

Social Justice Task Forces
Application for Recognition or Renewal
Unitarian Universalist Church Bloomington (UUCB)
Sept 2022

Name of Task Force: Refugee/Immigration Support and Education

Initial____ Renewal

Form submitted by: Barb Backler Phone: 812-340-0354 E-mail: bbackler@gmail.com

Task Force Chair if different than above:

Name Co-chair: Cindy Mosca (847) 830-3057 E-mail: cmosca52@aol.com

Please answer these questions:

1. What are the **goals** of the task force, and how do they reflect UUCB principles and enhance the life of our congregation?

Support immigrants

Promote a welcoming attitude to immigrants in Bloomington

Educate ourselves and the church members about immigration laws and policies and about improvements that need to happen

Underlying these goals is our belief in treating everyone with respect and dignity, standing on the side of love and changing the world.

2. What are your planned **activities** this year (**especially thinking of families, children, chalice circles, and connections**), including fundraising and educational meetings, and how do you plan to accomplish them?

We were happy and grateful to be awarded the 25% of the offering plate for this year to be awarded to RSN - Refugee Support Network

We will continue to work closely with RSN in supporting individuals in our community who are recent immigrants.

At the invitation of Exodus - a placement agency hired by the U.S. government - we have been sponsoring The Fakherduin family since December. We have supported them with food, clothes, and household items. We have provided activities for the children, including taking them to the Boys and Girls' Club camp all summer. This fall we have helped them get involved in their new school, and we will continue to support their English language learning. Shabnam, the mother, recently had a baby. We will make sure she has what she needs for the baby and make sure she has transportation to her doctors' appointments. The Fourth Trimester committee at church wants to work with us to provide parenting support. Sally McGuire lives in their neighborhood and has already reached out to them. She is also a nurse, so she will be able to offer medical support. Some of our task force members have visited on a regular basis and will continue to offer their friendship.

3. Who are the **members** of this task force, and what is the normal schedule of your meetings? Do you have plans to expand within the congregation and to the larger community?

We have 60+ members on our mailing list. We have had only a couple of Zoom meetings since the Pandemic. We would love to sponsor a movie night this year if it's possible with COVID restrictions when we could show a movie about immigration and follow up with a discussion. We send out periodic newsletters to let people know about our Afghan family and about issues that are important about immigration. I would like to have a book group to discuss Ungrateful Refugee by Dina Nayeri. I will be inviting people to join me in reading this book this fall. I attend the bi-weekly meeting with Exodus on Zoom that keeps us informed about immigration policies and local activities and services for our refugees.

4. If a \$300 budget were available, How would your task force use it this year? Be specific. What other **resources (financial and otherwise)** will you need to meet your goals and how will these be met?

We are paying 1/3 of the Fakherduins' rent (\$400/mo) until December. This will exhaust most of our budget. I would like to purchase several copies of the book, Ungrateful Refugee. If we are able to have a movie night, perhaps we could offer pizza like we did in the past. It's a good way to encourage people to come. We have been able to provide many of the Fakherduins' needs since December. Hopefully, they will be able to be more independent, but if they have an important need, I would hope we could help them out until they are able to be completely on their own.

5. **List at least 3 small bites - short-term or one-time volunteer opportunities (especially thinking of families, children, chalice circles, college students) that might be used to invite new members to your task force.**

We had a wonderful baby shower for Shabnam. There were half Afghan women and half UU women and some other local friends of our task force. There were several involved in organizing the shower, and I'd like to see what else they would like to do.

We have a very active team that is part of the task force. They have become friends of the Fakherduins. I want to have a fall get-together - perhaps a potluck - so that others can meet the family and become their friends too.

Perhaps we will join with the Indiana University Multi-Cultural Fair. Maybe we could connect to I.U. students who are active in befriending refugees.

We will reach out to The Fourth Trimester group at UU and see if we can support their involvement with the Fakherduin family.

I will invite people to read Ungrateful Refugee together.

We will continue to be a part of the inner faith organization in town that encourages churches to sponsor refugees. I am a member of the Immigration Justice Task Force which is made up of people from different religious organizations who work for immigration justice. Christie Popp who is an immigration attorney keeps us informed about pending legislation and encourages us to inform our church members about things they can do for immigration justice.

6. What other information and resources would you like listed on your task force web page? See current SJ task force web pages for format and ideas.

Request for input. What would the readers of the web page like to see happening in order to support refugees or inform church members about immigration policies?

List of books and movies that would be helpful to read or watch.

Submit this application electronically to Jackie Hall at jmhall@indiana.edu. Please be specific and accurate. Your information will be used in creating social justice web pages and other church documents.