



The

LIGHTHOUSE

Helping People | Changing Lives

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Summer 2017

Refugee Sponsorship

by Rebecca Walker, *World Renew Refugee Coordinator*; Cameron Klapwyk, *World Renew Refugee Program Associate*; Kathryn Teeluck, *World Renew Refugee Associate*; and, Jeanette Romkema, *Global Learning Partner consultant*

Churches can be a blessing to newcomers and their communities when they reach out and support refugee and immigrant families. This is what missional engagement can look like. Below are a few excerpts from a NEW Refugee Sponsorship Handbook that will be shared with you soon on The Lighthouse website, from World Renew. It is our hope that this resource and this newsletter will assist you in your journey to sponsor refugees, support newcomers or discern your role as a church in this area.

Who is a refugee?

Well, the short answer is: Refugees are our neighbours. When we think of refugees we often hear the Biblical call to “welcome the stranger.” And welcoming the stranger is a good first step. But in this increasingly interconnected world, these “strangers” are our neighbours and we need each other. When one part of a community struggles, the entire community is incomplete - the entire community hurts.

According to the United Nations Convention of 1951 to which Canada is a signatory, a refugee is “a person who, because of well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality and is unable or afraid to ask for protection in that country, or not having

a country of nationality, is outside the country where he/she usually lived, and is unable or afraid to return to that country.”

A person isn't a refugee by choice. A person is a refugee by the discriminating choices of others.

“To be a refugee means you are in exile. It is a very different experience from being a migrant. Many migrants have come here to get a better standard of living. We have come here because our lives are in danger!”
(Quote from a refugee)

The ideal solution for most refugees is repatriation—the resettling of refugees back to their country of origin.

For those who cannot return home, a second solution is for the refugee to create a new life in their country of asylum. However, if neither of these solutions is possible, refugees may be resettled to a third country, such as Canada.

It is important to note that refugee resettlement is a last resort solution. Only 1% of refugees worldwide will be resettled outside their country of origin or asylum.

Canada is unique because it is the only country that allows sponsorship of refugees by private organizations and citizens. World Renew is one of over 100 Canadian organizations that have been granted a sponsorship agreement by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

World Renew's sponsorship agreement allows churches and groups in Canada, to work together to sponsor refugees.

What is Private Refugee Sponsorship?

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP) gives Canadians the unique opportunity to play a meaningful role in the welcome and integration of refugees to Canada. In the program, administered by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), sponsors apply to resettle refugees who are approved overseas for protection. After the refugees arrive in Canada the sponsor walks alongside these refugees and provides ‘hands on’ support to assist them with settling well in their new community and country. Sponsors provide support with such things as accessing medical services, applying for necessary documents, opening a bank account and learning how to use public transportation. Since the beginning of the PSRP in 1979 the program has allowed Canadians to offer protection and a new home to more than 275,000 refugees.

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Meet Our Team of Summer Students

Jelle Koersen

In September, I will be returning to Wycliffe College for my second year in the master's of theology program, combined with a master's degree in Theological Studies in Development. I look forward to being a part of The Lighthouse and continue to grow in my knowledge of faith-based non-profits. I currently attend All Nations Christian Fellowship.



Bianca Martin

Hi there, my name is Bianca Martin. I'm currently studying in the field of family and community social services at the University of Guelph-Humber and I did my placement last semester at The Lighthouse too. I am thrilled to be back at The Lighthouse as a summer student. I look forward to this valuable experience!



At The Lighthouse, strengthening communications with you and our supporting churches is always a priority. One of the ways that we have prioritize this, is through the Lighthouse Keepers initiative.

What is a Lighthouse Keeper?

A Lighthouse Keeper is someone who is interested in the work of The Lighthouse, shares in our passion of helping others, and would love to represent The Lighthouse to their church, family, and friends.

Lighthouse Keepers receive exclusive monthly updates to share and keep your church family in the loop about all the exciting things happening at The Lighthouse.

For more information about being a Lighthouse Keeper, or know someone who would be perfect to represent The Lighthouse to your church, please contact Tiffany at 416-535-6262 or tiffany@lighthousecentre.ca

Christian Stewardship Services

Long days, warm days, vacation days! We sometimes take a break from the things that need to be done and put it off so we can enjoy the Canadian seasons.

While you relax, your estate still should be working for you. There are many current gift options that Christian Stewardship Services has available for your portfolio.

