

Immigration and Refugees: It Takes the Church to Settle a Refugee Family



Noe Bay (left) and his family at a local retail outlet where sponsors helped the family with much needed clothes and shoes.

Courtesy of Teresa Moody, Christ United Methodist Church

1 John 3:17 says—“How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?”

This scripture expresses the heart attitude we all should have in helping our neighbor in need when possessing the wealth of resources to do so. Thankfully, United Methodists like Teresa Moody of Christ United Methodist Church (CUMC) in Lincoln, Neb., and its Refugee Task Force members are giving what they have to support the ongoing work of sponsoring refugee families.

Church Support

Teresa Moody, Refugee Task Force coordinator, received notification from Church World Service affiliates, The Heartland Refugee Resettlement and Lutheran Family Services, to sponsor the Bay family from Burma—a refugee family of eight who were arriving in two weeks. The Task Force had just finished helping the Dah family whose five-month resettlement effort involved five team leaders and over 300 volunteers and church members to get everything in order. For the Bay family, time was not a luxury—preparations would have to be made quickly.

No Time to Spare

CUMC Task Force members pulled together and furnished a home for the Bay family while Teresa visited garage sales to and from work. The church contributed funds and assisted with purchasing shoes and school supplies. Others simply gave willingly when they heard about the Task Force’s time sensitive situation. Today, the Bay family children are now all enrolled in Lincoln public schools and are doing well. Noe Bay is working at Farmland Industries and his wife is taking English classes.

“The most valuable things that sponsoring a refugee family has offered our church are a common goal—unity, sense of purpose and accomplishment,” said Moody.

Church sponsors are invaluable partners in the success of refugees’ resettlement. Even when time was not on the Task Force’s side, the demonstration of United Methodists teamwork made the Bay family’s resettlement a success. Consider sponsoring a refugee family and experience the rewards that the spirit of unity, hope and giving can bring.

How to Give

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