

HOW YOU CAN HELP

PRAY

- For the families receiving our help.
- for reunification of separated families.
- for refugees everywhere.

VOLUNTEER

- Join the refugee ministry
- Help with local driving
- Help with required administrative tracking
- help entertain pre-schoolers (for example, when their parents are being tutored)

GIVE

Help support the continuing need for funds as we work to help our families become self-sufficient:

- online, by scanning this QR code and completing the secure form.



- by check payable to Christ Church; specify “Refugee Ministry” and mail to the address on this trifold’s cover.
- with gift, gas, and grocery card donations, via our sign-up sheet at www.tinyurl.com/CECRM-cardhelp

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO VOLUNTEER

The Christ Church

Refugee Ministry website:

[www.christchurchcolumbia.org/
refugee-ministry](http://www.christchurchcolumbia.org/refugee-ministry)

Refugee Ministry contacts:

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Pat DeLorenzo

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Paula Rees

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Local & national organizations in refugee work:

- **Luminus** at www.beluminus.org
- **Global Refuge** (formerly, Lutheran Immigration & Refugee Services) at www.globalrefuge.org
- **Lutheran Social Services of the National Capitol Area** at www.lssnca.org
- **International Rescue Committee** at [rescue.org/united-states/
baltimore-md](http://rescue.org/united-states/baltimore-md)



ABOUT CHRIST CHURCH’S INTERFAITH REFUGEE MINISTRY

Committed to providing the long welcome of help, support and hope to locally-settled refugees.

CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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EXPANDING CONNECTIONS AND OUR CURRENT FAMILIES

How it All Began - August 2021

As the U.S. military left Afghanistan in August 2021 and the Taliban came roaring back into power, the thousands of Afghan citizens who had worked for or with the U.S. and NATO received death threats from the Taliban. So did their family members. They went into hiding and started fleeing their country. Some 77,000 were immediately evacuated to the United States.

As this was happening in Afghanistan, Christ Church members formed what became the Interfaith Refugee Ministry and working with Global Refuge, became qualified to sponsor an Afghan refugee family. Our “first family” arrived into our care in late December 2021.

In the three years since then, the Ministry has grown. Four Afghan families are now under our umbrella of help and hope. Six congregations – Episcopal, Quaker, Jewish, Methodist, Lutheran – are now partners in this ministry as we try to live into our mission of Christians and Jews working together to help Muslim refugees.

The First Family

A female doctor employed as a medic for U.S. military contractors and three of her four sons were welcomed into our care and to a modest townhouse rented for them by the Refugee Ministry just after Christmas 2021. In the terrible chaos of the evacuation, the family became separated, and her husband and second oldest son were not evacuated. (They have spent the last three years hiding in Afghanistan and Pakistan and are now engaged with the U.S. embassy in Pakistan hoping to obtain permission to come to the U.S. and be reunited with their family here.)

Immediately upon their arrival, the family here began English classes and, thanks to coming with work authorizations, all three sons immediately found jobs. This semester the former doctor will start classes at HCC to become a certified dental assistant and so return to her medical field. The second son has worked for Lutheran Social Services for over two years, and was recently promoted to resettlement manager, helping other immigrants and refugees newly arriving to our area (including the Ministry’s “fourth family” – what a blessing!).

In mid-2024, the mother finally received SIV (“special immigrant visa”) status, meaning permanent residence and green card status in the U.S. for her and two of her three sons here. The oldest son has been granted asylum (because of his age at arrival, he is not eligible for permanent status under his mother’s SIV).

This family has worked hard to become financially self-sufficient, and will stand on their own starting in January 2025.

Our Second Family

In September 2023, a former high-ranking Afghan government civil servant and two of his children found our Ministry. Not evacuated when the government collapsed, this family of nine went into hiding, fled to Pakistan where they were still in grave danger (the father had already survived an assassination attempt), and eventually were able to get to Japan. Because of continuing threats to his life, even in Japan, the father, one daughter, and one son fled to the U.S. in May 2023.

In July 2024 the father was granted asylum, meaning that he and his teenagers can remain in the U.S., and are finally authorized to work. He has applied to bring his wife and five other children to the U.S. under his asylum status. He is very anxious to work and looking for full-time, part-time, or contract work.

This family is fluent in English, and in multiple other languages. The son is a senior in Oakland Mills High School. When the other six family members get to the U.S., this family will need significant additional support from the Ministry.

A Third Family sponsored by Wesley Freedom United Methodist Church

In January 2024, the Ministry answered another call for help, this time from Wesley Freedom United Methodist Church, sponsor of an Afghan refugee family (mother, father, two little boys) living in Elkridge. Like our “first family”, this third family had been evacuated and arrived with work authorization. The father, an armored car driver and interpreter for the U.S. military in Afghanistan, is a part-time bus driver at BWI airport and also drives for Uber and Lyft.

Fortunately, this family is financially self-sufficient. The principal support they’ve needed from the Ministry is coordination with the Howard County Public School System’s early childhood education and infants & toddlers programs for their boys.

A Fourth Family sponsored by New Hope Lutheran Church

In July 2024 the Ministry was asked by Wesley Freedom to take the lead in helping a family of three (mother, father, toddler) who are closely related to our third family and who arrived in the U.S. just in June. By God’s grace, members of New Hope Lutheran immediately volunteered to sponsor this new family and take the lead in coordinating the Ministry’s help for them.

With all of us working together, and with assistance from ISS, a small apartment in Catonsville was been rented and furnished and we are fully engaged in figuring out how we can support this family financially, help the father find a job (he worked in security for the U.S. military in Afghanistan and has work authorization), help with learning English, with handling money and U.S. “financial literacy”, with transportation, with the Baltimore County Public School’s infants and toddlers program, and everything else that you can possibly imagine.

OUR INTERFAITH PARTNERS

Interfaith from its start, the Christ Church Refugee Ministry is blessed to be working with:

St. John’s Episcopal Church
Ellicott City

Patapsco Friends Meeting
our local Quaker organization

Columbia Jewish Congregation
Columbia

Wesley Freedom United Methodist
Eldersburg

New Hope Lutheran Church
Columbia

Members of these congregations actively work together with Christ Church parishioners to make this ministry possible.

This ministry would not be possible without on-going financial support from people like you. We are grateful for the financial assistance from many, many individuals, and for one-time grants received in early 2022 from St. John’s Episcopal Church, the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland, and the Divinity Lutheran Endowment Fund.