Resources

With help from several sources, the Synod is assembling a list of agencies/organizations that are mobilizing to help asylum seekers and children separated from their parents at the Texas/Mexico border. These agencies need financial, material, and advocacy support. We will update the list frequently and seek your input on other agencies that are providing support.

Also be aware that the need is not just at the immediate border!

When those seeking asylum are released from detention, they are sent by all means to be with loved ones throughout the country to await a hearing. Some travel by bus, some by plane, but everyone needs and deserves a faith community with which to connect and feel welcomed once they arrive and are awaiting a hearing. ***Will Presbyterians be that community??***

These organizations are mobilizing to try to help asylum seekers and children separated from their parents at the Texas/Mexico border:

[American Gateways](http://www.americangateways.org/) provides legal services and representation to detained parents. It's seeking volunteers to represent low-income individuals and families.

[Angry Tias & Abuelas](https://www.facebook.com/angrytiasandabuelas/) delivers financial support to local shelters; transportation to and from bus stations, airports and shelters; and emergency food, water, clothing and toiletries to individuals and families seeking asylum. They are accepting donations.

[Annunciation House](https://annunciationhouse.org/) shelters families detained and separated by ICE on the El Paso/Juarez border.

[Baker Ripley’s team of immigration attorneys](https://www.houstonimmigration.org/members/bakerripley/) is providing free or low-cost legal services throughout the Houston immigrant community.

The Humanitarian Respite Center for [Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley](https://www.catholiccharitiesrgv.org/Home.aspx) provides a place for men, women and children to rest, have a warm meal, shower, change into clean clothes, as well as receive medicine and other supplies.

[Diocesan Migrant & Refugee Services](http://www.dmrs-ep.org/) says it’s the only full-service immigration legal aid clinic serving low-income immigrants and refugees in the southwestern U.S.

[Immigrant Families Together](https://immigrantfamiliestogether.com/) works to bond out asylum seekers and reunite them with their children. It also provides food to families and government and foster-agency-approved housing to expedite reunifications. The group is accepting donations.

[Immigrant Justice Now](https://www.immigrantjusticenow.org/current-initiatives) is working to provide supplies, like bus tickets, Pedialyte, shoes, prepaid cellphones and underwear, to immigrant families and children.

[Interfaith Welcome Coalition](https://interfaithwelcomecoalition.org/) assists refugees, asylum seekers and at-risk immigrants. They have an overnight shelter at Travis Park Methodist Church and help migrants get transportation — buses or planes — as they travel to other places through San Antonio.

[Justice for Our Neighbors](http://njfon.org/) provides free and low-cost legal services to immigrant individuals and families in Texas.

[Kids In Need of Defense](https://supportkind.org/) partners with major law firms, corporations and bar associations to create a nationwide pro bono network to represent unaccompanied children through their immigration proceedings. Volunteers don’t need to have immigration law experience.

[La Posada Providencia](https://lppshelter.org/) in San Benito runs a shelter for people in the legal process of seeking asylum, residency or some other legal alternatives.

The El Paso-based [Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center](https://las-americas.org/) provides legal representation to asylum seekers. It’s accepting donations.

[RAICES](https://www.raicestexas.org/) is a nonprofit that provides free and low-cost legal services to immigrant children, families and refugees in Texas. It’s accepting donations and volunteers at its website.

[South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_interest/immigration/projects_initiatives/south_texas_pro_bono_asylum_representation_project_probar/) is looking for volunteers and attorneys (even ones not experienced in immigration law) to provide legal services to asylum seekers detained in South Texas

[Texas Civil Rights Project](https://texascivilrightsproject.org/) is looking for bilingual attorneys who can help represent detained and separated parents during their immigration proceedings

[Texas RioGrande Legal Aid](http://www.trla.org/) provides provides free legal services to low-income people seeking immigration assistance.

[The Children’s Immigration Law Academy](http://www.cilacademy.org/) has pro bono attorneys representing children in immigration-related proceedings. It’s also providing specialized training to legal service providers and volunteers who are serving unaccompanied immigrant children.

[The Human Rights Initiative of North Texas](https://hrionline.org/) provides free legal services to immigrants who are seeking asylum in the U.S. and immigrants who are victims of violence.

