

"Our mission is to love and care for those seeking refuge from war torn countries with the heart of Jesus."



Volume 32  
Issue 1  
January  
2017

## GOOD NEIGHBOR INITIATIVE

*A Note from Tom and Denise Rhodes*

My husband & I felt called to help refugees after hearing Joani & Mark speak at our church last fall. **The Good Neighbor Initiative** is a great way to make an impact directly on a refugee family. We thought we were JUST joining a ministry, **BUT what we RECEIVED were BEAUTIFUL FRIENDS!**

Our friends are from Iraq and have been in St. Louis only a few months. We have visited, shared photos, laughed, helped them move to a new apartment, and they even came to our church Christmas event - "A Bethlehem Village".

They tell people we are their family. She talks to her mom in Baghdad often and her mother sends messages back to us saying, "Tell Denise & Tom thank you. I am praying for blessings for them."

Our friend is due with a baby girl in February. The ladies from my church are giving her a shower to welcome this new life. She is very excited. They have asked if Tom and I will be at the hospital with them... of course we will! We are family now.

Imagine if it were you or your family in a foreign country where you don't understand the language, customs, driving rules, grocery stores. . . wouldn't you want a friend? We all would!

Please consider signing up at [www.goodneighborstl.com](http://www.goodneighborstl.com) to become a much needed friend to a newly arrived refugee family!

Tom & Denise Rhoades



## LOOK WHAT THE LORD IS DOING

Every year I say, "Look what the Lord has done!" I want to change that to "**Look what the Lord is doing!**" Obviously if you have read any of our newsletters in the past years, you have seen that our Lord Jesus Christ has been doing, is doing and will do, miraculous things. The Bible says in Philippians 4:19, "And my God will supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." We **have** seen the provision of finances, volunteers, furniture, clothes, jobs, housing, healings, and most importantly the presence of God here at Oasis International. Everything we do is about loving and caring for the refugee families in the Name of Jesus.

**Here are just some of the miraculous statistics of 2016:**

1. The number of refugees increased from 500 in 2015 to **1,200 in 2016**.
1. We were blessed to have over **639 volunteers** serve Oasis International and the refugees with **13,819 hours**.
2. Our drivers, Haider and Ghassan made **687 furniture pick ups** around the St. Louis Metropolitan Area.
3. Our drivers and many church groups have **delivered furniture to 523 refugee families**.
4. The furniture delivered is **valued at \$364,000**.
5. **4,256 refugees from 35 countries** came through our doors for service and/or ministry.

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**I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger, and you welcomed me. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you took care of me. I was in prison, and you visited me.**  
**Matthew 25:35-36**

## *Oasis In the City: "Stories from the heart."*

**"oasis"** a pleasant or peaceful area in the midst of a difficult place.;



**50 teams delivered 400 Christmas presents**



Glorianne Slovensky and Rachel Bigbee were one of the 50 teams who delivered Christmas presents on December 17th. Over 400 gifts were donated and delivered just in time for Christmas. With every box was a plate of home made Christmas cookies too. When refugee children come from war torn countries, they do not have any toys. There is nothing like the smiles on the children's faces when they receive their gift. Thank you to all who gave and all who served by visiting these families.



### **Another Miracle!**

**We received the \$15,000 to purchase another truck for Oasis. Praise God!** Now we are needing to hire two more refugees to drive the truck. The cost of hiring them will be \$600 a week. We are connected with 70 different churches. If a church or organization would donate \$600 one time for each of the 52 weeks, then we could hire two men. Also, then we could do our pick ups and deliveries in a more timely manner.

