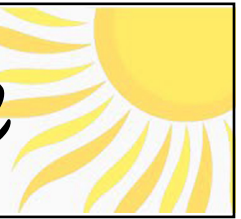




# The Elim Scribe



## Reflections from Pr Bruce ~

### Gamar Refuge Resources Center

I was able to attend the Ribbon Cutting Ceremony that was held on Friday, June 18th, for the Gamar Refuge Resources Center located at 415 East 3900 South in Salt Lake City. The Gamar Refugee Resources Center now houses these agencies: Their Story is Our Story, Lutheran Family Services, Women of the World, and Refugee Justice League. Individuals from each of these agencies and various levels of city, local and state government were there. I even met one of Senator Mike Lee’s staff. We exchanged business cards as I told him, with a smile, that Mr. Lee and I disagree on just about everything. I believe my name will now be on Mr. Lee’s email list. Maybe one day we can have a face-to-face conversation!

This event reminded me of the story of Jonah and the Whale in the Old Testament book of Jonah. Jonah refused to go and preach repentance to the capital city of Syria, Nineveh (in modern day Iraq.) Jonah fled by taking passage on a merchant ship that then encountered a violent storm. The sailors on the vessel were very distraught to discovery that Jonah was fleeing from “*the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land.*” (Jonah 1:9) Their response? “*What is this you have done!*” (v 10). They knew there is no escaping from a god that is not geographically defined. They tried hard to save Jonah, but ended up tossing him overboard as instructed. Immediately the sea ceased its raging. Verse 16 tells us “*the men feared the Lord even more and they offered a sacrifice to the Lord and made vows.*”

The message of Jonah? God cares for all people. Period. No exceptions. God is available to all people. Period.

Today there are approximately 84 million refugees who have had to flee their homes. They need places of safety to call home. God cares for them and wants us to care and get involved too. All of us are strangers and foreigners, immigrants and refugees. We are all in the same boat!

Khosrow Semnani, the business man and founder of the Semnani Family Foundation, donated the center, naming it in honor of his mother, Gamar. She was also in attendance. They immigrated as a family from Iran. He challenged all of us to do one act of kindness everyday. Speaking as a Muslim, he said that practice has changed his life.

Imagine if we were to recognize that we are all in the “same boat” and worked toward being kind and welcoming to each other. Doing one act of kindness everyday could change our entire world.

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The Fourth of July falls on Sunday this year. We will have a special celebration that day with a patriotic theme and music. Come, bring a friend, and help us celebrate our nation and our freedoms, including the freedom to worship! We have many things to be grateful for as a congregation, a community, a state and a nation that is connected across the entire globe.

**Gamar Refugee Center Resources (415 East 3900 South, Salt Lake City, UT. 84107)**

**The Refugee Justice League: [www.refugeejustice.org](http://www.refugeejustice.org)** - a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded to promote and defend the Constitutional rights of all refugees in the United States of America. They help with free COVID-19 vaccinations, refugee foster care and more. They are opening a new office in the Ogden area. For more information go to: <https://t.co/4bU4kMD81V>

**Their Story is Our Story — [www.tsosrefugees.org](http://www.tsosrefugees.org)** - There are roughly 84 million displaced people in our world today, immigrants and refugees, who have been forced to flee their homes in an attempt to find safety for themselves and their children. When we listen to their stories, we discover they are not people to be feared or ignored, but welcomed, helped and loved. Their Story is Our Story is starting an exciting new chapter, offering subscription memberships. As a sustaining member of TSOS, you will be an important contributor in our work to collect and share first-hand refugee stories. Membership includes a monthly newsletter with new refugee stories, curriculum content, think pieces and links to podcasts, videos, and online forums. Sustaining members also receive a “Thank You” gift and an Annual Report outlining the impact of their donations.

**Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountain - [www.lfsrcm.org](http://www.lfsrcm.org)** - We are fortunate in having a bilingual immigration attorney, Alethia Graham, working in the Salt Lake area to help immigrants and refugees transition and work toward citizenship.

**Women of the World — [womenofworld.org](http://www.womenofworld.org)** - Women of the World offers refugee, asylum-seeking and immigrant women free, year-round programming and case management to assist them as they strive toward their goals of self-reliance. As we serve these women and their families, we see great perseverance and resilience that enhances the strength of our community. This past year 800 women connected with Women of the World, many of these being helped in language and writing skills, learning to write their names and the names of their children, and obtaining jobs. You can learn more about this excellent ministry or make a donation by going to their website - [www.womenofworld.org/donation](http://www.womenofworld.org/donation).

**Announcements:**

- Our **flower chart** is up and available for you to sign up for Sundays that you choose to sponsor flowers for our worship services. The cost is \$25 per Sunday.
- We will begin to offer **coffee hour** refreshments in our coatroom. Sign up for Sundays to provide goodies and snacks that can be enjoyed outside. We need help in setting up card tables and chairs for this fellowship.
- The July-September issue of "**Christ in our Home**" is available. Pick up a copy at Elim or call the office to request a copy be mailed to you. A few are in large-print; specify if you need one of those.



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ELIM LUTHERAN CHURCH