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Compass Community Church responds to refugee crisis

Imagine living each day not knowing where you're headed, where will you get your next meal, where your children will sleep at night, and how to keep your family safe. This is the life of a refugee. Facing situations like hunger, persecution, imprisonment, kidnapping, and torture is a constant fear. The future of a refugee is bleak, and filled with a desperate longing for hope.

Being aware of the plight that many refugees face, a team from Compass Community Church was tasked with exploring refugee sponsorship. Jennifer Miedema, who leads this team, shares, ?No one should feel forgotten, abandoned, and without a place to belong. But this is exactly what refugees experience. The Church is called to be a hope for the hopeless, a voice for the voiceless, and to bring wholeness to the broken ? this is the Church in action.?

The Refugee Sponsorship Team from Compass soon identified two families and three single men who are displaced refugees, originally from Eritrea. These refugees are cousins of a family who attend Compass and who have been living in Orangeville since 2009. Compass is inviting the community of Dufferin County to partner with them in the sponsorship of these families and to welcome them to our community.

Andrew Gordon, Lead Pastor at Compass Community Church, says, ?There is so much bad news. Heartbreak and injustice are apparent. In response, Compass wants to be a voice of hope. We want to speak good news that brings hope out of despair, peace out of rage, and light that overcomes darkness. The call to care for those in need is something we take seriously. That is why Compass is leading this community response to offer families a new life in Canada.?

A refugee sponsorship involves a commitment to secure or provide support for the refugees for the period of twelve months or until they are self-sufficient, whichever comes first, including reception, housing, basic care and financial support, settlement assistance, ongoing friendship, and emotional support. In order to proceed with the formal sponsorship process, the federal government requires Compass to have a plan to secure the funds needed. To meet this requirement, Compass is seeking pledges and one-time gifts for this project.

?This is a bigger challenge than we can meet on our own,? continues Gordon. ?So we are welcoming any person or group who would like to be part of this effort to contribute. Together, we can make a huge difference!?

Ami Alexander, who also serves on the Refugee Sponsorship Team, shares, ?The total of people we will sponsor depends on our pledged funds. It is our goal to raise enough pledges to sponsor all of these refugees. This is a community effort. We want the community of Dufferin County to have the opportunity to partner with Compass, and with these individuals, as we welcome them to their new homes and they join our community.?

One hundred per cent of funds donated will go directly toward the refugee sponsorship, and all financial gifts are tax deductible. Individuals, businesses, and organizations can make donations or pledges through the Compass Community Church website: thisiscompass.com/refugeesponsorship