

September 2025

Dear Pastor Jack and Members of the Congregation,

The HARRT team of volunteers thanks you for your incredible support in helping us match our \$12,500 challenge gift, resulting in a total of \$25,000 raised this summer! This remarkable achievement was made possible by generous donations from your congregation, which has a history of supporting refugees and immigrants. You should be very proud of your role in helping immigrants build new lives in Connecticut, providing them with a welcoming community that shows compassion and understands their needs.

All funds raised will support essential needs for two families of five, one from Syria and the other from Afghanistan, both living in Hamden. Four children, ages 9 to 18, are now enrolled in Hamden public schools, and their parents and older siblings continue to improve their English skills as they work part-time and seek full-time employment. The Afghan father of three studied hard and achieved his goal of obtaining a driver's license.

We're so pleased that your former Ministerial Intern, Mindy Misener, still makes time to tutor our middle school student, who truly enjoys enhancing her English skills. The three youngest children had a wonderful time attending two weeks of Hamden summer camp, with support from scholarships provided by the town, while the 18-year-old worked at a local restaurant to help support his family.

The current economic situation for immigrants and refugees is difficult, with anticipated cuts to vital benefits like SNAP, Medicaid, and refugee cash assistance in the near future. Although refugees are here legally, they still live with the fear of ICE intervention. With the funds raised, HARRT can continue to support them as they work toward financial independence.

With thanks and gratitude,
Jane Shaw, HARRT Volunteer