[The Migrant Center for Human Rights](https://migrantcenter.org/) is providing free and low-cost legal services for detained asylum seekers in Texas.

[The Thanks-Giving Foundation](http://thanksgiving.org/?fbclid=IwAR0WWkl9jo5TIoKahEkR-bhY4QppLTsIZx6x9YhuywG8OPtSCJ9Fu3evG28) is taking volunteers and donations to help with the Oak Lawn Methodist Church Respite Center. The center is where some of the overflow asylum seekers are being sent from El Paso while en route to their families and sponsors in the U.S.

The [Val Verde Border Humanitarian Coalition](https://vvbhcoalition.com/) supports refugees by providing them with access to phones, restrooms, showers, laundry and warm meals.

[The Young Center for Immigrant Children’s Rights](https://www.theyoungcenter.org/) is accepting donations that will go toward providing more child advocates for immigrant kids inside the detention centers weekly and accompany them to immigration proceedings.

[Together Rising](https://togetherrising.org/) is collecting money that'll go toward defenders, prosecutors and advocates who are working to reunify immigrant children with their families.

Annunciation House - this is the organization that has been hosting and helping churches host Asylum Seekers who have been released by ICE and CBP. Because of the fluctuations of people and limited storage space, they would prefer cash donations, not items. <https://annunciationhouse.org/> and Ruben Garcia is the Executive Director.

2) Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center - This is a local legal aid organization working to represent and provide legal advice to those inside detention centers and those working on their legal cases after being released. They are working hard to reunite families separated by ICE and right now they are working to help provide representation to children being detained. Again, cash donations are preferred. <https://las-americas.org/> . They are also a PW funded organization.

Good Neighbor Settlement House in Brownsville:  <http://www.goodneighborsh.org/>

Pastor Bill Reagan of Loves & Fishes of the Rio Grande Valley:  Loaves & Fishes of the Rio Grande Valley - <<https://lfrgv.org/>>

The Humanitarian Respite Center in McAllen:  Humanitarian Respite Center <<https://www.catholiccharitiesrgv.org/HumanitarianRespiteCenter.shtml>>

Proyecto Libertad - Contact RE Rogelio Nuñez: Casa De Proyecto Libertad - National Immigration Legal Services Directory - Nonprofit Resource Center <<https://www.immigrationadvocates.org/nonprofit/legaldirectory/organization.393335-Casa_De_Proyecto_Libertad>>

LUPE organization:  LUPE <<https://lupenet.org/>>

Border Network for Human Rights, Robert Heyman, Policy Director
rheyman@bnhr.org - Office: 915-577-0724; cell: 915-801-7440

[The Florence Project](https://firrp.org/) is a nonprofit legal service organization providing free legal services to men, women, and unaccompanied children in immigration custody in Arizona. Although the government assists indigent criminal defendants and civil litigants through public defenders and legal aid attorneys, it does not provide attorneys for people in immigration removal proceedings. As a result, an estimated 86 percent of the detained people go unrepresented due to poverty. The Florence Project strives to address this inequity both locally and nationally through direct service, partnerships with the community, and advocacy and outreach efforts.

Catholic Charities is the local San Antonio partner for routing the funding as well as the families. Funds for that are near depletion. All transportation $-donations can be routed directly to and through Catholic Charities at: <https://ccaosa.z2systems.com/np/clients/ccaosa/donation.jsp>
In the comment box, please note “Transportation $s”.

[Compassionate San Antonio](https://sacompassion.net/human-needs-are-basics/) continues to serve those San Antonians most in need while experiencing the [recent influx of migrants](https://www.expressnews.com/news/local/article/City-seeks-funding-for-migrant-shelter-13848599.php) transitioning through San Antonio and onto other places across the U.S. Hygiene kits are needed today and everyday in SA.

