



## Checklist for Congregations

### Phase 1: Resource and Information Gathering

*Spend time with your small group, task force, or committee gathering information and resources, and getting a sense of the "lay of the land" and the diverse ways you could engage in refugee resettlement ministry.*

- **Watch the "Mission and Advocacy to Support Refugees" Webinar Video** - Use the on-demand video of the webinar as a launchpad for your group. The webinar can be viewed in an adult forum, a fellowship event, or by a gathering of friends.
- **Read the Refugee Backgrounder** - The backgrounder provides a basic orientation to the refugee situation globally, to United States resettlement process, and to Episcopal Migration Ministries. It is a great place to start to get your bearings and understand the basics about this work.
- **Consider Your Ministry Options** - Read our document, "How You Can Help." There are many and varied ways to be involved in refugee resettlement advocacy and service. This document sketches out some opportunities and the commitment involved.
- **Contact your Local Resettlement Office** - Locate your nearest EMM affiliate or other local resettlement office. Review their website, call/email to ask for information and brochures on ways you or your group could be involved. Sign up for a volunteer orientation to learn more; attend a Lunch & Learn; invite a speaker to come present at your church, business, or group.
- **Read "Best Practices for Congregations Engaging in Refugee Resettlement Ministry"** - There is a lot to learn in any new outreach ministry, and oftentimes it helps to know how to approach the work in a spiritually sound and healthful way. Use this document to shape your understanding and to frame your conversations with your team, your local agency partner, and those you meet along the way. As you learn new things in the process, please share them with us so we can share your wisdom with the wider church!

### Phase 2: Gifts Discernment

- **Utilize our Gifts Discernment Activity or Called to Transformation: An Asset-Based Approach to Engaging Church & Community** - Called to Transformation, [www.calledtoformation.org](http://www.calledtoformation.org), is a resource for the whole Church and all its people, offered through a partnership between the Domestic & Foreign Missionary Society and Episcopal Relief & Development. It "is centered around the belief that individuals, groups, and communities have the gifts they need to address the needs they see around them. 1 Corinthians 12 tells us that each of us are given different gifts to serve the community and we are all a part of the body of Christ working together." As you engage with the Called to Transformation website and resources, and assess your individual and collective "hand, head, heart, and human" gifts, you will begin to see opportunities for connection, for support, and for partnership in the work of refugee resettlement. Alternatively, you can download EMM's Gifts Discernment Activity resource to engage your group in a 2-3 hour formative retreat. This will be a boon to your success in refugee resettlement ministry and will provide time for the group to build healthy dynamics for the work ahead.

### Phase 3: Mutual Learning & Building Partnership

- **Meet with Local Resettlement Agency** - After you have gathered resources and information and discerned the gifts and assets your group has to bring to resettlement, schedule a time to meet with a representative of the local resettlement agency who coordinates partnerships with the faith community/congregations. In your meeting, you may wish to come prepared with a short, one-page description of the gifts/assets your group could bring to refugee resettlement. Approach the meeting with an open mind and open heart, prepared to listen for opportunities and needs that your group could respond to.
- **Identify Additional Partners** - As you explore opportunities to be involved in refugee resettlement work and advocacy, you may also find that the time is right to build or strengthen partnerships with other groups in your community - perhaps another congregation or faith community, the Boy Scout troop that meets at your church, or other organizations. Share your plans and invite them to join you!

### Phase 4: Planning and Engaging in Service

- **Identify Team and Activity Leaders** - Pending on how your group chooses to participate in refugee resettlement ministry and advocacy, there could be many tasks, activities, and items that need clear planning, organizing, points-of-contact, and follow-up. As you discern your gifts and strengths, identify individuals in your group who can organize and lead certain efforts. Be clear about expectations and timelines so that the teamwork is strong and each individual has a good experience.
- **Engage the Experience** - Again, pending on your group's chosen activities, you may wish to organize one or more service days, a rotating schedule for volunteers/drivers/tutors, events such as welcome dinners, cultural festivals, or more. Work together to identify the best ways to go about your shared mission. Make sure that each member of your team is sharing in the work and having a good experience; no one should feel overburdened. If your activities span several weeks or months, schedule time for regular check-ins, prayer, and reflection to keep the group strong, to nourish each individual's spiritual life, and to strengthen the work, communication, and partnerships.

### Phase 5: Rest, Reflection, Evaluation

- **Ensure Self-Care** - When engaging in any mission work, self-care is never self-centered. It is self-centering. Being aware of your own limitations, your needs, and your boundaries ensures that you provide time for your own rest, recuperation, and renewal, as well as your time with your family and your spiritual life. Engage in self-care throughout your mission experience, and during this final phase of the process, assess your own well-being. What might your heart, soul, and body need in the future? How can you prepare to engage this work again, refreshed and renewed?
- **Reflect and Evaluate** - Engage in an intentional process of reflection and evaluation with your team once your mission experience has ended. What worked well for the group? Where were there hiccups or bumps along the way? How can they be mitigated or navigated better in the future? Did the group engage in the right activities for its skills, gifts, and resources (material, human, and time)? Reflect on how you are called to welcome new Americans in the future. Your lessons learned and skills gained are valuable - consider how you will engage in this work with regularity, and how you will share your knowledge with others.