

Information from Lory McCoy
about their effort to help the family from Mexico legally seeking asylum

July 22nd update from Lory:

Oldest daughter flew to El Paso July 20th! A very tearful reunion. We are tentatively flying the family of 4 to Providence August 6th. Then the joyous work begins!



July 17th update from Lory:

Estrella's 16 year old daughter is still in Florida. Estrella and her younger daughters are doing well in El Paso, Texas and very excited to come to RI. Estrella has asked me to thank everyone who has volunteered to help her. The number of volunteers that have offered to help is growing!

Annunciation House went beyond their usual services for asylum seekers staying at their shelter and assigned a volunteer to help unite Genesis with her family. After much effort, multiple long forms, and many phone calls, often ending abruptly with the Florida shelter case manager hanging up on the Annunciation House volunteer, we hope that Genesis will join her mother and sisters in El Paso within the

next 2 weeks. (She needs to pass a psychiatric evaluation that was scheduled on July 15th. The whole process and details of the story are truly amazing).

I have secured help from an immigration lawyer who is willing to handle the case pro bono. He has over 30 years of experience and has been very helpful. Their case is somewhat complicated because of prior events, but hopefully things will go well.

I have also been busy finding support groups for the family, including Progreso Latino in Providence for social support, as well as volunteer groups to teach them English. I don't know all of the details yet, as I have been holding off until I knew that the family would make it to RI. I may need transportation help for these services in the future.

The target arrival date for the family is still be between August 6-11. There are many requirements set by the government that need to be strictly followed so that the family doesn't jeopardize their asylum case.

Lory McCoy got up in church on Sunday, June 16th 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