

Keller church prepared to resettle Afghan refugees

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[Northwood Church](#) in Keller has trained 150 members to help resettle Afghan refugees when they arrive in North Texas.

“Every day, we’re told the first families could arrive today, or it might be a week from now,” said Bob Roberts, global senior pastor at Northwood Church, a Tarrant County congregation affiliated with Texas Baptists. “Right now, they are housed in U.S. military bases, just waiting to be resettled.”

The Northwood volunteers will help the new arrivals move into apartments, provide them with transportation and assist them in finding jobs. The church organized 10 ministry teams of volunteers to help refugees.

“Our people already have raised between \$60,000 and \$70,000” to assist the refugee families, Roberts said.

Responding to request from World Relief

A few weeks ago, Roberts received a call from [World Relief](#) saying a significant number of Afghan refugees will be resettled in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

Northwood Church has a longstanding ministry among the Afghan people. Roberts began helping build schools and medical clinics in Afghanistan not long after the 9/11 attacks 20 years ago.

He and Scott Venable, lead pastor at Northwood Church, announced the need to help resettle refugees and urged members to attend a World Relief-sponsored informational meeting in Fort Worth.

At the meeting at Southcliff Baptist Church a few days later, Northwood members made up about half of those in attendance.

“We began training our people—not only about resettlement, but also Afghan culture. We want to make sure we go slow and be culturally sensitive,” Roberts said.

‘Serve people who are hurting’



As part of the Baptist World Congress, Bob Roberts, senior pastor of Northwood Church in Keller and co-founder of Multi-faith Neighbors Network, leads an online seminar about offering a public witness in a pluralistic world. (Screengrab Image)

He pointed to a three-fold motivation for Northwood’s involvement in refugee resettlement.

“First, it’s an opportunity to serve people who are hurting. Second, it’s an opportunity to present a positive witness of Jesus to people who are in need. And third, in a polarizing time, it’s an opportunity for us to come together to serve,” he said.

In addition to his ministry at Northwood Church, Roberts also is seeking to help Afghan refugees through his leadership role with the [Multi-Faith Neighbors Network](#). The network seeks to “build resilient communities of mutual trust and respect among faith leaders through civic engagement, authentic relationships and honest dialogue.”

As part of a [9/11 Day of Service](#), the network coordinated a national campaign encouraging churches, mosques and synagogues to assemble personal hygiene kits for Afghan refugees.

Evangelical Christian churches, mosques and synagogues in Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, Detroit, Miami, Nashville, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C., committed to join the initiative.