

UMC Special Congregational Meeting
(Leadership team called for congregational review of proposal to support refugee family resettlement)
Sunday, December 22, 2024, 11:15-11:30AM in our sanctuary and on Zoom

Present in Sanctuary (18):

Joel Weidner (Chair); Tim Groff (Vice-Chair), Dale and Becky Kephart; Doug McPherson, Hope Brubaker, Fran Osseo-Asare, Meredith & Ben Wideman; Micah Schonberg, Evelyn & Karl Bartsch, Doug Miller, Ruth Kitchin Tillman, Leah Witzig, Rodney Brubaker, Ken Litwiller, Carmen Groff, Doug Yoder;

Opening - Joel disbursed hard copies of the following proposal to review and called meeting to order.

Proposal to Support Refugee Resettlement Efforts with up to \$10,000

The State College Interfaith Group (SCIG) which includes representatives from UMC, University Baptist and Brethren Church, and the Brit Shalom Synagogue are currently working with Church World Service (CWS) to host another refugee family in the State College area. You may remember that the group worked successfully in the past to welcome and re-settle the Jalali family into our community. The group currently has \$7,621 in funds that have previously been donated.

The group overseeing the Radical Hospitality Funds is recommending that we set aside \$10,000 of those funds towards the future refugee re-settlement efforts, if needed. As you may know, our church received \$30,000+ from the Allegheny Conference to be used for radical hospitality (so far, no other actionable proposals have been developed for the use of the hospitality funds). There is also the possibility that money could also be raised by asking for folks to donate directly to the refugee resettlement efforts, in which case some or all of the hospitality funds may not need to be redirected.

The SCIG group is uncertain if a family would be placed in our community. CWS is actively trying to place as many refugee families prior to the new administration taking over in January. However, having the additional funds committed would allow the group to move forward with confidence if the opportunity to resettle a family becomes a reality. The group notes that the financial burden to settle the Jalali family was significantly less than anticipated due to a member from Brit Shalom donating one-year rent free apartment.

The leadership team is proposing that up to \$10,000 of our Radical Hospitality be used to assist in

Ben Wideman introduced the proposal, provided a brief explanation and outlined the urgency due to the incoming US administration on January 21, 2025. This does not permit time for fundraising like we have done in the past for this type of need.

After a brief discussion, Joel made a motion to pass the proposal, Meredith seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Closing - Joel adjourned meeting.