

December 2022

Dear Members and Friends of Rocky Hill Congregational Church,

Holiday Offering and Most Abundant Gift

The holiday season leading up to Christmas is a time when we continue to reflect on ways to share our abundance with those less fortunate for a wide variety of reasons. Last year we used our Most to Abundance Gift to support IRIS (Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services, a CT based organization empowering refugees and immigrants to become self-sufficient and integrated into their new communities. The focus last year was for an expected 300 Afghan refugees arriving in 2022.

Because of the continued need to assist refugees, asylum seekers, and other immigrant families not only from Afghanistan but also from Ukraine, Venezuela, and others, we have decided to once again focus this year's holiday offering and December Most Abundance Gift to IRIS.

Refugee families who arrive from overseas come to the U.S. with virtually no material possessions. They have lost homes, friends, family, country, culture and jobs. Many do not speak English. They have no income, and many are victims of trauma, with physical or mental health needs. Asylum seekers, asylees, and other immigrant families who seek assistance stabilizing their family situation often have many of the same needs as refugees coming from overseas and also require support.

In addition to direct support, IRIS coordinates and oversees the development of Co-sponsorship groups throughout CT communities. These 30 member groups in the local communities help newcomers on the road to self-sufficiency by supporting transitions in areas of housing, employment, health, legal, education and case management. You may recall that Outreach and Witness made a direct contribution last year to a West Hartford sponsorship group.

Your donations to IRIS will help ensure that relocations are progressing and that families and individuals are given the resources they need to create new lives successfully. And, at the same time, newcomers enrich our communities, making this a better place for all of us.

For more information about IRIS access their website at [www.irisct.org](http://www.irisct.org).

How can you contribute? Visit the church website and donate using your bank account, your credit card, or Paypal here: <https://www.rockyhillucc.org/donate-methods>. Of course, you can also send a check to the church office at 805 Old Main St. Rocky Hill CT 06067.

Please join us in taking the time to offer prayers of hope that all individuals and families benefited by your thoughtful gift will thrive in their new communities. Thank you for your continued generosity in these economically challenging times. May we all be enriched by the powerful joy of helping others.

Our sincere blessings,

**Sue Chatfield**, Outreach and Witness Ministry

**Rev. Nada Sellers**, M.Div., Pastor, Rocky Hill Congregational Church

