



Newsletter, July 2021



Desert Southwest Conference
The United Methodist Church

Director: Gretchen Lopez
Email: theinnofsa@gmail.com
Phone: (520) 330-8146
Web: <https://theinnofsa.org>
PO Box 43332; Tucson, AZ

To all our Valued Donors, Friends and Volunteers,

Much has changed so...**A QUICK REVIEW:** Due to Covid 19, and in compliance with the CDC guidelines and best practices to avoid congregate settings, The Inn was relocated to a hotel in February 2021. Housing families in individual rooms with meals being prepared and plated offsite and distributed, along with clothing and other necessities to each room by volunteers, we have been able to provide much greater safety to guests and volunteers during the pandemic. Guests are screened for Covid-19 before arriving and are able to receive vaccinations, if desired, after arriving at the hotel. Site Coordinator Gretchen Lopez and a wonderful team of volunteers at the hotel have made it possible for each person and each family to feel warmly welcome.

A big THANK YOU to everyone who has been helping The Inn continue its mission of solidarity and compassion, as asylum seekers released from government agencies journey on to destinations in the U.S. Each of you receiving this newsletter is a valued participant in this work. We could not continue without your support.

Entrance to the U.S. has been denied to many from Mexico, Guatemala, and other Central American countries under Title 42, instituted under former President Trump.

As soon as Title 42 is lifted, The Inn is looking ahead and preparing for an increased need for shelter. Thankfully, migrants who have

received asylum hearings no longer need to wait in Mexico under Migrant Protection Protocols, which was revoked by President Biden. Working within the Border Shelter Network, The Inn is continually updated and informed about changing conditions. In April, Custom and Border Protection (CBP) reported some 20,000 apprehensions of migrants crossing the Arizona border in the Tucson sector. This number includes those who request asylum upon being taken into custody ([The Arizona Daily Star](#), June 17, 2021).



BY THE NUMBERS: In March 2021, The Inn welcomed 470 total individuals (this includes children traveling with their families). We received 251 in April and 271 in May with numbers increasing again in June. Migrants from Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Cuba have been significantly represented as well as families from a number of other countries.



OTHER VOLUNTEER NEWS:

The Inn recently acquired volunteers to help with the essential roles of grant writer and bookkeeper.

A volunteer group is providing masks for our guests, about 60 per week.

Roy DeBise-Loomis and Nancy Garcia prepare most of the weekly meals! Bravo!

St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Tucson contributes snack packs and travel lunches needed by our departing guests.

A group from The Voyager RV Resort provide peanut butter and jelly sandwiches that are part of the travel bags.

A group of volunteers sorts and packages clothing in sizes needed by guests.

Friends have been generously donating new clothing, shoes, flipflops, water bottles, and breakfast cereal.

Members of the UUCT church are putting together entertainment bags for the children so they have activities at the hotel and on their travels.

Lifting Hands has sent The Inn a pallet of underwear, socks, flip-flops, baby bottles, backpacks, and more.

Save the children send a pallet (240) travel bags with toys for children, flashlight, battery charger in a nice bag for food or clothing.



WHAT WE OFFER: We are providing three healthy meals a day, delivered to guests in their rooms, hygiene products, clothing, and assistance in connecting with loved ones, as well as transportation on their day of departure. And, of course, our notoriously friendly hospitality!

The hotel has been wonderfully willing to work with us and our guests. The courageous travelers coming to The Inn express deep gratitude for all we do, how much we care, and how committed we are to supporting them. It is such a joy to interact with them as they check in, come by the office with a question, or say their goodbyes.

WHERE ARE WE NOW:

UPDATE FROM OUR SITE

COORDINATOR



It is our privilege to share the journey with those migrants arriving in Tucson on their way to loved ones across the U.S. Currently the flow of arrivals continues to fluctuate. Those arriving in Tucson needing covid testing go through Casa Alitas first. We try to assist by bringing as many individuals to the Inn as possible. Partnership has been a part of our advocacy work from the beginning.

~Gretchen Lopez, Site Coordinator

**LOCATION,
LOCATION,
LOCATION.**

LOCATION: We are now in the process of searching for a more permanent location, eagerly anticipating the time when volunteers and guests can safely congregate again. If you have time and expertise to help in this regard, please contact our Board Chair at diane.everhart@hotmail.com



Volunteers from the Unitarian Church making entertainment bags for children.



