

Donate and Fundraise for Refugees in the Middle East & Europe

Middle East

Poorer countries host 86% of all the world's refugees. Turkey alone hosts 2.5 million. **Christian Aid** works with partners in these countries to provide the help needed for those fleeing war and violence. Call 0870 078 7788 to order envelopes for a church collection, or support Christian Aid's refugee crisis appeal online: www2.christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/refugee-crisis

A Place at the Table is a project of the Church of Scotland encouraging us to set an extra place as we sit down and eat and donate the value of that meal to help the National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon support Syrian refugees who are struggling to feed their families:

<https://mydonate.bt.com/events/cofsplaceatthetable/214970>

Europe: Carlisle Refugee Action Group

There are thousands of refugees living in terrible conditions in the refugee camps of Europe too. Carlisle Refugee Action Group (CRAG) urgently needs **money** to buy supplies for the refugee camps in northern France because there is insufficient food and other essentials to meet current need:

<https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/carlisleoneworldcentre>. CRAG also needs urgent donations of **tents, sleeping bags and a variety of men's clothing** for these camps. A list of goods needed is on our website; or ask James Cartwright: 07801 414751; james@cartwrightsmith.wanadoo.co.uk Churches are encouraged to pick one item from the list and set a target for members to collect, for example 100 pairs of pants or 25 sleeping-bags.

More ambitiously, could your churches donate a **caravan**, name and decorate it? **Volunteers** to work in the refugee camps are also very welcome: contact sky@sustainablecarlisle.org.uk

Further Resources

See our website: www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk



How Can Churches in Cumbria Get Involved in Supporting Refugees? (July 2016)

Prepare to Welcome Syrian Refugees to Cumbria

Following postponement due to the December floods, Cumbria is now preparing to welcome refugees from Syria to our county as part of the Government's commitment. Cumbria County Council will very much value offers of help from Churches Together groups and churches to support the Syrian refugees as they come to live in Cumbria.

A Variety of Informal Support

We very much hope churches and Churches Together groups will offer this vital support in every place where Syrian refugees come to live. E.g:

- **Meeting refugees** as they arrive; **welcome & information pack**.
- Support in integrating into their new community with **orientation activities, social events and befriending activities**.
- Help and practice with **English language and conversation**.
- **Sharing of food** – A great way to get to know each other. But it can be a difficult area to think about as families from different faiths will have different dietary laws and requirements. If in doubt ask.
- **Support with completing forms**, e.g. for jobs or benefits.
- **Transport** - Help finding the way around and understanding transport systems. For offers of transport, safeguarding issues need to be considered. We must be vigilant with vulnerable people.
- **Schools** – Prepare our own children to welcome the stranger. If you lead assemblies ask schools how they are working with families so that there is a consistent message being put across.
- **Offering space for a prayer room** in a church, hall or drop in centre.

Language Skills

We have already received a few offers from people with linguistic skills. Families may come with some understanding of French as well as other languages, so please think about any language offers that could be relevant and contact Nicola Reynolds:

Tell Us What Support You Can Offer Refugees

Please contact Nicola Reynolds, Churches Together in Cumbria Emergency Response Team Coordinator, as soon as you can with all your plans to help: nicola.reynolds2@talktalk.net; 01697 508465.

Full Community Sponsorship of Refugees

This is a formal Government scheme launched in July 2016 by the Home Secretary and Archbishop of Canterbury:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship. Full Community Sponsorship is a major undertaking with serious commitments over a period of 2 years for the group or groups taking it on, including the provision of housing. Any church or Churches Together group that might be interested is advised to consider possible partners and discuss the requirements in depth before applying. Contact the North West Regional Strategic Migration Partnership for a discussion: www.nrpfnetwork.org.uk/regionalnetworks.

Accommodation

Apart from this scheme, accommodation for refugees will be found by the local authority housing departments using public and private sector stock. Please notify your local housing authority with any ideas of suitable accommodation.

Pray

See <http://www2.christianaid.org.uk/emergencies/refugee-crisis-church-resources> for a variety of prayers to help you.

Challenge Negative Perceptions

Through Conversation

Where views expressed by members of our congregations and communities do not reflect the love that Christ calls us to give, we need to be prepared to challenge, gently but firmly, with Christ's command to love our neighbour; helping those in need and challenging situations where we find people being treated with abuse and hatred. Although many refugees may want to return to their home country if it becomes safe for them and their children to live in peace, we need to be clear that refugee status confers the right to stay in the UK for 5 years and thereafter to apply for indefinite leave to remain. This is an international standard that we should defend vigorously.

In the Media

Christian Aid is encouraging Christians to write to the papers to Change the Story: www2.christianaid.org.uk/change-the-story. Ideas for your letter:

- Britain's proud history of welcoming refugees, e.g. Kosovan refugees in Cumbria in the 1990s, and that they have brought much to our society.
- We are about to welcome Syrian refugees and there will be many good stories to be told from this experience too.
- The press should focus on positive stories about supporting refugees.

To help you write, please see our website, which contains a letter sent from the Social Responsibility Forum and a briefing from Christian Aid: www.churchestogethercumbria.co.uk/component/content/article/709-ctic-refugee-support.html

Hate Crime

We work with groups such as AWAZ - <https://equalitycumbria.org/awaz-cumbria> - to ensure that bigotry is tackled and that our communities can grow through this experience. If you witness anything but are afraid to address it yourself please contact the police, AWAZ or [Nicola Reynolds](#).