

## Afghan Family Update

Summer flew by for the Family and, believe it or not, the kids are back in school! So now we have children in 7<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup>, and Kindergarten, as well as a pre-schooler. Through incredible diligence by Sue Scott and Sue Davis, we were fortunate to enroll the three-year-old in a Preschool program in the City, where they gave us a generous, but partial, scholarship. The balance of tuition is being covered by our Church. Prayers for a successful school year for all would be greatly appreciated. We are thankful to the Isaiah 58 program for helping get the kids new backpacks, school supplies, socks, underwear, and a gift card for new shoes. Delta Gamma was also at the back-to-school fair that Isaiah 58 held, and all the children had their vision tested. We're happy to report that everyone passed with flying colors. Isaiah 58 Ministries is a cooperative ministry on the near South side of St. Louis. They are in St. John's Episcopal Church in Tower Grove.

If we had to pick one thing, The highlight of the summer was swimming for the children. We are so grateful to the Seele's and Castagno's for hosting the family for swimming. In fact, two of the boys had a joint birthday and it was a swim party. Through Christian Friends of New Americans, the children received free swimming lessons, as well as activities and a snack. The five oldest participated in the lessons and the family also got free swimming passes to the pool at Marquette Park near their home.

Several trips were made to the library and the children have enjoyed checking out books. The oldest girl especially enjoys reading and has read with the English tutors. Trips to the zoo and Grant's Farm also took place and the kids have loved it. The older children also continued the soccer program at St. Louis Futbol Club, and we are especially grateful to Tom McNeely and Tim Currinder for driving the children.

As we get to know the family better, we continue to learn more about them. They were farmers in Afghanistan and grew pomegranate, olive, and fruit trees. They love that St. Louis is "so green" but wondered where all the fruit trees were. So, they were very happy (especially Mother) when they went to Eckert's and picked peaches. Mother seemed to be "at home and content" in the orchard. They were also able to pick vegetables. Hopefully, an apple picking trip will happen come Fall.

We have also learned the father had a welding shop, along with his father-in-law, in Afghanistan before he joined the United States forces. If anyone in our congregation has any contacts or knowledge about that field, we would be grateful for your help as that could be a great option for a career for father.

The Core Partners have worked hard at finding sources for free items for the family and we've found some very helpful food sources. The family picks up a fresh produce box every Tuesday at the YMCA. And through Isaiah 58 and St. Anthony of Padua Outreach Ministry, they have been able to get food and diapers several times a month. The International Institute of St. Louis is no longer a source for free items as they are focusing on new arrivals. Hence, we are spreading our nets wide to find the resources a family of 10 needs.

We do have need for prayer for health issues for father. Hopefully, there is nothing serious, but we will know more soon. Dr. Crews has finished Mother's extensive dental work. And while our appeal to Medicaid for the oldest daughter's orthodontia was denied, Dr. Crews has generously offered to assess her case and put together a treatment plan bringing in the specialist that will be needed to address her dental issues.

Just last week, Father's brother and his family came to visit from Tulsa. This is their first visit to St. Louis, and they are hoping to move here at some point. Ideally, the two families would like to live near each other and father has high hopes that this will come to pass.

To end with, please consider giving to the Mission Commission to continue aiding this family. You have been so generous, and it has made a tremendous difference in the life of this family. Your contributions of BP gas cards have been a lifesaver and so very much appreciated as father continues to work in Fenton, which is quite a drive from the City.

In Partnership,

Sue Davis, Sue Scott and Noreen Mayfield