

MISSION MOMENT

Synod's Refugee Resettlement Ministry

By Rev. Dan Odden, co-chair of the Synod's Refugee Resettlement Ministry Team

Refugee Resettlement Group Re-focuses on Needs

We have in the past welcomed about one hundred refugees to the Madison area each year, but the Federal government administration has significantly reduced the number of refugees being admitted to our country. Consequently, we have welcomed only a few families in the last nine months. We continue to be prepared to welcome people with apartment furnishings and commodities. We also continue to look for ways we can show hospitality and be of help as refugees get settled in the Madison area .

With this lack of arrivals, we have shifted our activities in two ways:

First, we have been making individuals and congregations aware of Lutheran Social Services financial needs to maintain staffing during this time. There are families that need our continued support and it is important to maintain a presence to build on in the future.

Second, we are looking for opportunities for advocacy for refugees. We encourage individuals to write letters to US Congress Representatives and Senators to encourage a more welcoming and sustainable flow of refugees to our country. We encourage use of materials consistent with the refugee work of LIRS (Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service) and L.S.S., and ELCA social statements.

Recently, Catholic Charities of Milwaukee has shut down their program that had been receiving over 500 individuals per year. This may make the Lutheran Social Services program in Wisconsin more important in the months ahead.

We give thanks for your prayers on behalf of people seeking refuge from wars and disasters that have caused the historic high of 65 million refugees worldwide.

God's Blessings and Peace,

Dan Odden

For more information on the synod's Refugee Resettlement Ministry, visit the synod website: www.scsw-elca.org and click on Ministries & Partners and then Refugee Resettlement.

If your congregation would like to get involved with this ministry, contact Rev. Dan Odden at (608) 643-5128 or danodden@gmail.com or Lisa Hansen at (608) 838-7929 or lisatimhansen@charter.net of the SCSW Refugee Resettlement Team.