

Afghan Family Update

It's hard to believe but we are now in our sixth month of partnership with our family from Afghanistan. So much has transpired in these months and many of us have been changed by the relationship we have forged with this wonderful family.

When we met the family on January 10, we didn't have a clue as to where this would lead us. Certainly, we never dreamt that we would become so closely intertwined with this family of eight..and then ten! There has been joy, frustration, love, concern, generosity, patience, and any number of adjectives to describe this experience. There have been sleepless nights and extremely busy days. And while we can tell you a concrete number of hours that we interacted with the family, we cannot count the number of hours spent awake at night, worrying about the way things were going. Or the hours spent on the phone, talking through what we should do or if we were doing it right. And often we felt like we were blindly finding our way through the maze of government bureaucracy with programs the family desperately needed. Others with experience advised us but every family comes with its own unique set of needs and wants. We pray that we have done the best that we can to enable this beautiful family to succeed and thrive in our great United States of America.

Looking back through these six months, there have been so many successes! We attribute so much of this to the support of Webster Groves Presbyterian Church and to the financial donations, time and talents, and prayers that we have been so blessed to have. Everything from landlord issues, new baby arrivals, clothing and housing needs, dental care, medical care, transportation needs, etc., have been successfully met. Maybe it hasn't always been as we wished it would but it has been enough. Enough to allow this family, who has been through so much, to experience happiness, contentment, trust, friendship and peace.

We thought you might like to hear the number of volunteer hours our church has dedicated directly to the family. This does not include meetings, phone calls, Zooms, emails, etc. or the number would be far greater. While trying to keep track of all that we've done, members of our church have dedicated 966 hours from January 10 to June 10. These hours have included: Doctor's appointments, dental appointments, driving lessons/driver's license, opening checking accounts, working on missing Social Security cards, taking father grocery shopping, English tutoring, taking the family to the Zoo, birthday parties for four of the family members, driving father to and from work when he lost his ride, driving the children to school when the bus didn't arrive, taking the family to the Magic House, planting flowers and making a garden at the house, building bunkbeds, Covid shots for most of the family members, working on finances with father, finding rent assistance, establishing orthodontia work for one of the children, staying at the hospital during the babies delivery and then for days afterward while also taking care of the other children, soccer practice, the list just goes on.

And our work is not yet done. While our family is settling into our city, there is no doubt that we will be part of their lives for years to come. We have already begun the process of helping father to find a better-paying job, while keeping an eye on the children's educations and improving their current rental situation. We will continue to update you on a monthly basis or as needed. Please keep us and this family in your prayers. Thank you all.

In Partnership,

Sue Davis, Noreen Mayfield and Sue Scott