

Interfaith group's Syrian refugee application accepted

By Brock Weir

It is news that has been a long time coming, but the Interfaith Refugee Resettlers will know more about the Syrian refugee family they are sponsoring before the end of the year.

The Interfaith Refugee Resettlers (IRR) is, as the name suggests, an interfaith collective of members from Aurora United Church, the Newmarket Islamic Centre, and Trinity Anglican Church, that will sponsor at least one refugee family from Syria.

Founded earlier this year, the group has struck committees, completed their required paperwork, and raised enough funds for this first family while working with AURA to make their pledge a reality. Since mid-fall, however, there has been something of a waiting game to learn of the next steps, but now that individuals and families are being processed at refugee camps there is light at the end of the tunnel.

"We are committed to sponsoring at least one refugee family and hopefully more families in the future," says Karen Kines, a member of Aurora United Church, on behalf of the IRR. "We have been supported in our efforts by AURA, a charitable organization assisting in the sponsorship and resettlement of refugees. Our team has now completed our training with AURA and the exciting news is our sponsorship application has been accepted! Before the New Year we will know who our family will be and they will arrive in Canada in the late winter or early spring."

In the meantime, however, there are still ways for the community at large to get involved. The IRR is asking the community to consider a financial donation to the cause.

"Sponsoring a family means we commit to providing all financial and practical support for one full year after they arrive in Canada," says Ms. Kines. "We are grateful to our compassionate and generous community for their support and commitment to this project."

Donations will be accepted through the mail, with cheques payable to the faith group of their choice, with "Refugee Fund" noted. They can be reached at Interfaith Refugee Resettlers, c/o Trinity Anglican Church, 79 Victoria Street, Aurora ON L4G 1R3.

For more information, email irrctee@gmail.com or follow them on Facebook at Interfaith Refugee Resettlers.