



LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES National Capital Area

Celebrating 100 Years of Serving Boldly

Issue No. 1 2017

Celebrating 100 Years of Serving Boldly

Since 1917, Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area has boldly served, confident in the knowledge that every small gesture is a miracle unto itself.

Through faith and your partnership, we offer love to those in need, creating new families in the process. We engage our communities to welcome the displaced. We embrace those whose present circumstances make them feel unwanted and marginalized by society, strengthening their lives and providing hope for the future.

In this, our 100th year, join us as we celebrate, united in the mission to serve. Learn more at LSSNCA.org



Lutherans to Collect Foreign Relief Goods
Washington area Lutheran churches are again cooperating in a Thanksgiving clothing appeal for Lutheran Welfare Relief which will reach a climax Sunday. The Rev. Donald F. Bautz, executive director of the Lutheran Inner Mission Society of Wash...

Lutheran Society Brings 200th Displaced Person Here
The 200th displaced person to be settled in the Washington area by the Lutheran Interdenominational Society is shown here with her parents, Hannelore and Anna Schmidt. This is the Bible presented to the family in Hannelore's honor.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Tollefson Urges Fellow-Lutherans To Take Bigger Role in Politics
WASHINGTON — Lutherans were urged to take a bigger role in politics by a Lutheran member of Congress who declared that the church "as an organization must take part in some degree in the affairs of our government."
"How far the church should go is a question for study and eventual decision," the speaker said. "It will require considerable research and study on the part of the church to decide how much it should participate in political affairs."
The Representative spoke at the Washington Seminar for Students from Lutheran seminaries, colleges, and deaconess schools April 7-9 conducted at Reformation Church. It was sponsored by the Division of Public Relations, American Lutheran Council, Washington.

Lutheran Social Services of the National Capital Area LSSNCA.ORG United Way #8146 CFC #78343

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A Special Holiday Delivery

By: Mira Mendick, Staff

Do you remember the thrill of the holidays as a child? The anticipation of Christmas morning? The excitement of seeing a shiny wrapped gift under the tree? LSS/NCA wanted to give that joy to refugee children celebrating their first holiday season in America.

A group of seven dedicated volunteers from the DC Jewish Community Center met early on Christmas morning to deliver presents to unexpected refugee families. With two trunks filled to the brim with beautifully wrapped holiday gifts, I felt like Saint Nicholas himself in a Toyota 6-cylinder sleigh.

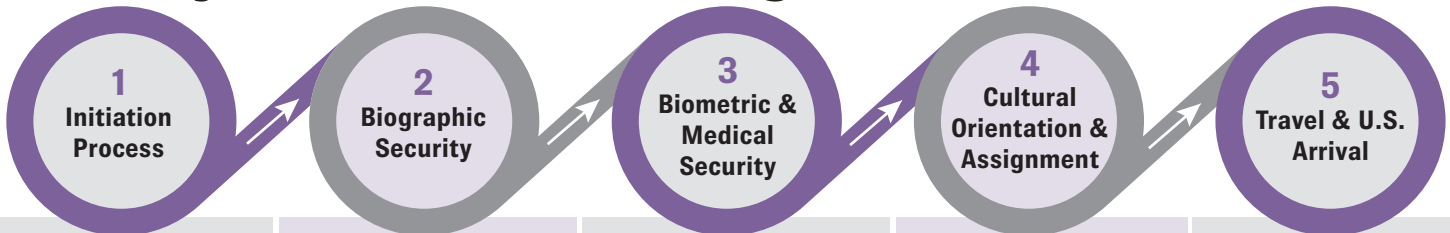
We were greeted at each door by smiles as big and bright as the presents we balanced in our



arms. The doors flew open and the children tugged the presents from our hands and sacks. They fell to the floor and tore through the paper, excitedly glancing between their new toy and their grateful parents. Yoyos, dolls, gloves, rubix cubes, stuffed animals all scattered the floor of each apartment we visited.

While watching children play with their gifts, we visited with their parents, exchanging tidbits about holiday traditions and hopes for the New Year: new homes and new beginnings with new friends and new opportunities. Because of your support and our volunteers, "Maybe Christmas, perhaps, meant a little bit more."

