As of December 5, 2021

Afghans coming to the Seacoast will be welcomed and supported by Team Seacoast, a Neighborhood Support Team (NST). Our expectation is that we will be welcoming a family sometime in January 2022.

A Neighborhood Support Team (NST) is a group of 20-30 people who engage the true power of community in the mission of refugee resettlement, enabling a refugee family to restart their lives in the US and become self-sufficient. An NST, as a collective team, will devote a total of approximately 40 hours per week for the first two months, forming relationships and friendships built on trust and mutual respect, and then continuing to work with the family on an ongoing basis as their needs evolve. The primary responsibility of an NST is the willingness and desire to work with a refugee family for at least six months to empower them to become independent.

This is exciting news. Team Seacoast is headquartered in Durham. South Church member Charlotte Ramsay (clcramsay@gmail.com) and Riverwoods Durham resident Sudie Blanchard (sudieb@gmail.com) are the co-chairs. A critical first need has been fulfilled already. Team Seacoast has arranged for an Afghan family to be housed in the currently vacant rectory of Christ Episcopal Church on Lafayette Road in Portsmouth. A family is expected to be assigned to Team Seacoast in the next few weeks.

This message is to invite you to become a part of Team Seacoast - it's a big project with lots of moving parts and many hands needed.

First, attached is a description of the NST concept. Reading that is likely your best first step.

Second, here is the link to a Google Doc that has all the volunteer opportunities listed with the option for you to sign up. This list is being maintained by Sudie.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xCXT-K1-U23G_21Pb7jaQmRtHG0RM9QR/edit

Third, here is the link to register as a volunteer with Ascentria (this is required as it will initiate a background check). Ascentria was formerly called Lutheran Services and is one of two agencies that has been charged with resettling Afghan people in New Hampshire.

https://www.ascentria.org/our-services/services-for-new-americans/help-welcome-afghans/neighborhood-support-teams/nst-application

I have completed this application - it is not arduous, but you will need to give three references, complete with address, email, and phone number.

Team Seacoast is well on its way.

I encourage all who are interested to contact Charlotte or Sudie with any questions you may have. Also to note - the NST will need to raise between $8,000 and $10,000 to support the resettlement over the next few months. I expect that Charlotte and
Sudie and those who sign up to help with the fundraising will soon have some specifics to offer. Donations will be critical to the Team's success.