

Germantown Jewish Centre Refugee Shabbat 2020: (mostly) Local Opportunities to Assist Refugees and New Immigrants

We have compiled these materials to alert our community to various options for assisting new immigrants and refugees to our larger community. Many of us come from families of immigrants and understand how important a helping hand can be. We hope that you will extend your open arms to welcome individuals to the Philadelphia area and stand with them as they navigate this journey. The information below is current as of March 2020 – but, as we know, this info can change from day to day. Please be in touch with questions and to suggest other information. We look forward to continuing our efforts to be a welcoming and supportive community. **If you would like to stay updated on the work of the GJC Refugee and Immigrant Committee, please email co-chairs Seth Lieberman, at s.lieberma@aim.com or Joyce Lieberman, at rejoice34@gmail.com.**

On behalf of the Refugee and Immigrant Committee of GJC,

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Support local families who may be in sanctuary, awaiting legal appointments, or recently re-settled

The Canizales Family, Lesvin and Cindy and their sons Lesvin Isaac (11) and Wilmer Josue (9), are citizens of Honduras and are seeking asylum in the United States. They crossed the border in January 2019 and lawfully requested asylum. GJC congregant Peter Maas is the volunteer lawyer for the family. Their Merits Hearing is listed for February 2021 and this hearing will determine whether they will be granted asylum. We have provided initial support of furniture, refrigerator, household items, non-perishable food items. We can, on a monthly basis, continue to assist them with non-perishable food items and household supplies. Note that **items should be delivered to Barbara Lissy's porch, 816 Carpenter Lane in Mt. Airy, not to GJC. But please email her first to let her know of the drop off. If you prefer to make a monetary contribution, please make the check payable to Barbara Lissy and mail to her at 816 Carpenter Ln. Phila. 19119, as GJC is unable to accept checks**. If you can join us please use the link below to sign up.

- https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cCwDHd_ki-u_Bzwkroio4Y5VbUEYAKsOtBLqhGyMRUY/edit#gid=0
- For more information contact GJC congregants Dena Lake denareva@comcast.net or Barbara Lissy barbaralissy@comcast.net

Suyapa Reyes and her four children had been living in sanctuary at FUMCOG (First United Methodist Church of Germantown), 6001 Germantown Avenue, since September 2018, and have now received their visas. The church is continuing to provide assistance to help the family to settle permanently in the community. At this time the family can still use volunteers to assist them in resettlement. You can read more about the family at:

<https://www.sanctuaryphiladelphia.org/campaigns/sanctuary-suyapa-and-children/> For more information on volunteering to assist the family, contact GJC congregant Yona Diamond Dansky at ydanksy@gmail.com

Oneita and Clive Reyes and their family are also living in sanctuary at FUMCOG. And the **family of Carmela Apolonio Hernandez** is living in sanctuary at the Germantown Mennonite Church, 21 Washington Lane. *The New Sanctuary Movement* arranged these placements. Visit their website at www.sanctuaryphiladelphia.org and click *Campaigns* to read more about the families. You can sign a petition, write a letter of support, make a financial contribution to provide for their meals, personal items and clothing. Additionally, fundraising dinners are held monthly in different churches to benefit the families. Information is on the New Sanctuary website and on its Facebook page. If you wish to volunteer to assist at these dinners, contact GJC congregant Debbie Stern at debstern502@msn.com.

GJC congregant Margaret Shapiro is working on setting up a **mentoring program for immigrants seeking work**, with the organization *Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians*. Helping with resumes, interviewing, and navigating the job seeking process are needed on a one-to-one basis. Contact her for more information at Mshapiro2@me.com

Volunteer with HIAS Pennsylvania (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society). HIAS PA has many opportunities including youth education volunteers, serving as Philly Neighbors, childcare volunteers, citizenship tutors, delivery drivers, grocery shoppers, etc. Please visit their website www.hiaspa.org

Stay informed about how to support immigrants and refugees in our northwest area of Philadelphia and resist legislation and policies that threaten them by signing up for emails from the *Northwest Immigration Action Mobilization (NWIAM)*. Email Jocie Dye at jociedye@gmail.com and she will add you to their mailing list.

Volunteer, donate, and advocate with one of these Philadelphia organizations who are dedicated to assisting refugees and immigrants legally, financially, and emotionally: [HIAS PA](#), [New Sanctuary Movement](#), [Welcoming Center for New Pennsylvanians](#), and [Nationalities Service Center](#). Money, household items, clothing, temporary housing, pro bono lawyers and mental health professionals, child care assistance, are some of the categories that are needed.

Support organizations working at the border: Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center: <https://las-americas.org/> (legal aid for migrants now on both sides of the border); Annunciation House: <https://annunciationhouse.org/> (support, housing and clothing for migrants once asylum claim is made and awaiting trial). These organizations are recommended by GJC congregant Elyse Wechterman, who has participated in a Jewish delegation visiting the border area. Contact her for more information at ewechterman@gmail.com