



Refugee Hospitality Kits and Welcoming Churches Needed!!

Disciples in churches from El Paso, Texas to Richmond, VA. have been responding to the call to offer welcome to refugees by gathering “*Refugee Hospitality Kits.*” The kits offer suggested groupings of bedding, bath, kitchen, and school items that help meet essential needs of newly arriving refugees. Further information on the kits may be found at: <https://www.discipleshomeissions.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/RIM-Refugee-Hospitality-Kits-Sept2016.pdf>. Some churches choose to compile the kits as a part of their worship offering time. Others gather items and assemble kits in Sunday School or as Women’s, Men’s, or Youth Group activities.

The Disciples Refugee & Immigration Ministries office then helps churches build relationships with one of 34 refugee resettlement offices with which Disciples partner around the U.S. Each office is affiliated with Church World Service, which holds the contract through the U.S. State Department to conduct resettlements. Disciples resettle over 8% of all refugees who enter in through Church World Service! Churches located within 50 miles of an affiliate office are needed constantly to help sponsor families. But ALL churches are needed to offer hospitality kits and special needs support for families!!

Our Disciples call for “*Refugee Hospitality Kits*” undergirds the growth of refugee populations around the world, due to crises of war, climate, and oppressive regimes. As the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees reported last June, “There are more refugees and displaced people in the world now than at any point since WW II; over 51 million people—and more than half of them are children.”

The highest numbers of refugees seeking assistance through Disciples churches are in the anticipated states of Texas, California, New York, and Arizona. But, significant needs also exist in the states of Indiana, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Kentucky, and Ohio. Top nationalities who are arriving are diverse; including refugees from Burmese, Iraqi, Somali, Bhutanese, Cuban, Congolese, and Iranian backgrounds.

Churches which help welcome refugees also experience a direct partnership with Disciples Home Missions and with the Week of Compassion, as both help support our office and denomination’s outreach to show compassion to sojourners among us. RIM is the domestic arm of refugee outreach, which links with Week of Compassion’s international refugee assistance and crisis relief.

CONTACT THE REFUGEE & IMMIGRATION MINISTRIES (RIM) OFFICE TO LEARN HOW YOUR CHURCH CAN HELP WELCOME THE WORLD!!: Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rea, Director,
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