

The Refugee Fund

*The LORD watches over the foreigner and sustains the fatherless and the widow,
but he frustrates the ways of the wicked. [Psalm 145:9](#)*

*Defend the weak and the fatherless;
uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed. [Psalm 82:3](#)*

*Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with
shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your
own flesh and blood? [Isaiah 58:7](#)*

*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after
orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by
the world. [James 1:27](#)*

Background

We are acutely aware of the humanitarian crisis that is unfolding because of the war in Ukraine. We envisage that there will be a number of phases of support that will be required to help Ukrainian refugees, e.g.:

- Immediate food, clothing, travel costs of those fleeing to neighbouring countries
- Support costs for those seeking to house and care for refugees in the medium-term whilst they wait to be repatriated, perhaps most significantly in neighbouring countries
- Hosting refugees locally in the UK, and partnering with others who are hosting refugees locally
- In the longer-term, supporting the return of refugees to their homes and initiatives to help them rebuild their lives

Further, we expect that responding to this situation and all that we will learn as a church will raise our awareness of other refugees and how best to support them both locally and further afield.

And so, we wish to establish a fund for work with refugees.

Policy

Establishing the Fund

On Sunday 27 March 2022 the fund was introduced to Saint James. The fund will be monitored monthly and will be reported to the working group.

The intentions of this fund align with one of our charitable aims; the relief of poverty, so Gift Aid can be reclaimed on donations made.

Establishing a fund, from which a committee can direct financial support is a more effective way of responding to needs that we become aware of through growing partnerships than directing church family to new needs as they arise.

The fund is classified as a Designated Fund, as such the funds can be repurposed at the agreement of the PCC.

Purpose

- To make grants to ministry partners and humanitarian aid partners as they provide for the spiritual, material, and emotional needs of refugees. This may be locally in Buckinghamshire, within the UK, or further afield.
- To support Saint James initiatives to care for and host refugees locally.

Due Diligence

We will need to be able to assure ourselves that recipients will be directing the grants we make for the purposes for which we have intended and which fall in line with our charitable purposes. This will include the promotion of the Christian faith and the relief of poverty.

Steps that will help us in this regard will include:

- Establishing and building relationships
- Ensuring that partner organisations have a history and track record
- Reviewing statements of faith / charitable purposes
- Enquiring about governance structures
- Cross-referencing with other partners

Wherever possible this fund should not be used for the support of individuals. Within our local context the Relief Fund may be better suited to that.

Governance

The Pastor | Membership, Rev. Daf Meirion-Jones is gathering a working group to monitor the situation locally, nationally, and internationally. This group will be strengthened by the inclusion of one or two members of the PCC.

The working group will meet regularly (in person and virtually as necessary) and will stay in contact with each other by email. Funding requests will be approved by a clear majority of the working group.

Requests for payments to be made will be made to the Saint James Finance Manager and noted to the Treasurer. All transactions will be by bank transfer and need to be approved by a signatory on the account (Rector: Matt Beeby, Treasurer: David Steel, Operations Director: Mark Nicholas).

Monthly reports of the grants made will be presented to the Leadership Team and PCC.

Payments of £5,000 and over will require PCC approval.

Communication

1. Establishing the fund – Sundays & Prayer Central & #SaintJamesTogether in late March / early April 2022.
2. Fund Progress – working group to monitor initial fund progress and response to future requests. They will update the Ministry Team and church family periodically.
3. Annual Governance reporting to Leadership Team and PCC.
4. Establishing partnerships, responding to needs and opportunities – use Sundays, Prayer Central and #SaintJamesTogether.
5. Transitioning focus – As the Ukraine crisis becomes more resolved and we grow in our awareness of other refugee needs we will need to:

- Update Leadership Team and PCC, and
 - Communicate with the church family through Prayer Central and Sundays (supported by #SaintJamesTogether).
6. Changing funding model – should the working group and PCC agree that the fund is sustained in a different manner to which it has been established then this needs to be communicated to the church family.

Process

- The Working Group will build relationships and partnerships.
- From those relationships and partnerships, proposals will be made to the working group for initiatives to support.
- The working group must ensure that due diligence is done and can be demonstrated.
- Bank transfer request is made to the Finance Manager and Treasurer.
 - Grants up to £5,000 can be authorised by the working group
 - Grants over £5,000 will need to be agreed with the PCC