

*Lory McCoy got up in church on Sunday, June 16<sup>th</sup> and made the following announcement:*

Good morning. My name is Lory McCoy.

I come to the congregation today to ask for support for Charlie and me as we welcome a woman and her two children from Mexico who are legally seeking asylum.

Some of you may remember my daughter Bridgett. Bridgett recently volunteered in EL Paso Texas for a month in May at Annunciation House, which receives asylum seekers who have been processed at the border and can legally stay in the United States until their case has been heard in court. While Bridgett was there, she met a woman and her two daughters who came from Mexico on April 29. Her partner had been severely beaten by the Cartel and when she found him, they fled to the border. He was hospitalized for several weeks in Texas with multiple broken bones and other injuries.

At the border, women and children are separated from the men. Estrella's partner will most likely be deported. Estrella and her daughters are seeking asylum and have no sponsor. Bridgett reached out to Charlie and me to see if we might help. If Estrella and her daughters stay in Texas, they have over a 95% chance of being deported. In New England, those odds might be reduced to 50-60%.

To make a long story short, we have decided to accept Estrella into our home and help her while she waits for her case to be heard. We decided it was the right thing to do. We are hoping the congregation might help by developing a support group to help us help them.

There are many things that Estrella and her daughters will need and Charlie and I are willing to provide most of them. We have already contacted a lawyer who will take on the case. The big categories of need are transportation, short term housing when Charlie and I are away, and potentially being "on call" for the family's needs when I am at work 4-6 days per month. We also wonder if anyone has experience to help negotiate through the school system, the government offices, and the many human services agencies the family will need, or anything else. The hardest part is not knowing what I don't know.

If anyone in the congregation thinks they might be able to help us, I would like to meet you in Fellowship Hall after today's service, or you could call me. Thank you