

Welcome House Raleigh

Summer 2026

A Holy Welcome: Celebrating Hope at World Refugee Day Raleigh 2026



Families gathered beneath the shade of towering trees while friends shared meals and laughter. The joyful sounds of children enjoying face painting, henna, games, crafts, and soccer filled the air. Vendors displayed beautiful cultural clothing and handmade treasures as music, dancing, and singing celebrated the rich traditions of people from around the world.

This was the beauty of World Refugee Day Raleigh 2026.

For many of our international neighbors, this joyful celebration stands in stark contrast to the hardship that forced them to flee their homes in search of safety. It is a powerful reminder that while their journeys began with loss and uncertainty, they are now finding community, belonging, and hope.

This year marked Welcome House Raleigh's fifth consecutive year helping organize World Refugee Day. What began in 2022 as a neighborhood celebration in a predominantly international community has grown into a city-wide event.

Since 2023, the celebration has been made possible through a remarkable partnership with the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department, the local refugee resettlement agencies USCRI and Lutheran Services Carolinas, and the faith-based nonprofits Welcome House Raleigh, We Choose Welcome, and Refugee Hope Partners.

World Refugee Day, designated by the United Nations, honors refugees around the globe while shining a light on their rights, needs, and dreams. It calls communities to move beyond awareness toward action—creating opportunities for refugees not only to survive but to thrive. While every day offers a chance to welcome and support those seeking refuge, this annual celebration reminds us of our shared responsibility to stand alongside those fleeing conflict and persecution.

This year's celebration was also marked by a meaningful change of venue. Out of concern for the safety and well-being of many international families, the event was hosted by a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship church, providing the protections afforded through the CBF affiliated church protective locations injunction. With open doors and open hearts, the congregation embodied the very spirit of welcome the day was designed to celebrate.

One of the most moving moments of the day came through the words of refugee leader Hassib, whose message captured both the pain of the refugee journey and the hope found in community

“My name is Hassib, and I am truly honored to welcome you all today. I am a refugee; a refugee who arrived here in the US just a few years ago. I know what it means to live the refugee life: to be far from home, to be far from where you were born and raised, to feel lost, to fight for a new life, and to survive peacefully. But today, we are not just surviving—we are standing tall. We are a family built on courage, hope, and on the dream of a brighter future. I ask you all to feel the power of this day—enjoy every moment, because the Refugee Day 2026 committee has poured their hearts into this event. You all deserve this celebration, so please take this day as a reminder of your strength, your dignity, and the bright future you are creating.”

His words remind us that refugees are not defined by the tragedies they have escaped but by the resilience, courage, and hope they carry with them. They enrich our communities with their gifts, traditions, and stories, making Raleigh a stronger and more vibrant place to call home.

To everyone who has chosen to welcome our international neighbors into your neighborhoods, churches, schools, and homes, thank you. Your hospitality reflects the heart of the Gospel. Every shared meal, every friendship, every act of kindness proclaims that all people belong.

As Jesus told His disciples:

"Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other."

John 13:34-35 (The Message)

May we continue to live out this holy welcome—not only on World Refugee Day, but every day—as we walk alongside our newest neighbors with compassion, dignity, and love.



Mothers from the other side of the world

by: Matty Grace

For mother's day this year, I spent the day with my mama and both of my grandmothers. These three mothers have loved, cared, and supported me through each stage of my life. Without them, I would not be where I am today. However, throughout the day, I kept thinking of the refugee mothers in Raleigh that have welcomed me into their families. I opened my Whats App and sent each of them a Happy Mother's day text. Every time I see these women I feel their motherly love. They fuss over me and tell me not to spoil my dinner. Just being in their presence is a comfort.

Many of these women are from the greater middle east where women are often denied access to education. As I have gotten to know many women from this part of the world, I have noticed patterns in the cultural/societal expectations of women. For many women, the expectation is that they will be a wife and a mother. The women I know are amazing mothers and love their children so much.



The more women I talk to, the more I wonder if they ever allowed themselves to dream of what life could look like if cultural and societal pressures did not expect them to go directly into motherhood. When I was a kid, I was allowed to dream and my future career changed many times. My earliest professional aspiration was to be a farmer with lots of horses. I wonder what professions the mothers would go into if they had the choice to pursue an education before they had children. Would they be doctors, lawyers, educators, accountants, engineers, business women, or architects? Maybe some of them would choose to be stay at home moms.

It was not so long ago that women in the US were also expected to be housewives and did not have the same educational opportunities as men. In the US, ideas about gender equality have evolved greatly. Just last month, I and women around the world watched in awe as astronaut Christina Koch completed the Artemis II mission. I am thankful to live in a country where women have the choice to pursue motherhood, a career, or both.

Recently, one of the mothers I am close to proudly showed me a video of her daughter receiving an award at her school. The award recognized her academic success but also the positive impact of her presence. This mother was denied the opportunity to go to school in her country, but in the US her daughter will graduate from high school and have the opportunity to further her education. In the US, this mom is able to study English. She is so intelligent and has learned so much in a little over a year. She also lights up every room she enters. She is kind, funny, and creative. She definitely passed on all of these traits to her daughter. In the US both mother and daughter are able to learn and they are making an impact in their educational settings. It is beautiful.

I give thanks for all of the mothers in my life. I give thanks for the mothers that have been in my life since the day I was born. I give thanks for the newer mothers in my life that traveled across the world and arrived in Raleigh. I give thanks that in the US these mothers and daughters have the opportunity to dream and learn.



Praise!

Our long-term family of guests at Welcome House Raleigh have finally moved into their permanent home. After 4 years on the Refugee Highway, they are HOME!



Prayer Requests

Pray for community members that are experiencing PTSD for a variety of reasons: time in detention, trauma along refugee highway, uncertainty of status in the US.

Pray for an opportunity to potentially extend our virtual English Classes to include people living in the Greater Middle East. Pray for teachers that would like to join the virtual teacher team.

Pray for those seeking God through Jesus Christ. Pray that they will be encouraged by believers around them.

 [Click here to](#)
[Give to the](#)
[Offering for](#)
[Global Missions](#)

