

## **Bloomington Refugee Support Network**

We are nominating Bloomington Refugee Support Network (BRSN) as one of three organizations vying for our 25% of the Sunday Plate offering for the coming year, because of the positive impact they continue to have in the lives of refugees and immigrants. They are a volunteer 501C3 network of individuals and organizations. Their cadre of 100 volunteers provides services and raises money through donations, small grants and fundraisers.

A March 2020 Pew Research Center study indicated that 49% of Hispanics surveyed said they or someone in their household had taken a pay cut or lost a job because of the COVID19 outbreak. BRSN has felt that impact via increased requests for help. Share the Plate funds would be used for application fees for asylum, green cards, citizenship, employment authorization and visas.

With UUCB voting to become a Sanctuary Congregation in 2017 and the formation of the Refugee and Immigration Support and Education Task Force, we have already shown a commitment to the work of BRSN by providing space to co-host last year's World Refugee Day, collecting coats and money for Christmas gifts for families, and using funds to support additional identified needs, most recently paying a month's rent for a local immigrant family. Providing funds for BRSN would be a perfect way for us to support our marginalized neighbors.

Barb Backler and Debbie Fish

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