Welcome Home: The Role of Faith Communities in Helping Refugees Rebuild Their Lives in the United States
Who is a Refugee?

Invited by the U.S. government, a refugee has escaped his or her homeland fleeing persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and has come to the United States to build a better life.
The Need for Durable Solutions

- At over 51 million, there are more forcibly displaced people in the world today than anytime since data on this population has been collected
- The average stay in a refugees camp is eight to ten years
- Large outflows of refugees from war zones and failed states are straining the resources of neighboring countries and can have a destabilizing effects
- Resettlement in a country like the United States offers safety, stability and opportunity to refugee families and can bring economic benefits to the host community
A Refugee’s Journey

New American Pathways

Flight from home

Life in refugee camp

Selection for resettlement

Arrival in refugee camp

Resettlement

HELPING REFUGEES AND GEORGIA THRIVE
Where Are Refugees Coming From?

- Bhutan
- The DRC and Somalia
- Burma/Myanmar
- Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan
U.S. Refugee Resettlement Program

- Began with faith and community organizations assisting refugees coming to the U.S. during World War II
- Became more formalized with the refugee act of 1980
- Today the U.S. State Department partners with nine national resettlement agencies and their affiliate networks to resettle approximately 70,000 refugees across the U.S. each year
- Episcopal Migration Ministries (EMM) is one of nine national resettlement agencies and has affiliates throughout the country.
Role of the Episcopal Church

The Episcopal Church - Episcopal Migration Ministries

Episcopal Provinces, Dioceses, Local Congregations

EMM Local Affiliates - New American Pathways

Local community, including Episcopal congregations

New American Pathways

Helping Refugees and Georgia Thrive
Mission: To help refugees and Georgia thrive

Impact statement: Refugees and immigrants in Metro Atlanta are successful, contributing and welcomed members of Georgia’s Communities
Theory of Change:
We provide a continuum of services that supports new Americans on their individual pathways from arrival through citizenship. We focus on key milestones along the pathway that build on one another and contribute to long-term success.

1. SAFETY & STABILITY
- Secure safe housing
- Have basic needs
- Access healthcare
- Orient to community
- Learn English
- Enroll children in school

2. SELF SUFFICIENCY
- Have a household budget
- Start job
- Pay own bills
- Navigate the community
- Parents involved in school
- Children adjusting
- Apply for green card

3. SUCCESS
- Enroll in training or college
- Become a citizen
- Reunite with family
- Grow in a career
- Children excel in school

4. SERVICE
- Volunteer
- Be a leader in the community
- Participate in civic life
- Vote

Advocacy and community engagement support the continuum by ensuring that Georgia continues to be a welcoming place where New Americans can thrive.
Programs Along the Pathway

- Resettlement and Resource Navigation
- Career Services
- Education and Youth
- Family Engagement
- Immigration Services
- Community Leadership
How Can Faith Partners Be Involved?

Faith partners and volunteers play an important role in welcoming refugees. Some of the ways faith partners can help:

- Direct Services
  - Family match
  - English tutoring
  - Tutoring children in after school programs
  - Employment Coaching
  - Co-sponsorship / Apartment Set-up

- Indirect Services
  - Help maintain and sort clothing and basic needs donations
  - Administrative support
  - Advocacy
  - Help raise emergency funding
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