

Family of six to be welcomed by interfaith refugee group

By Brock Weir

Volunteers from Aurora United Church, Trinity Anglican Church, and the Newmarket Islamic Centre are set to welcome a refugee family of six in as little as six weeks, following their response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Last fall, these three faith groups came together to form the Interfaith Refugee Resettlers (IRR), a group of 10 volunteers dedicated to support one refugee family at the very least, and helping their new roots in Canada flourish.

The group received the welcome news last week their application to sponsor a refugee family was successful and that they would soon welcome a family of a mother and father with four children.

Now, getting a sense of the family they will be welcoming at Pearson International Airport in a six to twelve week window, their hard work takes a different focus.

“With this new information, we can begin our search for a suitable home for our newcomers,” says the IRR. “The ideal home would be close to transit, elementary and high schools, and have three to four bedrooms to accommodate the family appropriately. As we move towards welcoming our first family, we are actively involved in fundraising, searching for appropriate housing, and the collection of household items. The Aurora and Newmarket Communities have been outstanding in their response to this crisis and we have been truly heartened by the outpouring of support, both financially and in the way of items needed to furnish the home of our newcomers.”

That being said, they are still holding out for a few necessary items to truly make a house a home, including donations of single beds and bedding, and now, keeping in mind the makeup of their incoming family, the list of specific needs is sure to grow in the weeks ahead.

The IRR asks the community as a whole to think about what can be donated “as sponsoring a family means we commit to providing all financial and practical support for one full year after they arrive in Canada.” Donations, they stress, are tax deductible, and are not limited to physical items. Donation of services from dentistry, physiotherapy, to social work, would be welcomed, as would local family doctors accepting new patients making themselves known.

“We are inspired to be working on behalf of such compassionate communities and are grateful for your support and commitment to this project,” they say.

To make a contribution, or for more information, contact the IRR at irrctee@gmail.com. Cheques can also be sent through the mail to Interfaith Refugee Resettlers, c/o Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, Aurora ON, L4G 1R3, payable to the faith group of your choice. Note “Refugee Fund” on the cheque.