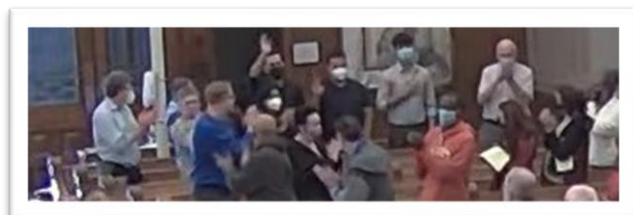


PARISHIONERS HONORED

In June 2022 St. Vincent de Paul parishioners and Mishkan Shalom congregants formed a team to resettle 3 Afghan refugees. Having successfully resettled the men in Philadelphia, the team was honored at a dinner sponsored by HIAS-PA, the Jewish immigrant aid agency, on April 20, 2023 at the National Museum of American Jewish History.

Pictured below are the 3 Afghan men on the left, Abdullah, Khalid, and Mukhtar. The core team, from left center to right, Lenny and Diana Thompson of St Vincent's, Judy Bernstein Baker of Mishkan Shalom Synagogue, Paul Witte of Saint Vincent's and Gail Bober of Mishkan Shalom. Many others of both congregations participated in helping the men in the many details of starting life in the U.S. We are thankful for all the unselfish giving of time and energy. The next big step for the men is to get permanent residency in the U.S. and bring their families from Afghanistan. For more information as to how you can help email: NSM@Saint-Vincent-Church.org.



<https://hiaspa.org/honoring-mishkan-shalom-and-st-vincent-de-paul-church-at-the-2023-golden-door-awards/>

HIAS PA's 2023 Golden Door Awards April 20, 2023

Honoree Spotlight: Mishkan Shalom Reconstructionist Synagogue and St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church Resa Rudney Award Honorees



[Mishkan Shalom](#) Reconstructionist Synagogue and [St. Vincent de Paul](#) Roman Catholic Church are our inaugural Resa Rudney Award honorees, bestowed for extraordinary community support.

Congregants from Mishkan Shalom and Saint Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church joined together as an interfaith community co-resettlement team to welcome and support three young Afghan men. The team members confronted the multiple urgent and unpredictable challenges that are often encountered throughout the resettlement process. Their optimism, cooperative spirit, and compassion exemplify the value of Welcoming the Stranger.

When the Afghan men ran out of housing options, the team hosted them in their own home for over two weeks. As one newcomer commented, "It is amazing that people of Jewish and Catholic faiths teamed up together to receive Afghans of the Muslim faith."



The Mishkan Shalom and Saint Vincent team has provided generous financial, social, and practical support for Khalid, Abdullah, and Mukhtar. The team has helped them to find and furnish a house, use their own car to help them get the driver's licenses, negotiate dental service fees, and find jobs. They have also celebrated their birthdays, and have taken Khalid, Abdullah, and Mukhtar to visit their synagogue and church.

While all of our community co-resettlement teams are worthy of recognition, this team's multi-religious background has exemplified religious diversity and tolerance in the US.

[Mishkan Shalom Reconstructionist Synagogue](#) is a Reconstructionist/Reconstructing Judaism congregation that was founded in 1988. At Mishkan Shalom, there is a shared commitment to social justice that's grounded in Jewish values and texts, and to integrating three areas of Jewish life: Torah (study), Avodah (prayer), and G'milut Hasadim/Tikkun Olam (acts of caring and repairing the world).

The Hebrew phrase "mishkan shalom" means "sanctuary of peace", reflecting a core commitment to social justice and to creating an atmosphere of mutual respect in which congregants may discuss different opinions about difficult issues while remaining a community. Tikkun Olam ("repairing the world") is the hallmark of Mishkan Shalom's history and identity. Ethical themes in Jewish observance, prayer, and study inform congregants' efforts to create meaning and healing in their own lives, and to work toward healing what is broken in the world.

[St. Vincent de Paul Roman Catholic Church](#) is the Mother Church of the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Since the founding of the parish in 1851, St. Vincent de Paul's existence has been interwoven into the history of Philadelphia and Germantown; a Catholic house of worship, it is the only Catholic church in Germantown.

St. Vincent de Paul is a faith community striving to live the gospel message of love, peace, and justice for all peoples; at St. Vincent de Paul, they serve those in need in the world and nurture the gifts of all of their members, while drawing strength and unity from their diversity and fostering an atmosphere of warmth, hospitality and prayerfulness.

St. Vincent de Paul's faith tradition remains strong; the present-day church community is thriving and espouses the same values of service and inclusivity on which it was founded over one hundred and seventy years ago.



Picture taken on arrival date June 22, 2022

The Resa Rudney Award

Resa Rudney was an extraordinary woman—compassionate, devoted to family and friends, giving of herself, and admired by all who knew her. She was passionate about social causes and was always on a mission to do something that would make a difference in someone's life. Her activism included work with Hadassah, Technion, Israel Bonds, Main Line Reform Temple, and Habitat for Humanity, where at the age of 78, she flew to Mississippi to help build houses for survivors of Hurricane Katrina.

She was a strong believer in HIAS Pennsylvania's mission, passionate about welcoming the stranger and helping refugees to settle in Philadelphia, and relentless in getting others to help. Resa herself was honored at the 2013 Golden Door Awards. As one refugee from Myanmar described her, "she was the light" that shared love and hope to many who had none.