Assign one person to be responsible for locking each door and turning off all lights each morning when you leave.
8. Turn off the air conditioning in the fellowship hall and kitchen. Keep the thermostat on low during the day. The thermostats in the classroom are set at 77 degrees and run all day. Do not attempt to change the thermostat settings.
9. PLEASE...no food or drinks in the carpeted classrooms. We have problems with ants!
10. **DRESS CODE FOR WORKING IN MEXICO**...no tank tops for females or males, only knee length shorts, and no bathing suit tops or sports bras. Do not wear "strappies". Christians in Mexico believe the body should be covered.
11. **QUIET TIME** begins every night at 10:00 p.m. Everyone should be inside and quiet by this time.

## **WHEN YOU LEAVE**

1. Stack all the foam pads and fold all the cots. Place them in the storeroom where they are stored.
2. Turn off all lights and the air conditioning units. Lock all doors as you do each day.
3. Return all the keys along with your payment. A fee of \$20.00 will be deducted from your deposit if all keys are not returned upon your departure. Your deposit will be mailed back to you after your departure.
4. Please dispose of any leftover food before you depart. If you cannot take it with you, distribute it to needy families in Mexico. Call Fanny Ross (565-1683) or Karen Seiver (565-4265) if you have leftovers you cannot distribute to others.
5. Clean the stove and the refrigerators you used.
6. Mop the kitchen floor.
7. Vacuum the carpets you used.
8. If it is necessary for us to use a professional cleaning service after you leave, the cost for this service will be deducted from your deposit.

***THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION! IT MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR OUR CHURCH TO CONTINUE TO SERVE AS HOST TO VOLUNTEER GROUPS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AGAIN NEXT YEAR!!!***

***HAVE A SAFE TRIP HOME!!!***

**Board of Trustees  
First United Methodist Church-Mercedes**

**MISSION AND MINISTRY HOUSING  
FEE WORKSHEET**

The team leader fills out this form. It is **most important** that this form accompany your payment. **FILL OUT THIS FORM AND LEAVE IT WITH A CHECK AND THE CHURCH KEYS IN THE CHURCH OFFICE MAIL SLOT WHEN YOU DEPART.**

Group's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Leader's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons in group \_\_\_\_\_

Multiplied by \$8.00 per night = \_\_\_\_\_

Multiplied by the number of nights \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Add House Use Fee (\$10.00 per night) \_\_\_\_\_

Or Add RV Hook-Up Fee (\$8.00 per night each RV) \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fee Due \_\_\_\_\_

Your Deposit will be mailed back to you after your departure!!!

**MISSION AND MINISTRY HOUSING**

**APPLICATION FORM**

First United Methodist Church  
200 W. 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Mercedes, Texas 78570  
956-565-1301

(Please fill out, detach and return to FUMC-Mercedes with a \$100.00 deposit check.)

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Group \_\_\_\_\_

Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number and E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Team Leader \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s) and E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Phone Number(s) of local contact person with whom you will be working while in the Rio Grande Valley \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Arrival Time (before 8:00 p.m.) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of adults in group \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Youth: Jr. High \_\_\_\_\_ High School \_\_\_\_\_

Please write a brief statement about the nature of your trip and the work you hope to accomplish during your stay. Cover such details as where you will be working during the day and other information you feel might be helpful to the host/hostess.

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It is our hope that your stay in our church complex will assist your group during your time in the Rio Grande Valley. We will keep you in our prayers as you spread the Gospel message through your work. Please know that we want to help make your stay fruitful.