

Sample Church Engagement Strategy

Beginning with the end in mind of becoming a church that forms lasting meaningful relationships with refugee or immigrant families the following framework can help develop understanding within the church as well as launch concrete ways of local involvement and serving:

Phase 1: First Steps – first quarter

- Pastor/leader's Initial meeting with World Relief DuPage/Aurora Church Mobilizer to understand more of the churches ministry context and desire to build a plan for integrating immigrant ministry into the ongoing life of the church in a way that will be sustainable.
- Church Mobilizer tasked with drawing up preliminary plans for a process for a future church leaders' meeting (other staff, elders, or others as appropriate).
- Pastor to introduce WRDA ministry approach and preliminary plans to church leadership to further shape the process for World Relief to become an ongoing ministry partner.
- Pastor proposes church put WRDA into the church budget so the partnership is vision driven and not personality driven by church members, ministry staff or refugee clients.
- Church develops strategy for gaining some early wins or simple successes to prepare the church for ongoing ministry including ideas of a holiday, winter and/or spring projects. Gardening was suggested as visible way of putting the needs of refugees in front of the congregation if the church could secure a garden coordinator.

Phase 2: A Refugee and Immigrant Sabbath Emphasis (RISE) Event – second quarter

- Worship service(s) could include sermon, spiritual formation component, prayer time, video, special offering, handouts, display over a series of Sundays or one time to expose as much of the congregation to this type of ministry as possible.
- Wrap up of this time could be with a commissioning of our common work with representatives of WRDA invited to participate.
- A series of scheduled times for volunteer orientation and training are promoted.

Phase 3: Serving Together Around the Needs of the Disadvantaged (STAND) – third quarter and ongoing

- From volunteers trained church identifies a champion for the work.
- Prayer and giving continue but communication is altered to share various prayer needs and ways church support is helping refugees.
- Church champion begins to regularly identify, guide through WRDA training and form teams to become friendship partner teams with refugee families.
- Plan is reviewed and refined with targets and actions to arrive at new targets for the development of the ministry.
- An annual partnership discussion takes place with representatives of WRDA to enhance and strengthen the partnership moving forward.