

## **WILL YOU JOIN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AND IMMIGRATION MINISTRY IN OUR MISSION?**

As many of you know, any opportunity to work on a project with other parishioners—even the simplest tasks—helps us know each other better and appreciate our gifts, increasing our humility. It anchors us more firmly and comfortably in the community on a heart level. It provides hope and energy and, on a spiritual level, gives a sense of being part of God's work.

Starting in 2016, St. Martin's has sponsored or co-sponsored four refugee families: a Syrian family of four, a Ukrainian family of three, an Afghan family of nine, and an Afghan family of seven (names withheld to protect families' privacy). Since 2016, we have raised more than \$80,000, but far more importantly, we have established close relationships with them. The gratitude they have not been able to put into words, they have poured into generous meals, often accompanied by laughter while trying – awkwardly – to communicate using Google Translate.

We have grown closer, helping to fill out endless bureaucratic forms to ensure their safety and health. We have supported them in getting housing, green cards and citizenship, and finding scholarships to good schools for their children. We have watched those students become confident young adults.

Now, the work of Refugee Resettlement and Immigration Ministry has entered a new and critical phase. In addition to dealing with refugees who have legal status, we are now dealing with immigrants who do not have permanent legal status and are being rounded up in the government's mass deportation campaign.

Reaching out beyond St. Martin's, we work with Northwest Immigration Network (N-WIN) to share news, information and resources to bolster regional efforts to protect our neighbors. Recently, through a campaign of letter-writing, donating and protesting, we lent our voices to an effort to release a Germantown restaurant owner from detention. Many of our members take part in interfaith vigils at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) headquarters in Center City.

We are members of New Sanctuary Movement of Philadelphia (NSM), an interfaith organization currently mobilizing against ICE, training people to accompany immigrants to their required appointments and hearings and advocating for immigrant justice.

We are not alone, but we need more help, whether through your presence at vigils and protests; your donations of money, food, or household goods; your calls and letters to politicians; volunteering for NSM's accompaniment training program; your attendance at our monthly meetings – and more.

If any of these endeavors interest you, please contact any of us: Jeff Meade ([irishphilly@gmail.com](mailto:irishphilly@gmail.com)), Rev. Mary Barber ([mbarber@stmartinec.org](mailto:mbarber@stmartinec.org)), Huntly Collins ([huntlycollins@att.net](mailto:huntlycollins@att.net)), Emily Law ([evlaw@comcast.net](mailto:evlaw@comcast.net)), Lorie Simmons ([loriesimmons@comcast.net](mailto:loriesimmons@comcast.net)), Kate Maus ([katemaus@gmail.com](mailto:katemaus@gmail.com)), or Marnie Kerr ([mkerr@germantownfriends.org](mailto:mkerr@germantownfriends.org)). We welcome your talents and know you will enjoy the fellowship and energy we have experienced in engaging in this important work.