



OUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE

St. John's Episcopal Church

OUR HISTORY

Fall of 2017, St. John's Church took steps to develop an outreach ministry to serve refugee families. Working in partnership with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) the ministry decided to furnish apartments for families being resettled in the Washington DC region, most of whom had spent years in refugee camps and were arriving in the US with almost no possessions. 2017-2018, over a 12 month period, a small team of parishioners coordinated efforts to furnish apartments for four families or households approved for resettlement by the US State Department. The St. John's community opened its collective heart to this effort, contributing vast numbers of items as well as financial and physical support to equip 4 apartments with all that these families would need to start a new life.



MOVING FORWARD

As we move beyond the first year of ministry, we want to renew our commitment to furnishing four apartments a year, expanding the human effort of St. John's by engaging four small teams (of six or more people) to shepherd the furnishings. The current ONH core team will coordinate the yearlong effort which will include facilitating ongoing collection of items and general communication with the IRC and other faith organizations for collaboration. The goal is to have teams tackle the specifics of each of the four moves. We have developed a toolkit to guide teams by breaking down the approach into a 6-step process.



OUR NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE CORE TEAM

- Tim Wittig - IRC Point of Contact
- Mary McQueen - Donation & Staging Advisor
- Roberta & Hans Feldhausen - Inventory Management Advisors
- Jerry and Bree Bruemmer - Community Outreach Advisors
- Nancy Eichacker - Logistics Advisor
- Kay Drew - Set up Advisor
- Shelley Spencer - Parish Engagement Advisor



Please consider becoming a part of this ministry and part of a team...
Contact Shelley Spencer @ sspencer38@gmail.com for more information.



1.

DRAFTING YOUR ALL-STAR TEAM

Assemble a cohesive and joyful team of **at least 6** to assume clear roles and responsibilities. We suggest a team with a minimum of 6 each assigned a clear role.

- Team Leaders (2)
- Communications Lead (1)
- Donation Coordinator/Inventory Manager (1)
- Logistics (1)
- Staging (2-3)



2.

DEFINING AND COMMUNICATING NEEDS

IRC has a minimum list of items required to furnish an apartment for a family of the size being resettled. We recommend you work with the Core ONH team to communicate your furnishings list in a variety of ways.



3.

COLLECTING FURNISHING WITHOUT BECOME A THRIFT STORE

Donations are likely to ebb and flow throughout your team's engagement. While people are generous you also want to restrict donations to exactly what is needed and avoid becoming a thrift store or drop spot for emptying "Grandma's Attic".



4.

MOVING DAY

IRC has designated apartments they rent for refugees being resettled. The apartments are in Prince George's County and close to Lanham. The move can happen over several days or in a single day.



5.

STAGING THE HOME

Working with the inventory, the staging team tags the items to go the apartment the week prior to the move and also sets up the apartment following the movement of the items to the apartment.



6.

GIVING THANKS

Take time to give thanks for the blessing of being able to offer your time, talents and service as a demonstration of our acts of service in the name of others. Share your experience with the congregation.