Security Check List for Refugees



<p>1 Initiation Process</p> <p>Refugee applicants identify themselves to the U.N. Refugee Agency, UNHCR, which collects identification documents, biodata, and interviews to confirm refugee status and need for resettlement. A federally-funded Resettlement Support Center (RSC) receives the case, collects identifying documents and creates an applicant file to begin biographic security checks.</p>	<p>2 Biographic Security</p> <p>Enhanced inter-agency security checks are conducted by the National Counterterrorism Center, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, and State Department. Security screenings assess the potential that the individual would be a security risk based on connections to known bad actors, and outstanding warrants or immigration/criminal violations.</p>	<p>3 Biometric & Medical Security</p> <p>Specially trained U.S. Immigration Officers conduct interviews and submit fingerprints for biometric security check. Fingerprints are screened against the biometric databases of the FBI, DHS, and the U.S. Department of Defense. The need and extent of medical screening is determined on a case-by-case basis.</p>	<p>4 Cultural Orientation & Assignment</p> <p>Refugee applicants must complete cultural orientation classes. An assessment is made by a U.S. non-governmental organization to determine the best U.S. resettlement location accounting for family connections, health, and cultural ties in a particular region.</p>	<p>5 Travel & U.S. Arrival</p> <p>An international organization for migration books the applicant's travel. Prior to entry, applicants are screened by U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Transportation Security Administration. Refugees are required to apply for a green card within a year of arrival triggering another set of U.S. security procedures.</p>
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Throughout this process, pending applications continue to be checked against terrorist databases for any new information. If at any point an applicant is flagged, their application may be terminated or held indefinitely for additional investigation.

Whitehouse.gov; The Screening Process for Refugee Entry into the United States

INVESTING IN PARENT PEER *Support*

By: Shayla Dunnington, Staff

Last year, LSS/NCA established a Foster Parent Support Group to encourage foster parents to lean on one another for both emotional and physical support. Since its early stages, the group showed promising results and LSS/NCA invested in hiring a Parent Support Specialist to lead and educate the group.

The group has become a place for our foster parents to bond, inspire each other, and share stories of discouragement and hope.

Recently, Ms. Mary announced at a group session that she could not continue as a foster parent. George, a young boy, was placed in her home. He often threw tantrums and could not be consoled. As a result, Ms. Mary felt like a failure and believed someone else could give him a better home. The other parents rallied behind her by sharing similar challenges, and tips and techniques to successful fostering. Ms. Mary is still a foster parent and George receives a spoonful of love every day.



The group continues to grow each month, doubling in size since its first meeting. We welcome all foster parents to attend. The meetings are held at 6 p.m. every third Friday of the month at the LSS/NCA Bowie Office. Email Shayla for more information at Dunningtons@lssnca.org.

Living positively with HIV



By: Dara Yahya, Staff

6 STEPS to Decreasing STIGMA

STIGMA - an undesirable or discrediting attribute that a person or group possesses that results in the reduction of that person's or group's status in the eyes of society.

In 2007, the Foundation for AIDS Research commissioned *Harris Interactive* to study the public's attitudes towards women living with HIV/AIDS. Among other disturbing statistics, the study found that **one in five Americans would not be comfortable with having an HIV-positive woman as a close friend**. Though the study is a decade old, lack of education continues to be a root cause of AIDS stigma today.

So what can we do to decrease STIGMA?

1. Know the facts: Educate yourself about HIV and AIDS. Learn the facts instead of the myths.
2. Be mindful of your attitudes: We've all grown up with attitudes and beliefs including prejudices and judgmental thinking. Try talking to someone outside of your circle and learn about their experiences.
3. Choose your words carefully: The way we speak can affect the way other people think and speak. Don't use hurtful or derogatory language.
4. Educate others: Seek out opportunities to pass on facts and positive attitudes about people living with HIV. If your friends, family, co-workers or even the media present information that is untrue, challenge their myths and stereotypes.
5. Focus on the positive: People with illnesses, physical or mental health issues or substance use problems make valuable contributions to society. Let's recognize and applaud their courageous stories.
6. Support people: Treat people living with HIV with dignity and respect. Think about how you'd like others to act toward you if you were in the same situation.

Youth Haven invites you to participate in the **Facts Not Fear** stigma workshop this spring. Learn more by emailing YouthHaven@LSSNCA.org, subject: Stigma

Resources: Steps adapted from mendthemind.ca AND poz.com

Celebrating 100 YEARS



#LoveBoldly

At LSS/NCA, we choose to love boldly, connecting children in need to families with love to give and a heart for service. These connections save lives, change futures and create new families to strengthen us all.