**LEARNING**

**1. Visit the Office of the General Assembly Office of Immigration Issues** [**web page**](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/presbyterians-just-immigration-signup/)**.**

* Find information about a variety of issues, realities and laws related to migration of people from around the world.
* Join the [Presbyterians for Just Immigration](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/presbyterians-just-immigration-signup/) network.
* Read up to date stories at the bottom of the home page.
* Learn how to respond using helpful [advocacy toolkits](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/advocacy/).
* Engage others in your church in conversation with the documentary film ***From Genesis to Exodus*** (found at <https://genesisofexodusfilm.com>) and accompanying “story map” and reflection guide.
* Find Advent and Christmastide with interfaith PC(USA) partner, Interfaith Immigration Coalition ([lectionary resources](http://www.interfaithimmigration.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/IIC-Advent-Devotional.pdf)).

**2. Visit the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance office** [**web pages for Refugee Ministry**](https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/refugee-ministry/)**.**

* Learn about PDA’s humanitarian response to and advocacy on behalf of refugees, asylum seekers and other forced migrants. Read the PDA web page about “[Families, Children and the US/Mexico Border](https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/unaccompanied-children/).”
* Find a variety of [educational and worship resources](https://pda.pcusa.org/situation/refugee-ministry/#resources) related to migration.
* [Watch the trailer](https://vimeo.com/145351153) for the documentary film ***Locked in a Box***, an “award winning short documentary that follows the stories of individuals held in the U.S. Immigration detention system and those who visit them. The film traces the lives of individuals who fled their homelands in search of safety and freedom only to end up in U.S. prisons under a mandatory bed quota system run by Immigration Customs & Enforcement.” Download the 24-minute documentary and view the accompanying study guide, [here](http://pda.pcusa.org/pda/resource/video-immigration-detention/).
* Learn how to [visit an immigration detention center](https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/visitor-volunteer-resources/) or join (or start) a visitation program.

**WORK AND SERVICE**

***Short- and long-term on-site service***

1. **Long term PC(USA) mission co-worker position now open:
Coordinator for Migration Issues, Advocacy and Mission, based in El Salvador**

“This position will facilitate a faith-rooted advocacy witness in Central America, coordinated by the Reformed Calvinist Church in El Salvador and the Office of Latin America and the Caribbean of Presbyterian World Mission with other church partners in the Northern Triangle of Central America and Southern Mexico.

“A focus of this position would be to develop a Central American Advocacy… [**[more]**](https://www.joblinkapply.com/Joblink/803/Job/Index/332101/coordinator-for-migration-issues-advocacy-and-mission-with-the-northern-triangle-international-mission-co-worker-?ShowBackButton=True&BackUrl=%252fJoblink%252f803%252fSearch%252fResults%253fsavedSearchId%253d0ad299f9-c1fe-4598-9930-0807b82effc7&fbclid=IwAR07ohtxW2S6iHLf0yexeTecF59yFxJj9fqWxc4Cqjbl89HLJ3Zc9u43H-Q) Network working in the following areas:
1. Refugees and Migrants
2. Prevention, Human Rights and a Culture of Peace
3. Climate Justice
4. Formal Education (scholarships for children, adolescents and youth).” [Learn more here.](https://www.joblinkapply.com/Joblink/803/Job/Index/332101/coordinator-for-migration-issues-advocacy-and-mission-with-the-northern-triangle-international-mission-co-worker-?ShowBackButton=True&BackUrl=%252fJoblink%252f803%252fSearch%252fResults%253fsavedSearchId%253d0ad299f9-c1fe-4598-9930-0807b82effc7&fbclid=IwAR07ohtxW2S6iHLf0yexeTecF59yFxJj9fqWxc4Cqjbl89HLJ3Zc9u43H-Q#.W__wFuhTGM0.facebook)

1. **Three-day intensive events for short-term support (see attachment)**

Texas Impact - Courts and Ports: Faithful Witness on the Texas Mexico Border.  See attached information flier and visit their website for information on volunteering and needs at:  [http://texasimpact.org/project/courts-ports/](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Ftexasimpact.org%2Fproject%2Fcourts-ports%2F&data=02%7C01%7CEllen.Sherby%40pcusa.org%7Cefb4cb14df0141ffdf5a08d656477d70%7C99082a1a70af459fa6ac8ad01476a157%7C0%7C0%7C636791262388660479&sdata=PqQ4MJRbBNQsfaCYHe5cDQBrAgv2eMJcJNnnWgatiAA%3D&reserved=0)

