

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Plattsburgh Congregational Meeting
April 14, 2024

Meeting started at 11:30 am

Welcome: Connie Shemo, Co-Chair

Membership Quorum Count: Ursula Jones and Connie Shemo. 27 voting members present

Welcome Corps Presentation: Ursula Jones

- What Welcome Corps is and how this organization offers support for refugee sponsorship.
- UUFP would be responsible to sponsor a refugee family for 90 days.
- Refugees: forced out of home country and met the US requirements for sponsorship (completed vetting process, completed forms, completed background checks, etc.)
- Refugees are eligible for US citizenship
- UU can sponsor a family we do know or don't know
- As of right now, no one in the congregation knows a refugee family who needs sponsorship
- UU would be matched with a refugee family and the family can be from anywhere in the world.
- UU can state preferences on our refugee sponsorship application (language, nationality, country, etc.).
- If no preferences are stated then the number of matches increase
- Sponsorship is a public-private partnership. Welcome Corps is the public partner and UUFP would be the private
- Private sponsorship's role includes: housing, food, jobs, services they are entitled to receive, community involvement, education, etc.
- Private sponsorship requires five team leaders who live in the same community – the team leaders are: Ursula Jones (coordinator), Kris Lutters, Connie Shemo, Arlene Morrissey, Megan Morrissey-Kelly, and Shera Marston
- The team leaders have to meet specific requirements: training, background check, and add their names to the application form
- To submit an application to Welcome Corps 60% of supporting funds must first be raised, team leaders have to complete the requirements and a service plan must be written
- Welcome Corps recommends that \$2495.00 per person will be needed for the 90-day period, although, previous sponsors suggest \$3000.00 per person is a better measure.
- Money needed will not come from the congregation's annual budget nor will members of the congregation be solicited for money relating to this project
- If members want to be part of this project, they can do so by volunteering to be a member on one of the teams, donate items the refugee family may need, and/or donate money.
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- Motion submitted by Ursula Jones
- The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Plattsburgh will pursue the sponsorship of a refugee family by welcoming, offering legitimacy to the project and support the core team, through Welcome Corps, a program launched by the US Department of State in coordination with the US Department of Health and Human Services, No part of the fellowship's annual budget will be

used to fund this project, and individual members- though free to contribute financially – will not be solicited for funds.

- Seconded: Jerry Bates

- A question-answer period lasted about fifteen minutes

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- There were no objections to take a public vote

- Vote count: Ursula Jones for those present and Nancy Lewin for those on zoom

- All members approved the proposal with four abstentions; no members voted No

- Meeting adjourned at 12:15 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Tana Hanley, Board Member