Show us how you love boldly by sharing with us on Instagram or Twitter using #LoveBoldly.

#LoveBoldly at [Instagram.com/lssnca](https://www.instagram.com/lssnca)



Into the Streets



Join us on May 6th for the first LSS/NCA Day of Service "Into the Streets:" a bold demonstration of

the impact we can create and the good we can do when we work together. We hope you'll join us and lend your heart, hands and voices as we celebrate 100 years of service and action in the community. You can choose to participate in any one of our hosted volunteer activities on May 6 or organize your own volunteer event within your neighborhood or congregation.

Visit our website [LSSNCA.org](https://www.lssnca.org) for more information or contact Kiersten at RossettoK@LSSNCA.org.



Wednesday, April 26

Images of Grace: Launch of Art Competition to design the new mural on the DC office

Sunday, May 6

Into the Streets: Join us for a community day of service, serving children and families throughout the Washington DC Metro Region

Saturday, August 5

Family Reunion: Past and present LSS/NCA staff, volunteers, and clients are invited to celebrate 100 years

September 2017

Images of Grace Reveal: New mural revealed on exterior of DC office: Winner announced

Sunday, October 22

500/100 Commemoration: Attend a pan-Lutheran Concert to celebrate the Lutheran Reformation's 500th anniversary and LSS/NCA's Centennial anniversary

November 2017

Centennial Celebration: Join us for an evening of recognizing 100 years of offering hope and celebrating another century of Serving Boldly

Images of Grace: DC Mural Art Competition



To mark 100 years of service, LSS/NCA is commissioning one local artist to join us in making our mark in the community. The winning mural will be installed on our property at 4406 Georgia Ave NW, Washington, DC.



DETAILS FOR ARTISTS:

- Terms and conditions will be posted March 13 on our website
- Submissions will be accepted April 26-June 30
- Cash prize for winning artist

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Spread the news! Tell your friends.
- Vote for your favorite mural online between July 1 - July 14.
- Read artist profiles and see their work on our Facebook page. [Facebook.com/LSSNCA](https://www.facebook.com/LSSNCA)
- Visit our office in September to see the completed mural.

Offering “WELCOME” at Tilden’s Day of Caring

By: Kiersten Rossetto Nassar, Staff

“Bienvenidos! ようこそ! Üdvözöljük! bem vinda! אבה דורב! Welcome!”

As students were prompted to say “welcome” in their primary language, the classroom was alive with diversity and pride. Their smile indicated a glimpse of their excitement as they freely expressed a part of themselves and their heritage.

For the fourth year in a row, LSS/NCA was privileged to attend Tilden Middle School’s Day of Caring. Traditionally, the day before Thanksgiving break is unattended and children are less engaged. But Tilden’s Day of Caring has revitalized families and children by

focusing on community service and the small things that make a big difference.

This year, the children were asked to decorate photo frames that would be given as a welcome gift to newly arriving refugee families. Filled with ideas, the students began to draw with all the colors they were given, picking out the most elaborate stickers and vials of glitter. This year’s lesson of welcoming new neighbors not only engaged the mind of each child, but their heart.



By: Kiersten Rossetto Nassar, Staff

Imagine leaving everything you had at a moment’s notice. There is no time to pack, grab your photo album, or decide which family heirloom to take. After waiting two years in a camp, on the streets, or in hiding, you are told that you

have a chance to start over and are assigned a new home. You don’t know what that home will look like, feel like, or resemble. However, you and your family will be safe and your children deserve a chance to play and sleep without fear.

Then you arrive in America and waiting for you is an apartment with everything you need to cook, sleep, and clean. What a surprise; what relief you must feel.

This freedom from worry and stress, this sense of kindness and welcome is what you provide for every family torn from their home

through donations to LSS/NCA. Volunteers committed to gathering donations, assembling welcoming kits, moving furniture, and providing transportation are essential to building a new home for a refugee family.

Today, we are in dire need of mid-week volunteers to move furniture and decorate apartments. Be a part of someone’s new beginning! Please contact Kiersten at RossettoK@LSSNCA.org if you can help.

home sweet home

Over the past six months, we have been transitioning to a new donor database. The transition resulted in the usual glitches and bugs. Any delays in recognition are a reflection of the system changes.

We appreciate your generous support of our mission. Every gift is important to us so we are working hard to make sure we properly account for and recognize your gift.

Thank you for your patience.

