

About Welcoming Week & WV Interfaith Refugee Ministry

When a small group of committed clergy and lay persons from various faith traditions gathered in 2015 to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis, they had big dreams fueled by big hearts. They were not daunted by the scope of their dreams: to resettle some Syrian refugees in Charleston – to offer Charleston WV as their **home**.

Despite changes in federal immigration law in the past few years, this group, West Virginia Interfaith Refugee Ministry, which incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, stay focused on their mission. In 2018 and 2019, WVIRM welcomed three families from Africa to Charleston.

With recent new changes in Federal laws allowing more properly authorized and vetted refugees to come to the US, and immigration reform is on the horizon, WVIRM is hoping to develop plans to start the program of resettling refugees in Charleston WV.

A place of belonging, WVIRM continue to work diligently to make Charleston a welcoming city and to set an example of how **Belonging together begins with US.**

The pandemic has forced us to find creative ways to work together and what we mean by "home," recognizing that home is not necessarily a bricks and mortar structure. If home is a place of belonging, then what does it mean when people are excluded because of the color of their skin, the way they worship, the language they speak or who they love?

West Virginia Interfaith Refugee Ministry is working to make our community a more inclusive and equitable place for all, not just refugees and others seeking protection in the United States. This second annual Welcoming Week, let us work together to show the world we are all created equal and as West Virginians we belong together.



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2nd Annual



**WELCOMING
WEEK**

Charleston, WV

September 10-19 2021

Sponsored by



Belonging Begins With US



Schedule of Events



September 10th

- Mayor Goodwin Proclamation reading at 12:30 pm on the steps of the City Hall.
- An Op-Ed by Rick Wilson from American Friends Service Committee, "The state of WV Immigrants in WV " to be placed in the Charleston Gazette.

September 11th

- 12:00 pm- 2:00 pm "Let's Talk" table will be placed in front of Taylor Books. Several prominent immigrants will answer any questions or engage in a dialogue about immigration and their contribution to our community.
- 4:00 pm FB live webinar on Immigration in WV with Dr. William Hal Gorby, Technical Assistant Professor, Dept of History, WVU.

September 12th

- Panel discussion of clergy representing: Episcopalian, Methodist, Catholic and conservatives on their "welcoming the stranger" religious perspective. The discussion will take place at 4:00pm at St John Episcopal Church. Rev Kay Albright will moderate the session.

September 13th

- Imam Nasir Adbulsalam will teach class titled Introduction to Islam at the Islamic Association Masjid at 7:00pm

September 15th

- Members of WVIRM will join members of Elizabeth Memorial Methodist church in a Day of Service project.

September 16th

- Art Walk table in front of the immigrant mural on Hale Street. President Bush's book on immigrants, "Out of Many, One", will be offered as a door prize.

September 17th

- WVIRM will set up table at Live on the Levee

September 19th

- WVIRM and the Council of Churches Interfaith Program Unit will sponsor a Facebook live dialogue at 4:00pm - 5:00pm on understanding Jewish Holidays with Rabbis Victor Urecki from B'nai Jacob Synagogue and Joe Blair from Temple Israel. Register at forms.gle/RueGfaaASQHfMJ7R9 After registering you will be sent a Zoom link from Rev. Jeff Allen. For more information on this event and the Council of Churches visit the Council's Facebook page: facebook.com/wvcouncil



WELCOMING
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