An endowment fund is an ongoing tool to support your favorite charity. You set the parameters for the interest produced from your capital which is used by the charity. It works so you don't have to! Find out the details if this is right for you. 1-800-267-8890 x 200 or admin@csservices.ca

Upcoming Events

Ride for Refuge - September 30
Annual Dinner & Silent Auction - November 4

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8 Helpful Tips:

1. **Pray fervently.** Bring all you do to God, for it is through and with Him that great things will be achieved.
2. **Listen deeply.** As you journey with refugees, listen carefully *to them*. Ask questions, realize you don't know as much as you think you do, and seek out learning opportunities.
3. **Ensure autonomy.** Refugees are in need but *they want to make decisions for themselves*, just as you and I do. Whenever possible check with the refugees themselves when a decision needs to be made that may impact their lives or choices.
4. **Walk along side.** You are starting a journey that will be a blessing for all involved. It will be in the walking *along side*, rather than the *leading in front*, that the greatest gifts will be received.
5. **Be Realistic.** Be aware that you will face problems. Don't expect that the sponsorship will be easy. It probably won't be. If it is, you will be pleasantly surprised. Take the long view. If things are difficult, try to picture where the refugees will be in five or ten years in terms of employment, education, assimilation, spiritual life, emotional healing and wellness. Know that every refugee resettlement is unique.
6. **Communicate.** Clear communication is key to the development of a flourishing sponsorship and to the functioning of a thriving refugee committee. When communication with the refugees breaks down, either because of misunderstandings due to language or cultural differences, or because of personality clashes, extra effort needs to be made to restore it. The same is true for communication among refugee committee members. The clear articulation of goals, roles, responsibilities, and frustrations are necessary to keeping a common vision alive.
7. **Examine Expectations.** Each refugee committee member enters the sponsorship with some expectations of what will happen. Be aware of expectations that you have of the refugees. Are they fair and realistic?
8. **Celebrate.** Even when you face difficult circumstances, take time to celebrate refugees' birthdays and other occasions. Generous love and small gifts contributed in a party atmosphere can go a long way to forging love, healing wounds, and building trust.

For more information, please contact **Rebecca Walker** at World Renew: rwalker@worldrenew.net, 1-800-730-3490 x4389, or 905-336-2920 x4389.

Easter Food Drives



A heartfelt thank you to Friendship Community Church, Heritage Fellowship Christian Reformed Church, First Christian Reformed Church

St. Ansgar Lutheran Church, Willowdale Christian Reformed Church, and Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church.

Thank you so much for all your efforts to collect food for The Lighthouse food bank. For your generosity in giving food and for those who organize and deliver food, we are grateful.

Income Tax Clinics



The Lighthouse has a long history of completing tax returns for low-income individuals and families. The income tax clinics started in 1983, and since then a whole host of volunteers have been involved over the almost 30 years.

This year, *our team of 14 volunteers filed over 430 returns during the months of March and April.* A warm thank you to our phenomenal volunteers for your dedication and hard work to providing superb service to all those in need in our community.

A Big Lighthouse Thank You!



The generosity of many, together with the gifts of time and commitment from a group of volunteer callers, made our PHONE-A-THON campaign a success. Your donations contribute significantly to The Lighthouse's ministries and programs. If you have not yet had a chance to respond to the phone-a-thon, there is still time!

Together, we are impacting the lives of people by offering community, food, healing and hope in the name of Jesus.

From the Rob's Desk

On June 20th, the world takes pause to acknowledge the millions of refugees who have lost their homes and loved ones because of global persecution, conflict, violence or war. World Refugee Day is observed annually to raise public awareness about refugees' situations around the globe as many of us are unaware of the impact of being forced to flee has affected the lives of refugees. The General Assembly of United Nations established this day for refugees to honour them for their courage in facing numerous problems after losing their homes due to conflict or violence.



World Refugee Day provides an opportunity for us to help refugees worldwide to rebuild their lives and help to increase our awareness from the real-life stories we hear. It is necessary to draw our attention toward the refugees' conditions to honour their courage and solve their problems.

World Refugee Day gives us a chance to focus on:

- The plight of refugees and displaced people around the world;
- The causes of their exiles;
- Their resolve and will to survive; and
- How they can contribute to your community.

For World Refugee Day this year, we encourage you to take the time to meet refugees, to learn about their journey and how they became refugees. Many are willing and open to share their stories.

Throughout the years, The Lighthouse has helped refugees through the sponsorship program and also those who claim refugee status in Canada. We want to continue to help them when they come to Canada. Your donation to The Lighthouse will help continue this work.

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Helping People Changing Lives

Thank you for being partners with us in this ministry.



Yes, I would like to help with a donation of \$ _____

Cheque enclosed

VISA MASTERCARD # _____ Expiry Date. _____

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Other Ways to Help - Contact us for details

- PAR PreAuthorized Remittance
- Monthly Visa or MasterCard donation - makes it easy for you and for us
- Canada Helps on line at www.canadahelps.org
- Giving through Christian Stewardship Service
- United Way Payroll Deduction - just provide our CRA # and address
- Matched Corporate Giving - many companies match employee donations

Please mail your contribution to:

The Lighthouse
1008 Bathurst Street
Toronto, ON M5R 3G7

Receipts will be issued in the New Year.
Canada Revenue Agency #13036 3740 RR0001