

La Hormiga Project



La Hormiga is a squatter community of 31 houses in the municipality of **Dorado, PR**. Like many others in Puerto Rico, this community was severely affected by the devastation caused by hurricanes Irma and Maria in September of 2017. Nonetheless, different from other communities on the island, most residents in La Hormiga have been squatters for the last 60 years. Lacking property titles they do not qualify for full FEMA aid.



For this reason Iglesia **La Travesía PCA**, **Trinity Church PCA**, **Iglesia Casa de Bendición**, and **Iglesia Nuevo Testamento** are joining efforts to adopt this community and invest our resources, time, money, and friendship to help restore their houses, develop meaningful relationships that testify to the love of Christ with our words and our hands.



Our Vision

We are convinced that poverty is not merely a lack of material goods but moreover a lack of healthy relationships. Shattered relationships with God, family, neighbors, government, and other social structures have a huge impact and hinder people from thriving in God's world. This is the devastating consequence of the fall in Genesis 3 (i.e. broken relationship with God, other human beings, and indeed, the whole of Creation). This is undoubtedly not how God intended things to be in the world He created. But the good news of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is in the business of renewing all things (cf. Revelation 21:5), that is, bringing healing to all of these broken relationships, both human and non-human. (cf. Colossians 1:19-20).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is about restoring all that was shattered in the Garden, and putting it back into right relationship with its Creator. As the church, our ministry is to actively participate in God's glorious mission of reconciliation (cf. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20).

This is what we long to see this happening in La Hormiga! We desire for the people of this particular community to be reconciled to God, to enjoy the blessing of fruitful and meaningful relationships with their neighbors, and to flourish in the space where God has placed them. But it will take time, and we are committed long-term. We are committed to walk with this community. Hence our desire is that each short-term group that comes to serve see themselves as collaborators of this larger plan.

Asset Based Community Development

The model we are employing for this project is commonly referred to as Asset Based Community Development. We do not just want to alleviate the needs of the community; mere charity can actually cause damage in the long-term. We are carefully looking to work hand in hand with the community. We want to give them a hand-up, not just a hand-out. We are seeking ways to identify and leverage the resources that are already present in the community. We want people to rediscover their God given abilities, and to awake in them a desire to dream and see themselves as agents of change.

Hunger Corp

In order to properly receive our short-term teams of volunteers we are partnering with **Hunger Corp.**, a well-experienced organization, which currently has projects in Puerto Rico, the Amazon, Honduras and the Dominican Republic. They have created a convenient package for one-week short-term teams. Hunger Corp. will be taking care of **all ground transportation, meals, lodging**, and will provide **building materials** as well as **experienced foremen** on the worksite.

What kind of work will the volunteers be doing?

Our volunteers are a most precious resource to this project. They will act as the healing hands of God. Some of the projects include the following: scrap removal, roof repair, house construction and restoration. Apart from the construction work, we will have a few occasions for volunteers to engage in relational activities (e.g., VBS, educational workshops, picnics, movie nights, etc.) to build relationships and bless the community. These activities will vary depending on the profile of each group.

How to Schedule a Team

1. Register as a MNA Disaster Response Volunteer; to register, please **click here**. Each individual on the team must register individually.
2. Once the Team Leader determines the size of the team and the dates the team would like to serve (*the Team Leader only*) please contact Sherry Lanier, slanier@pcanet.org to determine availability of dates requested.

*(Teams will be scheduled to serve based on availability of spaces at the Volunteer Staging Site. Once the dates have been confirmed your team will be placed on the calendar to serve and the Team Leader will receive a **Confirmation Email** with further information about serving.)*

FAQ

Are construction skills required? Construction skills are highly desirable, however not required for all volunteers. We will have experienced foremen on the working site that will be leading and training volunteers.

Is there a minimum age limit for volunteers? Minors should be of age 14 and accompanied by an adult. Adults should compose at least 70% of the group. (If you want an exception, please seek out permission first.)

What would constitute an ideal group? It is most desirable for volunteers to be willing to humbly serve this community and **join our vision** of creating a long-term Gospel impact.

Do we need to raise additional money for the project? While it is not required for groups to do this, it would be a huge blessing if each team raises an offering to contribute toward construction costs in the project.

Are there accommodations for special dietary needs? Yes, we can provide special menus to accommodate people with certain (not all) health conditions at an extra cost of \$100 per person/week.

Do we need to arrange transportation from the airport to the lodging place? No, Hunger Corp. will be providing ALL ground transportation, to include airport pickup.

Do we need to bring our own tools? No, all tools and materials will be provided on the worksite.

Packing List

Note: We ask all volunteers to avoid excess luggage. It would be ideal for participants to just bring 1 bag and a personal item such as a daypack.

- Sunday clothes (casual attire, jeans and collared shirt are fine)
- Comfortable working clothes
- Clothes to wear after work and on day-off
- 1 pair of work gloves
- 1 pair of sturdy work shoes, boots or tennis shoes
- Hat for the worksite
- Safety glasses
- Lightweight pajamas
- Bathing suit (no 2 piece bathing suits)
- Towel and washcloth
- Twin sized sheet for bed (a sleeping bag works well too)
- Pillow
- Toiletries (Shampoo, soap, toothbrush, etc.)
- Insect repellent
- Advil, Tylenol or other personal medications (Please inform your leader of any prescription medications you will be bringing.)
- Sunscreen (SPF 15 and above recommended)
- Water bottle for worksite
- Day pack to carry personal items to the worksite

Optional

- Camera (Please be sensitive when taking pictures of local families and homes. Ask permission first.)
- Spending money
- Individual battery operated fan