1. **Short-term mission trips/delegations**

Sites in El Paso and McAllen, Texas with a focus on humanitarian aid.
Contact the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Call Center:

Eden Roberts

Mission Specialist II for Hosting and Volunteer Management

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

National Call Center

866.732.6121 (toll-free)

1. **Individual volunteers**

Sites in Texas and California with a focus on advocacy and accompaniment.
Contact the Office of Immigration in the Office of the General Assembly:

 Amanda Craft

 Manager of Advocacy, Immigration Issues

 Office of General Assembly

 800-728-7228 x5007

 Amanda.craft@pcusa.org

***Helping from wherever you are***

1. **Visit the web page of the** [**Office of Public Witness**](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington/) of the PC(USA) to learn about advocacy in which you can engage, including advocacy issues related to immigrants and refugees.
	* [Sign up](http://capwiz.com/pcusa/mlm/signup/) to receive current updates and alerts.
	* Read and sign-on to the action alert for President Trump [regarding the migrant caravan](http://capwiz.com/pcusa/issues/alert/?alertid=80570761).
2. **The Interfaith Welcome Coalition and the backpack ministry.** From their website: “The Interfaith Welcome Coalition (IWC) is a faith-based movement meeting the changing needs of asylum seekers, refugees and at-risk immigrants in collaboration with others.” [Visit their page](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.interfaithwelcomecoalition.org%2F&data=02%7C01%7CEllen.Sherby%40pcusa.org%7Cefb4cb14df0141ffdf5a08d656477d70%7C99082a1a70af459fa6ac8ad01476a157%7C0%7C0%7C636791262388660479&sdata=F1yNjraRMbjqWJmgtttz3BvKRr2sDSgp7ZSxHF%2BkT4s%3D&reserved=0) to learn about their backpack ministry and ways to be involved. The IWC is based in San Antonio.
3. **Visit a nearby immigration detention center.** [Learn more](https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/visitor-volunteer-resources/) about how to find and visit a detention center. Check with local law schools, your presbytery and non-profits that support immigrants’ rights to learn what kind of accompaniment is needed at detention centers and how best to go about making a visit. [See this map](https://www.freedomforimmigrants.org/detention-statistics/) of immigration detention centers.
4. **Explore steps to become a sanctuary church**. Learn more about the significant history of [sanctuary in the PC(USA](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/sanctuary/)) as well as finding more information about what it means to be a sanctuary church, what it means for individuals to see sanctuary, and how that life is lived together.
5. **Find additional ways to accompany those who are at risk of deportation or removal –**
	* [Family care plan](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/familycareplan/) – guide to help those who are at risk of being deported to make plans so that decisions are made prior to crisis.
	* [Supporting immigrants](http://oga.pcusa.org/section/mid-council-ministries/immigration/supporting-immigrants/) – as millions of our neighbors are vulnerable to deportation or removal, it is important for communities to respond in solidarity as advocates. This page offers examples of those responses.
6. **Learn about and support PC(USA) partners and mission co-workers involved in border ministry**. Read about PC(USA) partner [Frontera de Cristo](http://fronteradecristo.org/). Visit [www.pcusa.org/missionconnections](http://www.pcusa.org/missionconnections) to see letters from mission co-workers Mark Adams, Miriam Maldonado and Leslie Vogel (search by last name).

