

## Welcoming our Global Neighbors with the Love of Christ

*Matthew 25:35 "...I was a stranger and you welcomed me."*

*Engaging our Alliance churches to join us in strategically welcoming, building relationships, and sharing the gospel with refugees and immigrants in their community.*

RAIN of the Alliance Newsletter / Winter 2023

### RAIN at 2023 General Council

*Cathy Sigmund*

RAIN expresses appreciation and gratitude to our Alliance family for the collective effort in publishing and launching the Wells of Refuge: Welcoming Devotional Bible and App during General Council 2023. The Wells Devotional Bible reflects the hard work and heart efforts of over 200 Alliance contributors. RAIN is also grateful to Bible League International for graciously extending permissions to allow their Easy-to-Read Version to serve as the base Bible and key feature of the Wells Devotional Bible. Both the Wells Bible hardcopy and App also have the following other features: Books of the Bible Introductions, Devotional inserts (at least one for each book of the Bible), ten Themed Reading Plans, and Refugee and Immigrant stories in their own words. To date, RAIN has distributed all 3600 print copies of the Wells Bible, the majority of which were distributed at General Council, including IWs for use wherever English as a Second Language is taught.

RAIN would also like to thank all of you who stopped by our booth, attended our informational dinner, or fellowshiped over our orientation breakfast during General Council. We invite you to participate in other upcoming events including our quickly approaching Converge Orientation Dinner.



# Wells of Refuge Bible App

Jim Manchester

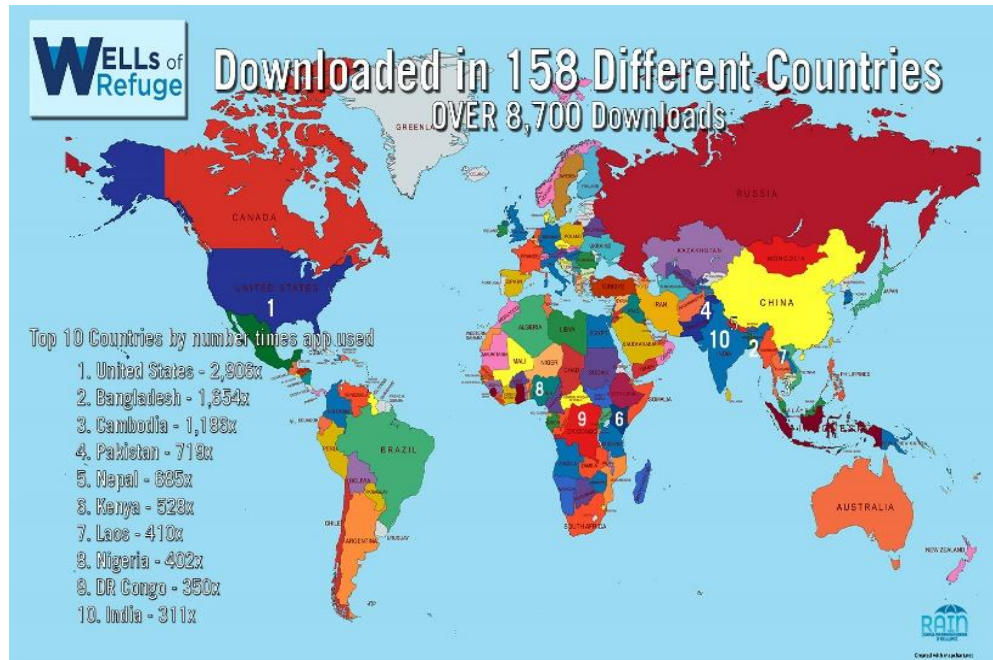
Since its initial release at the General Council in Spokane at the end of May, the Wells of Refuge Welcoming Devotional Bible has now been downloaded over 8,700 times in 158 different countries.

When looking at the total number of individuals who have downloaded the app, Bangladesh has the most with 781, with the United States coming in a close second at 759. When looking at the number of times the app has been opened in

each country, the United States is strongly in first place with 2,906 user sessions. The amount of time users spend in the app varies greatly, but is strongest in Kenya, with the average user using the app about nine times, with an average time in the app over one hour!

We celebrate the spread of God's Word and His heart for all nations through this project and take heart that His Word does not return void (Isaiah 55:11). As funding allows, we plan to make continued improvements to the app, and Lord willing, to release an easy-to-read Spanish version of the Bible, along with its introductions, devotionals, and stories.

For more information about this project, go to <https://www.rainalliance.org/wells-of-refuge/>.



## Coming to Converge?

**RAIN Leadership Dinner, Tuesday, 5:30-7:00 pm** for district leaders and missions mobilizers. We look forward to future orientation events for those wishing to participate with RAIN.

**RAIN workshops** about mobilizing your church to engage in refugee and immigrant ministry will take place on both Monday and Tuesday during the conference. Please join us for this valuable training, especially if you are exploring the idea or are new to this type of ministry.