Travel Packs from Save The Children



WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR STORIES.
Put into words what volunteering at
The Inn has meant to you.

“It is not necessary to do great things, only small things with great love.” Mother Teresa

As one of the many drivers helping to transport families from Casa Alita to The Inn, I often see the weariness and exhaustion in the eyes of our travelers. I am also privileged to see the expressions of renewed hope and relief after arriving at The Inn and getting much-needed rest, nutritious meals, clean clothing and even a dip in the hotel pool! As a family was leaving for the airport several days ago, their little girl was looking a bit apprehensive and unsure, so Gretchen, our mighty site manager, knew just the answer.

She pulled out a bag of stuffed animals that had just the day before been donated to our shelter and asked if she'd like to pick out a "friend" to keep her company on her continuing journey. As she started to sort through them, her eyes lit up and a smile replaced her uncertainty. She had found "Spirit," the cinnamon stallion from her favorite Disney movies! Needless to say, Spirit was absolutely not going to be put into her backpack or snack bag for travel...he was going to be tucked safely into her arms for the remainder of her trip!

CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE: visit our new, improved website www.theinnofsa.org and be inspired by the short video that Pastor Rolly Loomis put together on this website.

Sign up to be a volunteer today and to receive



our digital newsletter each month:

<https://tinyurl.com/xyvk369>

Or click on the QR code



MEETING THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES: The Board of The Inn of Southern Arizona has voted to incorporate and become our own 501(c)(3). Be assured, this will not sever the close ties developed during our years as a ministry of the Desert Southwest Conference of the United Methodist Church. By becoming a nonprofit, The Inn will be able to qualify for grants and other funding that was not previously available to us.



Fundraising is our major priority. Currently, we are spending about \$50 per night per hotel room, with 10 to 15 rooms usually occupied and one room being used as The Inn office; \$15,000 per month at minimum. With careful budgeting, we have been able to keep many costs down, however, base food and fuel prices have increased and we are incurring other costs, not previously necessary, for the safety and well-being of our guests and volunteers. We are truly grateful that, through your generous contributions, we have been able to

safely resume and continue our mission. You are invited to participate in our new 2021 Sponsorship Program:

The Inn Sponsorship Program 2021

Become an integral part of The Inn, providing sponsorship at a level that works for you. If you have given in the past, please consider increasing your support. If you are a new donor, we welcome you at the sponsorship level that suits you best. Your gift ensures that the Inn can provide the necessary support to asylum-seeking families.

Your donation helps provide a bed, clothing, and food in a safe, loving, Christian environment. As a sponsor you will fulfill the call Christ spoke about in Matthew 25:40 when he said, "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

As a sponsor, you will join in partnership with the staff and volunteers who provide for the day to day needs of our guests. You will receive periodic newsletters, invitations to special gatherings and activities in addition to the knowledge that your donation is changing lives.

Please become a sponsor of The Inn. Sign up here: <https://tinyurl.com/3stjppek>

Choose your level of support:*

Type of Sponsor	Monthly	Yearly
Wise Ones	\$1,000.00	\$12,000.00
Inn Keepers	\$100.00	\$1,200.00
Angels	\$50.00	\$600.00
Shepherds	\$25.00	\$300.00

We also welcome **one-time gifts**. Please donate online here: <https://theinnofsa.org/donate>

*Donations are tax deductible

"JUST AS YOU DID IT TO ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE WHO ARE MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY, YOU DID IT TO ME." MATTHEW 25:40

2021 Sponsorship Program

Become a Sponsor today at <https://tinyurl.com/3stjppek>

More at <https://theinnofsa.org>

Checks can be made payable to The Desert Southwest Conference UMC with "The Inn" written on the memo line and mailed to:

Treasurer, Desert SW Conference UMC
1550 E. Meadowbrook Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85014

The Inn of Southern Arizona
P.O. Box 43332
Tucson, Arizona 85719

Sponsorships make an ideal birthday or holiday gift for a family or friend. Helping a family seeking asylum and a new life is a perfect way to tell someone you love them. One-time sponsorship: one guest, \$25.00; family of four: \$100.00 or choose a level above. You will receive a card you can send explaining your special gift.