

November 2022

Dear friend of the Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregations' Coalition,

Thank you for your prayers, financial, and volunteer support of the immigrant family we hosted together through the pandemic. Thanks to this network of supporting congregations and individuals, the Kaziala family have made significant progress toward their goal of citizenship in the United States as asylees from torture in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Read on to hear about their success and to learn of the next family seeking asylum in the U.S. and temporary shelter with the Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregations' Coalition residence at Clifton United Methodist Church.

The Kazialas arrived in late October 2019. With a weekly stipend and access to translators and English as second language classes, coaches, and tutors, they acclimated to life in Cincinnati. With legal support, Pepe completed his asylum application, received a work permit, found employment, passed his driver's license requirements, purchased and insured a car, and settled into the opportunities now available to him. Titina delivered their second daughter, Karen, and cared for her older sister Regina in the small residence at the church during the isolation of the pandemic.

Now Regina is a student at Clifton Elementary School where she is thriving. They secured their own apartment in the spring of 2022. They moved in March taking all of the furniture and household items with which they had become familiar and comfortable. They, like so many others, await progress on Pepe's asylum application at which point Titina would be eligible for and able to get her own work permit. Fortunately, they have had one meeting with the Immigration Court which was promising. All in all, it has been a fulfilling journey thus far.

The support of congregations, like yours, provided \$200 per week stipend for living and legal expenses until Pepe had employment. Volunteers from congregations, like yours, provided transportation, childcare, and relational companionship. Together we provided the legal assistance to move the citizenship process forward. Thanks be to God for you and for the ministry of the Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregations' Coalition.

A new family seeking asylum needs the space. We are deep in preparations for their arrival. We will need you and your congregation again. We will once again be looking for congregations, small groups, or families who would like to be a sponsor/partner to our next family, the Danquahs from Ghana who are seeking asylum from religious persecution. Here is what partnership means:

- Take responsibility for partnership 1 week every quarter
- Provide volunteer support where needed, transportation, groceries, child care, navigation of systems, etc.
- Provide \$200 into the Clifton UMC ATM account for the family to access for their weekly living expenses
- Help supply other in-kind resources as needed

- Offer relational opportunities to get acquainted and become familiar with the city and its many aspects

I hope you, your congregation, or other group will reply to this e-mail and ask to be on the schedule again. We already have six congregations signed up and we're looking for six more sponsor/partners. Please review the sign-up genius schedule for sponsorship weeks: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4EA5AD2EABFD0-weekly1>

In addition, the coalition has renovated and redecorated the residence for the Danquahs: dad, mom (who is expecting), and son (who's 9). We are still seeking some items to finish the preparations. Please follow this sign-up genius link to see what is needed for winter clothing, technology, furniture, and household items:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0F4EA5AD2EABFD0-items>

The family will arrive before the end of the month, I hope you will step up to help whether it is a new ministry of compassion and empowerment for you or if you are returning after a brief respite between families. We are better together.

Grace and peace,

David Meredith, Convener, Cincinnati Sanctuary Congregations' Coalition
Pastor, Clifton United Methodist Church