

# Urban Advocacy

Fall 2015

A little over a year ago we moved to Buffalo. We've grown to know more of how the body of Christ, with its many parts, serves in the city.

**Houghton College Buffalo** classes resumed August 31<sup>st</sup> with 33 students in an innovative, new Associate of Arts program with liberal arts and work readiness courses designed for English Language Learners. Ruth teaches "Biblical Literature, and Steve teaches "Introduction to Christianity."

On August 2 a new Wesleyan multilingual gathering began called "Mission of Christ," with preaching and music in English and Swahili. (See the picture on the right.) Pray for Pastor Yoshua Bashizi. In October a newly arrived family from the Congo was welcomed into the gathering.

With the **worst refugee crisis** since WWII, people who flee Syria or other countries will bring a growing wave of new Americans. New York state ranks third in the U.S. for number of refugees received.

**You may help** new arrivals. Thanks to Wesleyan Churches for generous donations of school supplies and winter clothing for "Bundle-Up Buffalo." Through the winter, Journey's End also collects warm coats to distribute to new families who arrive. And Journey's End "Home Again" Starter Kits contain the info you need to assist refugees on arrival at their new home.



Recently, Ruth saw the body of Christ care for a young family in great need, at **Jericho Road Community Health Center** where we both provide **spiritual care**. Dr. Glick, founding doctor at Jericho Road, came into the clinic slightly late one morning, having been called to the hospital for an emergency C-section. The day before, the mom had seen a nurse practitioner. As the day progressed it became apparent that the baby needed to be delivered by emergency C- Section. A little boy was born, but the surgery took an unexpected turn for the worse for the mom. For 48 hours her life hung in the balance.

Ruth: “During this time I met her. What a hard situation for anyone, but this young family was new to the US, having just come a few months before from a refugee camp in Thailand. When I walked into the surgical waiting room to try to find her husband, I saw a young man seated on a sofa, weary and resting. On another couch sat a young woman, resting her head on her hands. I introduced myself and found that he was the young mom’s husband. The young woman with him was a *doula* from Priscilla Project. Soon we were given permission to enter the young mom’s room. Surgical ICU can be an intimidating place. The father fought back tears as he saw her. Feeling powerless in ourselves, I offered to pray. Though the father was new to prayer, he welcomed it. We joined hands and prayed at her bedside.”

So, from doctor, to nurse practitioner, to doula, to nurses helping to coordinate ongoing health care needs, the Body of Christ at Jericho Road is being the hands and feet of Jesus to a courageous young family God has brought to Buffalo. As the Lord brings this young family to mind, *we ask your prayers for them.*

*Gratefully,*

*Steve and Ruth Strand*

**\*\*Through Priscilla Project, a ministry of Jericho Road Community Health Center, refugee moms are connected with a *doula*, a woman who speaks the refugee mom’s first language. She visits the mom in her home and helps the family prepare for the baby and for delivery in the foreign world of a Buffalo hospital. The *doula* is often with the mom even during the birth process to help coach the mom and interpret as needed.**

## Contact Information:

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For more information or to give, please visit the district website: [www.wnydistrict.com](http://www.wnydistrict.com)  
Checks written to WNY District may be sent to PO Box 43, Angola, NY 14006

## Additional Resources:

Click the following links for more information:

- [Priscilla Project - Jericho Road Ministries](#)

- [Bundle Up Buffalo - Jericho Road Ministries](#)

- [Journey's End Refugee Services, Inc. Home Again Program](#)

- [Immigrant newspaper aims to make newcomers feel welcome](#)

“Karibu” is the Swahili word for “Welcome.” This new paper gives voice to Buffalo’s newcomers from other countries, so they can communicate their stories and experiences.

- [The Good Lie – Official Movie Site – Trailer, Film Synopsis](#)

Check out the trailer for this entertaining and though-provoking Warner Brothers film. It highlights challenges that refugees like these young adults from Sudan face in coming to the U.S.