

Practical Considerations

1. What space(s) will be used for the immigrant seeking sanctuary?

The downstairs' space of the manse would be perfect. There are 4 bedrooms which is enough room for the immigrant, space for the family to visit, and for the overnight volunteer to be able to sleep. There is a bathroom with a shower downstairs and the kitchen is available upstairs.

2. Would use of the manse interfere with any other uses we make of this space or deprive the church of any income?

Currently the church uses the upstairs' area of the manse for meetings, religious education, and for rental space. Having an immigrant in sanctuary downstairs would not interfere with these uses. The only current use of the downstairs' area is for storage which can be consolidated.

The long term plan is to use the manse as a residential rental for income for the church. However, this is not possible until the preschool has vacated and the building project is complete. Until then the manse is necessary for meeting space. Once the building project is completed, if we are still offering sanctuary, the issue of what space to use can be revisited.

3. What about the problem with the septic system at the manse?

No matter whether we take an immigrant into sanctuary or not, the problem with the septic system must be resolved. There are some possible temporary steps that might be explored while the permanent solution is achieved and the Sanctuary Ministry is prepared to work with the Building and Grounds Committee and the Minister to address those possibilities.

4. How will an immigrant be selected to come into sanctuary?

The churches that have already accepted an immigrant into sanctuary have developed a number of criteria to use in making this decision. Some of the criteria include whether the immigrant has a lawyer, whether the immigrant has a reasonable chance to win his/her appeal, whether the

immigrant has any serious convictions (not related to the individual's immigration status). In addition there are several outside groups that are also vetting immigrants for sanctuary. The Sanctuary Ministry will continue to develop criteria for our congregation to use in this process.

5. What kind of volunteer support will be needed?

There will be a substantial need for volunteers. It is necessary to have a volunteer host with the immigrant at all times. Usually volunteers serve 4 hour shifts during the day and a 12 hour shift at night. In addition help is needed to provide meals or go to the grocery store, run errands, do laundry, or provide transportation for the immigrants family members to visit. Once the immigrant goes into sanctuary, he/she cannot leave so boredom becomes a substantial problem. Volunteers to organize activities at the manse are welcomed.

6. Will our congregation have to provide all the volunteers?

No. The local churches that have offered sanctuary have had great success in recruiting volunteers from other congregations and even from the community. Other congregations have indicated that they would help us if we had someone in sanctuary.

7. Are there expenses to the church or the congregation in having someone in sanctuary?

Often the individual going into sanctuary is the family breadwinner. The congregation does not take on the responsibility for supporting either the immigrant or his/her family by accepting him/her into sanctuary; however, individual members of the congregation may wish to contribute to the family. Arrangements can be made to facilitate these contributions. The congregation's major commitment is to provide food for both the immigrant and the volunteers. This can be addressed through donations of food or money for food or through the minister's discretionary fund.