**FURTHER INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION**

1. [“Hundreds of Miles North of the Mexico Border? You, too, can help,”](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/hundreds-of-miles-north-of-the-mexico-border-you-too-can-help/) a Presbyterian News Service article about the November 30th webinar organized by the Outreach to the World committee of the Presbyterian Mission Agency Board. The article includes a [link to the 75-minute webinar.](https://zoom.us/recording/play/60v7kxcil6OqqCQLDnf3JyudGmPuiaeBqwxK-kBHhw1EoH-m6cLK8Ldj2I_MDrQK?continueMode=true)
2. [“Return Home and Tell Your Story,”](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/if-you-visit-the-u-s-mexico-border-return-home-and-tell-your-story/) a Presbyterian News Service article about a conversation between Stated Clerk Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, II, and Teresa Waggener, an attorney with the Office of Immigration Issues, and Amanda Craft, manager of advocacy in the same office. You can see the [session of Coffee with the Clerk on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/spiritofga/videos/873718486292605/).
3. **Read and sign-up for the PDA blog.** See the November posts, “[Called to Help](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/pda-blog/2018/11/08/called-to-help/)” and “[Stories of Light in the Midst of Darkness](https://www.presbyterianmission.org/pda-blog/2018/11/30/stories-of-light-in-the-midst-of-the-darkness/),” to learn about the ongoing humanitarian crisis at the border, how you can engage faithfully, and where there is hope.
4. **Presbyterian Peace Fellowship: Sanctuary at the Border/Wall of Welcome
“**The people in the migrant Caravan from Central America are seeking safety and security for their families. They can’t find it in their home countries, so they are coming to the United States to seek asylum. This is their right. Yet our government has sent military troops instead of humanitarian aid to our border. Our government has tried to enact policies of exclusion instead in place of political asylum.

“It’s up to us–people of faith and conscience–to join together with thousands of others to respond with the kind of hospitality and compassion that our faith calls us to. Presbyterians from all over the country are invited to join in efforts to do just this. These efforts seek to provide safety and witness for the migrants, encouraging the U.S. to obey its own laws by providing them access to petition for their asylum case.” [Read more here.](https://www.presbypeacefellowship.org/events/sanctuary-caravan-at-the-border/)
5. ***Arte de Lágrimas - Caring for the Sacred Other: A Conversation on Immigration, Faith, and the Borderlands*** [exhibit information](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fevents.ithaca.edu%2Fevent%2Fcaring_for_the_sacred_other_a_conversation_on_immigration_faith_and_the_borderlands%23.XABSE_ZFz4g&data=02%7C01%7CEllen.Sherby%40pcusa.org%7Cefb4cb14df0141ffdf5a08d656477d70%7C99082a1a70af459fa6ac8ad01476a157%7C0%7C0%7C636791262388670488&sdata=s%2Bnp39udmbwzn0HmbYoJ8weMih8iKLs1VjeR0o5B9eM%3D&reserved=0), sponsored by the Office of Religious and Spiritual Life at Ithaca College in New York. A conversation with Dr. Gregory Cuéllar and Nohemi Cuéllar, founders of *Arte de Lágrimas:* Refugee Artwork Project. “Using drawings from children released from detention on the U.S./Mexico border, the Cuéllars explore how to reclaim the sacredness of the Other in the borderlands.” Dr. Cuéllar is an associate professor of Old Testament at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He and Nohemi Cuéllar have “served immigrant-majority churches in Dallas and Austin, and regularly advocate for justice for migrants at the U.S./Mexico border.”
6. **The work of Eddie Canales at the** [**South Texas Human Rights Center**](https://southtexashumanrights.org/)**.** “The South Texas Human Rights Center is a community based organization in Falfurrias, Texas dedicated to the promotion, protection, defense and exercise of human rights and dignity in South Texas. Our mission is to end death and suffering on the Texas/Mexico border through community initiatives.”

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| 1. **Angry Tias and Abuelas.** The group, founded in June 2018 by a group of four women in response to family separations, “Finds out what people waiting at the bridges need, and then brings them those necessary items – basic things like food and water. And the group stays around to help even after media attention at the border dwindles.” [Read more here](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.texasstandard.org%2Fstories%2Fangry-tias-and-abuelas-group-in-the-valley-brings-resources-to-people-waiting-at-the-border%2F&data=02%7C01%7CEllen.Sherby%40pcusa.org%7Cdb4b4d51af924cfb092908d65a6a8c9f%7C99082a1a70af459fa6ac8ad01476a157%7C0%7C0%7C636795811040416301&sdata=DTe9oc3BPcJbvVOKv38JUyg%2FC1h5CDKEhgZbr%2FVPeHs%3D&reserved=0). Send donations to: Progress Texas Institute – 1023 Springdale, #11D, Austin, TX 78721. Note: For Angry Tias and Abuelas of the RGV.
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1. **Follow Mission Presbytery’s Immigration Task Force Facebook page at** *Mission Presbytery Refugee Family Response.*