

Liberia Refugee Session via Zoom

Save the Date! March 21st at 7:00 pm

Many members of Trinity now know that our church has joined with five other Lutheran congregations and CLWR to **sponsor two refugee families from Liberia**. Together there are 11 people, which is more than any one congregation can do on its own. But we are discovering that working together we can make this happen. We are also discovering that this is a truly spirit-guided journey for all of us.

The families will be settled in the Hamilton area with Trinity, Hamilton taking the lead together with the Liberian community of Hamilton. The rest of us are committed to raising the money which the Canadian government requires in order for CLWR to begin the process of bringing these two families to Canada.

Why these two families? There is a strong Lutheran presence in Liberia because of Lutheran missionary support over the years. The father of one of these families, who would be coming with his wife and children, is known to us because he is Lutheran and has been the music director (pianist and choir director) in his local Lutheran church in Liberia. That was before he and his family fled with another family due to threats on their lives because of the peacebuilding work they had been doing after the brutal civil wars in their home country. His family, and the second family, are now living outside of Liberia in West Africa. Until they had to leave Liberia, the children were all in school. One member of the group is a nurse.

Normally in refugee sponsorship we would not care if the people are Lutheran, or Christian. We reach out in support to anyone in need because of what we are called to do in Matthew 25: "When I was a stranger, you welcomed me." But in this case, we know that they are Lutheran, and that through our missionary sponsorship we have a connection with the Lutheran Church in Liberia that goes back many years.

Due to the sizes of the families, and due to the way the Canadian government tabulates the costs, this is a very expensive sponsorship, which is why six congregations are working together. **The total cost is \$127,000**. Over the past year these churches have so far together raised \$107,000. We here at Trinity, New Hamburg have just begun our fundraising. We are **very grateful** to those Trinity members and friends who have already made a donation!

The congregations involved in the sponsorship are listed below. Please give generously, but only over and above your normal offerings to Trinity. And be sure **to mark your calendar for the "all-congregations zoom" on March 21st at 7:00 pm to "meet" these families and learn more about the collaborative effort to bring them to Canada**. The link will be included in a future Emailer.

What else can you do? Please pray for all refugees, for CLWR, and for these two families and the churches supporting them.

Questions? Please contact Rick Ritz, Rebecca Larson, or Pastors Tanya or Leanne.

The Liberia refugee sponsorship group includes: Trinity Lutheran Church (Tavistock), Trinity Lutheran Church (New Hamburg), Trinity Lutheran Church (Hamilton), Mount Zion Lutheran Church (Waterloo), Trillium Lutheran Church (Waterloo), Zion Lutheran Church (Philipsburg), Alliance for the Earth, Liberian Community in Hamilton and CLWR.



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