OUR IMMEDIATE NEEDS

12-passenger van (\$35,000)

Mattress and pillow (\$125 each)

Fit Bit tracker for Youth Haven health and nutrition program (\$30 each)

Email Lisa at JohnsonL@LSSNCA.org to donate or inquire about additional needs.



What's new with Vann?

By: Vann



"I am only a small van."

One of my biggest challenges is moving large groups of people. Sadly, I am not big enough to move everyone at once.

Recently I picked up Abdul and his family of seven at the airport. They had just landed in America, a new and foreign country. They were hesitant and anxious, and Abdul wanted to ride with his wife and all his children but there was not enough space and too few seat belts to carry them all. Not only did we have to rent a second van but we also had to recruit another caseworker to help, delaying the caseworker from his usual responsibilities.

Similarly, Youth Haven is limited in the number of teens it can take on a campus visit or families that can join an overnight retreat because of limited space. Just the other day we were traveling to northern Maryland to visit a farm. When there weren't enough seats to carry everybody on the field trip, one staff member drove a family in her personal car so everyone could come.

I wish I was bigger and stronger so I could help. But I am only one small van. Another larger van would help. Consider a gift to the Serve Boldly campaign so we can achieve the goal of purchasing another, larger ME. Visit our website to donate.

Join Us at Expressions of Abundance Annual Benefit Breakfast on May 10th

Mark your calendars! Expressions of Abundance, LSS/NCA's annual benefit breakfast will be held on **Wednesday, May 17 at 8:00 am** in the Great Hall of the Silver Spring Civic Building. Just minutes away from the Nation's Capital with easy access and ample parking, the Civic Building is a great new location for our annual breakfast.

As one of LSS/NCA's most successful fundraising programs for the past six years, Expressions of Abundance has raised over \$100k every year for children and families in need. As we enter LSS/NCA's centennial year, we look forward to welcoming previous donors and new friends!

WHEN: Wednesday, May 10; 8:00-9:00 am

WHERE: Silver Spring Civic Building
1 Veteran's Plaza, (GPS: 8525 Fenton Street)
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Public parking is located directly across from the Civic Building in the Town Square Parking Garage. For further information contact: Lisa Johnson, Philanthropy Manager, at (202)723-3000 ext. 138 or email johnsonl@lssnca.org.



A Comment from Chris

Dear Friends:

Reaching a milestone like our 100-year history is remarkable, not just in terms of longevity – but also, in terms of consistency. Since we first opened our doors in 1917, we have seen and responded to the needs of a broken world – in particular families and vulnerable children.

Our world continues to be a divided and often dangerous place where the problems of our humanity can seem overwhelming and insurmountable. In the face of such odds, we have two very simple choices: Accept the status quo and resign ourselves to the fact that whatever we do, it will simply not be enough; OR believe in the transformative power of service. The power of a collective group to uplift, to provide comfort, in and of itself restores hope and dignity to those among us who are most in need.

Many of us wade into this breach every day. The stories herein are a beautiful testament of how each of you has blessed us by putting your heart and soul into service. For that, we are a hundred years grateful because every small gesture has the capacity to impact an individual, a child, a parent, or a family in very direct and profound ways.

This year, as we recognize our centennial, we invite you to join us in prayer, celebration, and service. You have carried families and children for 100 years, and your commitment to **SERVING BOLDLY** will ensure another century of opportunities.

Blessings,

Christine P. Connell
CEO

I ♥ LSC

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A Special Holiday Delivery

*Gifts delivered to refugee families;
 read the story on page 2*

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100 YEARS OF SERVING BOLDLY

*Celebrate Our Centennial
 on the front cover*

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 CARING**

5 VOLUNTEER

**"INTO THE STREETS"
 A COMMUNITY DAY
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4 CENTENNIAL

**NEW VENUE FOR
 EXPRESSIONS OF
 ABUNDANCE**

6 DEVELOPMENT

Save the Dates

- March 9 Good Neighbor Workshop
(Falls Church)
- April 11 Good Neighbor Workshop
(Hyattsville)
- April 22-23 Foster Care Booth at Concert of
Causes (Bowie)
- April 26 Launch Images of Grace:
A DC Mural Competition
- May 6 Into the Streets Day of Service
- May 10 Expressions of Abundance Breakfast
- May 18 Good Neighbor Workshop
(Falls Church)
- June 13 Good Neighbor Workshop
(Hyattsville)

**For more information & events, visit
LSSNCA.org**