

Del Rio church serves migrants sheltered under bridge

August 5, 2021

An overwhelming number of migrants arrived at the border in Del Rio, and hundreds camped for days beneath a bridge while they waited to be processed. [City Church in Del Rio](#) responded by feeding the hungry.

In four days, City Church prepared and provided more than 2,000 sandwiches for migrants at the request of the U.S. Border Patrol.

‘An act of obedience’

“It’s more than a political issue. It was more than a humanitarian response. It was an act of obedience to Matthew 25 and the command to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger,” Pastor Matt Mayberry said.



Members of City Church in Del Rio prepare sandwiches to deliver to migrants who were camped under a bridge, waiting to be processed. (Photo courtesy of Matt Mayberry)

During the last week of July, the number of migrants who arrived at the

border in Del Rio exceeded local processing centers' capacity to handle them.

By July 31, with the temperature topping 100 degrees, about 700 sought shade and shelter beneath the bridge.

"Our church has a good relationship with the Border Patrol office here. So, they reached out to us and asked if we could help," Mayberry said.

He noted [Shon Young](#), associate pastor at the church and a missionary with Texas Baptists' River Ministry, leads the Val Verde Border Humanitarian Coalition—a coalition initially formed at the request of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to help during an earlier influx of migrants.

Be salt and light



Hundreds of migrants seek shelter from the South Texas heat while waiting to be processed. (Photo courtesy of Matt Mayberry)

Mayberry recently began preaching a series of Sunday messages focused on Jesus' Sermon on the Mount as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. On Aug. 1, his text included Matthew 5:13-16, a passage in which Jesus

commanded his followers to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.”

“The Lord prepared the way, and our people obeyed his call to be salt and light,” he said. “I’m certainly proud of our church and how our people responded to God’s word. Our rapid response really was due to the working of the Holy Spirit.”

When church volunteers delivered the initial batch of sandwiches to the migrants beneath the bridge on Sunday evening, it was the first meal some had in three days, Mayberry noted.



Migrants sought relief from the South Texas heat by camping for several days beneath a bridge until they could be processed. (Photo courtesy of Matt Mayberry)

In the days that followed, the number of people waiting to be processed diminished as personnel at processing centers worked through the backlog of cases.

On Aug. 4, Mayberry received word everyone who had been sheltered under a bridge had been moved to processing centers. After four days of frantic activity, church volunteers were able to stop making and delivering sandwiches.

“Lord willing, we won’t have to do this again anytime soon,” Mayberry said.
“But when there is a need, we want to be obedient.”