## 2023 Fall Webinar Series

RAIN (Refugee and Immigrant Network) of The Alliance partnered with Crown College to host a free six-week Webinar Series on providing Refugee Care and Services. The Webinar participants met weekly from Sept. 15 – Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>. The Webinar Series included the following schedule, presenters, and topics:

- **Refugee Resettlement & Welcoming** – (Facilitator: Cathy Sigmund; Presenters: Bonnie Gay and Boyd Hannold). Topics: Displaced Peoples & Statuses; Steps to Refugee Resettlement; Importance of Welcoming Teams.
- **Overview of Diaspora, Refugee & Immigrant Care** - (Facilitator: Cathy Sigmund; Presenters: Jim Manchester and Hector Belen). Topics: Review of Diaspora and Immigrant Statuses; Health Care, Trauma, Social Services; Wells of Refuge: An Alliance Initiative; Education and Training Opportunities.
- **Legal & Citizenship Issues** - (Facilitator: Cathy Sigmund; Presenters: Michele Crouch; Rogerio Torres; Jim Manchester). Topics: Overview of Legal Services; Systemically, the reach of legal services; Citizenship Preparation.
- **Special Topics II (Housing, Envision Site Activities)** - (Facilitator: Kirk Lithander; Presenters: Pete Brokopp, Jim Manchester). Topics: The Importance of Housing; Envision Site Activities (Children & Family Outreach, Sports, and Clubs).
- **Special Topics I (ESL, Gardening, and Other Initiatives)** - (Facilitator: Kirk Lithander; Presenters: Bruce Lyman, Mark and Cheryl Grossoehme, and Diane Pomroy). Topics: Conversational ESL, and Diaspora Children's Ministries.
- **Kingdom Advancement Opportunities** - (Facilitator: Kirk Lithander; Presenters: Anya Holcomb, Corinne Nevius, Rich Noble). Topics: Mobilizing Churches, Ministry Development, Cooperation with Civic and Government entities.

## Ministry Spotlight: Metro District

*Bonnie Gay*

Alliance for Refugees is a resettlement agency that was birthed through a collaborative effort between World Relief and Princeton Alliance Church. After months of preparation and training, we officially opened our doors on October 1. The first family arrived at the airport on November 29. Mom and Dad and their little boy were grateful to receive gently used winter coats and put them on over the light coats they were already wearing.



Earlier in the day, the Good Neighbor Team was preparing for their arrival, filling their hotel cabinets with dishes and cookware and their fridge with snacks, fresh food, and frozen meats. Others contributed a pack-n-play, car seat, books, musical instruments, a few toys, personal care items, and diapers. And a homemade Venezuelan hot meal was ready as they settled into their temporary home.

With great joy, the little boy gave high-fives to the entire arrival team and received multiple first bumps in return. Surely, at bedtime, his new mouse friend will get many snuggles as Mom and Dad read *Buenas Noches, Luna* to him again and again and again.



# Ministry Spotlight: Ohio Valley District

*Irma Chon, Kirk Lithander, Cori Nevius*

## A Taste of Peace

Located on the northwest side of Columbus, OH, A Taste of Peace was started by Pastor Irma Chon, (who is part of the national RAIN executive leadership team) to minister to immigrants and refugees who have recently relocated to the city of Hilliard. This non-profit organization compassionately works alongside these relocated families by helping them resettle and adjust to their new homes, work, and family life by providing needed support. The work of A Taste of Peace is known for making a positive difference in the community.



## Mobilizing and Educating Churches



On May 6, RAIN of the Ohio Valley District partnered with Fairhaven Church to offer a training seminar to 110 people in Dayton, OH – “Welcoming Refugee Families to our Community”. In addition to the gifted RAIN speakers, there were four refugees who shared their powerful life-changing stories and the importance of churches to welcome and serve refugee families in their communities.

Another workshop took place on October 18 at CrossWalk Church in Reynoldsburg, OH, with over 30 people attending. The “Equipping

Those who Minister to the Traumatized: Inside & Beyond our Church Walls” equipping event was a collaborative effort of the Ohio Valley District, RAIN, and Dr. Lisa Ramsey, Co-Director of Compassion and Mercy Associates (CAMA), who presented the training. There were impactful testimonies from four refugees that helped the participants better understand the various challenges and obstacles from their trauma experiences. The afternoon session was highly interactive in breakout groups resulting in a trauma informed plan of action for each congregation represented at the workshop.

**Coming Soon:** RAIN is partnering with the Alliance Center for Leadership Development (ACLD) to develop church-based refugee/immigrant ministry training that will include curriculum and resources (in-person and online).

## Pray with Us

- That God would give us the nations as our inheritance to His Kingdom (Psalms 2:8).
- That all our Alliance churches would fully serve as His “House of Prayer” for all nations.
- That we would reflect God’s heart in welcoming the strangers (global neighbors) within our communities.