

10 Ways We Can Help Refugees



1. Pray for refugees

Refugees will be quick to tell you that they need and welcome your prayers on their behalf. See the IAFR resource: “What Can Christians Specifically Pray For?” for helpful tips concerning how to pray for refugees.

2. Hospitality

We start by giving God permission to lead us beyond our comfort zones. We then need to respond to the needs of refugees in our communities and offer them our friendship by visiting them and inviting them into our homes and churches. God will lead us from there. Let Matthew 25:34-36 be our guide.

The greatest thing any of us can do to welcome refugees into our communities and to extend relationship to them. While not as tangible as providing specific services or meeting practical needs, the ministry of hospitality brings comfort, peace and hope to the heart, mind and soul of those who have been uprooted.

3. Encourage our faith communities to be intentional about welcoming refugees into our communities

Church leaders will do well to encourage and enable our faith communities to actively welcome refugees in our communities. Emphasize that refugees are not only in need of our welcome, but that God will also likely use them to enrich our faith and lives as we develop relationships together. Be creative. If you would like some ideas, IAFR is here to help (www.iafr.org/contact-us).

4. Practical Assistance

While refugees are more than people in need, they do face many challenges. They often are in need of help with things like finding affordable housing, finding employment, learning the language of their country of refuge, navigating social welfare system, understanding the local school system, navigating public transportation, understanding their new culture, etc.

5. Speak up on behalf of refugees – challenge myths and prejudice

Many biblical texts refer to forcible displacement. Be sure to bring that out when preaching and teaching. Help educate your faith community concerning the reality that God is often at work in profound ways in and through the lives of uprooted people.

You can find a list of refugees in the Bible on the website of Refugee Highway Partnership member IAFR at www.iafr.org/ministry-resources/handouts.

6. Explore opportunities for collaboration with Christian agencies serving refugees

Contact Refugee Agencies to see how you can serve in volunteer, short-term and long-term capacities. If you need help identifying a refugee agency, IAFR is here to help (www.iafr.org/contact-us).

7. Refugee Highway Partnership – participate in a regional gathering

IAFR serves on the leadership council of The Refugee Highway Partnership, a worldwide network that brings together Christians, churches and Christian agencies with a burden to welcome and care for forcibly displaced people. We have active regions in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and South Asia. Many regions hold annual round table gatherings for a time of mutual learning, equipping and encouragement. See www.refugeehighway.net to see when the next Round Table will be offered in your region of the world.

8. Partner with local refugee resettlement agencies (Resettlement Team)

Contact a local refugee resettlement agency to learn how you and your church can partner with them to help a refugee family make your community their new home. Contact IAFR if you need assistance in identifying a local resettlement agency in your community (www.iafr.org/contact-us).

9. Provide Bibles for Refugees

10 Ways We Can Help Refugees

When refugees flee their homes, few have opportunity to pack their Bibles. Refugee Highway Partnership member, IAFR, is partnering with refugee churches in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya (population 150,000) to provide them with Bibles. Not only is the Bible a source of hope and comfort, each donated Bible is a tangible expression that they are not forgotten by the church-at-large. Learn more at www.iafr.org.

10. Provide roofing materials for refugee churches

Refugee camps are often found where the climate and living conditions are inhospitable. Refugee churches often struggle to find the resources to cover their mud and thatch church buildings with metal sheeting that protects them from the harsh elements. IAFR is partnering with refugee churches in Kenya and Malawi to help roof their buildings with metal sheets. The roofing gives them a safe meeting place to gather and worship, and communicates that they are not forgotten by the church-at-large. You can help (www.iafr.org/donate).

Of course there are many more ways to help refugees. We hope that some of these ideas will resonate within your heart – and that they will help you think of other ways to engage in this important ministry as well!