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South Carolina

News from
Lutheran Family Services
in the Carolinas

South Carolina Connections

Home for the Holidays

“When the Magi had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod.” – Matthew 2:13-15

As we move past Thanksgiving and into Advent and Christmas many of us will be traveling for the holidays or we will welcome friends and family into our homes for food and celebration.

During this time, we at LFS Carolinas, take pause for those who will be traveling away from all they know and love as they flee for the safety of their families.

During the season of giving our Refugee Staff will welcome more than 20 new refugees who have fled their homelands due to war and persecution; refugees like Tehseen and Haymen. Both of these young men served our US Troops in Iraq as linguists. Their service put their lives and the lives of their families at risk.

They each arrived just before Thanksgiving and were welcomed by the Lutheran Men’s Group at Pisgah (*pictured above*). Pisgah provided them with an apartment, clothes, furniture, and food. They have been transporting them to job interviews and medical appointments. Pisgah has welcomed them with open arms into their new community during a time of great uncertainty and fear.

There are more than 20 million refugees around the world who call the tents they live under in refugee camps home. They live where thousands are cramped together because the alternative often means death. Many refugees live in camps for more than 10 years, some as many as twenty. We invite you during this time of Christmas to remember another refugee – Jesus. As Mary and Joseph fled the hand of Pharaoh to save the life of their son they too were refugees. As congregations like Pisgah, St. Timothy’s, Bethlehem, St. Jude’s and St. Simon’s Episcopal, and so many others welcome these strangers into their faith community and into their lives they are sharing the love of Christ and welcoming him into their midst. These relationships are a testament to the season of giving and the work of the church for all in need of healing and wholeness.

Highlights

A Partners in Hope Thanksgiving Day Celebration

We are thankful to all those who gathered on Thanksgiving Day to provide a wonderful Thanksgiving meal, crafts, and games for the children being served in our four LFS Carolinas Youth Group Homes. More than 100 children, staff and volunteers gathered at the Cauble Center/Reformation Lutheran Church to spend Thanksgiving as an extended family of Christ. We served 6 turkeys, 6 green bean casseroles, more than 80 sweet potatoes and 12 pumpkin pies. Giving thanks for many of us is something we take for granted, but the children living at Aull Manor, Mikel's Run, and Victory House find great joy and appreciation in the very small things. These children, who have been abused and neglected, aren't able to spend their holidays with family because they are the very people who hurt them. Through the Body of Christ an extended family gathered to surround them with the love and peace of the Lord. Thanks be to God that together we are Partners in Hope!

More Photos available on our Facebook page, *LFS Carolinas—South Carolina*.



Opportunities to Serve

Saturday, February 13, 2010 – Wrapped in Love Festival – LFS Carolinas will be hosting a day of fun and fellowship to benefit homeless veterans, abused and neglected children and refugees. You can be a part of making this a special day for everyone! We are looking for individual volunteers to help coordinate the event and youth or church groups to help with things like food and games. The first planning meeting will be Tuesday, December 8th at 6:00 PM at Reformation Lutheran Church/The Cauble Center at 1118 Union Street, Columbia. Help us provide a fun day for so many and benefit the more than 600 served by LFS Carolinas this year.

June 20th, 2010 is World Refugee Day – A group will be gathering on Tuesday, December 15th to begin planning on this very important day. LFS has welcomed more than 140 refugees to South Carolina this year. Globally, agencies like LFS will be celebrating World Refugee Day to remember the more than 20 million who are still living in camps around the world. We take this time to honor the gifts of art, music, food and community they bring to us that enriches our lives and understanding of all God's children.

If you are interested in helping please contact Mitzie Schafer at 803-461-2613 or email Mitzie.Schafer@LFSCarolinas.org.

Donate Today and Become a Partner in Hope!

There are many ways you can support LFS Carolinas as we help the vulnerable people in our communities. To learn how your gift can make a difference contact Mitzie Schafer at 803-461-2613.

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Special thanks to the SC Arts Commission and the Institute for Cultural Partnerships for working together to bring local social service providers, libraries, and artist to the table to discuss ways we can better welcome and support Newcomer Artists in our community. More than 70 people gathered at Columbia College on Friday, November 13th to brainstorm and begin planning ways we can lift up the many gifts of art, music, food, and stories and refugees bring to the community.