

SANCTUARY at WORK

At our annual congregational meeting in June, we voted to become a Sanctuary Congregation. We thus became part of a national movement to change our government's policies towards immigrants and refugees from one of cruelty and terror to one founded on the humane treatment, justice, and compassion required by our Jewish tradition.

We are currently engaged in a number of activities in fulfillment of this resolution. Here is one:

The Tikkun Olam Committee has identified a local family who is seeking asylum and needs our help. This is a perfect opportunity for the Beth El Community to act on our commitment to support those who are threatened in the immigrant community. Through our work with the MetroWest Immigrant Solidarity Network and the Free Medical Program at Beth El we have come to know this family quite well. The family fled El Salvador after two close family members were murdered.

First the father, Salvador, and his 10 year old son, Brandon, came to Texas where their application to apply for asylum was accepted. The mom, Ana, and their 3 year old daughter, Jackeline, followed soon after, but they were kept in a detention center (aka jail) for two weeks. They have experienced much trauma.

Rachie Lewis, of the Jewish Community Relations Council, helped them obtain a lawyer through a special Catholic Charities Fund. Their case is pending, and while there is no guarantee that they will be granted asylum, they are safe for now.

The family needs help with resources and navigating their new life. While we do not need to provide them physical sanctuary, they need our help in addressing some very humble and basic needs. They are living in one small basement room without a bathroom or kitchen and share an electric burner, refrigerator, a bathroom and sink with other tenants.

These are hard-working people, although Salvador can only work a couple of days a week as he needs to be home on certain days in case ICE officers come to check on him, and other days when he needs to report to an ICE office for them to check his ankle monitor, which he must wear 24/7.

WAYS THEY CAN USE OUR HELP

Skills

1. Drivers who can take them to the store or an appointment (including medical, legal, and ICE check-ins). This is not only vital but allows drivers and family to get to know each other and brings their worlds closer together.
2. People who are familiar with local community agencies (e.g: the Framingham public schools, SMOC, Food Pantries) to give our committee information and help build up our data base of resources.

Items to contribute

1. Market Basket gift cards (can leave in Tikkun Olam mailbox or mail to Beth El)
2. Small toys; arts & crafts for the children, e.g. markers, stickers, cards (collection box at Beth El outside office)
3. Monetary donations - We would love to have people commit to donating \$18/month. Donations are tax deductible. **BECOME A MEMBER OF THE CHAI CLUB**

We are working on other specific ways to support this family and will keep you updated. We are also planning a gathering in early January to deepen our relationship with our friends from the immigrant community.

We would like to thank the Congregation for supporting our efforts. Last year when we became a Sanctuary Synagogue we understood that providing direct help to families such as this one is but one small way we can help our immigrant neighbors and truly participate locally in healing the world.

If you have any questions, need additional information, or have some time to spare, please contact:

- Judy Katz - judy16k@gmail.com (coordinating toy collection)
- Karin Segal - ks54321@comcast.net (coordinating community resource list and SIGN UP FOR CHAI CLUB- contact Karin Segal to join up and get details)
- Judy Sletzinger - jsletzinger@gmail.com (coordinating driving needs and Market Basket gift cards)

MANY thanks for your support!

The Sanctuary Committee of Tikkun Olam