

From: Wingo, Karen <Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov>
To: Veldran, KatherineKatherineVeldran@gov.sc.gov
Pisarik, HollyHollyPisarik@gov.sc.gov
Date: 6/28/2016 3:05:51 PM
Subject: Fwd: Jason Lee leaving World Relief

FYI. Change at World Relief

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Jason Lee <psalm963@gmail.com>
Date: June 28, 2016 at 2:09:20 PM EDT
To: Dorothy Addison <Dorothy.Addison@dss.sc.gov>, Karen.Wingo@dss.sc.gov, Karama.Bailey@dss.sc.gov
Cc: Lindsey M Seawell <LSeawell@lscarolinas.net>, BVause@lscarolinas.net, Bedrija Jazic <bjazic@lscarolinas.net>
Subject: Jason Lee leaving World Relief

Friends in Columbia,
We sent this out on June 22 about me leaving, please let me know if you have any questions.
Thanks,
Jason Lee

Dear friends, colleagues, church partners, volunteers, and supporters of World Relief Spartanburg,

It has been an exciting first year for World Relief Spartanburg. We have had challenges that I would have never anticipated, but we faced them in faith together. By God's grace, we have been able to lay a solid foundation in upstate South Carolina for welcoming refugees and empowering local churches to serve the vulnerable. God has been faithful every step of this launch, and already, our partnering churches have welcomed a total of 132 refugees.

When I was first offered the privilege, nearly 17 months ago, to launch the Spartanburg office, it was never about a job but rather a calling to live out the gospel and to equip our partner-churches in this vital work. The need to advocate for the vulnerable has never been greater; this generation is facing the worse global refugee crisis since WWII.

Locally, an increasing number of churches are stepping into the gap for those in need of protection. Not only are local churches actively sharing the Gospel vocally and practically to

refugees, just last week, through powerful cooperative efforts and against great odds, we celebrated the defeat of Senate Bill SC 997. In the same week, we witnessed the embrace of a significant refugee ministry resolution by the Southern Baptist Convention that, by God's grace, I was privileged to originally co-write and submit. Furthermore, on a grassroots level, I thank God for the significant number of Good Neighbor Team volunteers that are now on-board and equipped to welcome the next wave of newly arriving refugees to the upstate.

I am thankful for what He has done.

However, in light of where World Relief is organizationally and the direction it is planning **nationally** and locally, I am prayerfully stepping down from my role as Director of the World Relief Spartanburg office.

Please do not mistake this transition as an end to my commitment to advocating for biblical justice, standing for the vulnerable, or ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ in word and deed. In the coming days, I will be exploring ways to continue this work vocationally into the future. For our local friends, my family and I remain as committed as ever to serving refugees and churches, but we realize that it will be in a different capacity.

We look forward to continuing to “tell a better story” than has often been communicated in our region. We look forward to taking an active role in numerous refugees’ lives like **Divin** and **Ahmed** (whom will be featured in the forthcoming book, *Seeking Refuge*).

To my World Relief colleagues: you have been an example of William Wilberforce-like courage to me. You have been faithful to encourage me as I struggled to figure out how best to get this ministry off the ground. I will never be able to thank you enough for the care and support you have extended. Please know that I am not leaving the fight for the vulnerable. It will be in a different capacity, but I pray that God will provide a new role where I can serve with the Bonhoeffer-like bravery that so many of you have modeled so well for me.

I could speak for days regarding the powerful testimonies from our churches and the amazing people who give themselves as the hands and feet of Jesus. Our community has been incredible in welcoming refugees to our region and showing genuine, Southern hospitality. I am deeply grateful to God to have been on the frontlines of serving refugees in the US and being involved in this missional movement (Acts 17:24-27).

Lastly, I am thankful to God for the impact our refugees have made on my family as they have served *us*!

It has been one of my deepest honors, despite the challenges, to serve as the first director of World Relief's South Carolina office in "such a time as this" and to "open my mouth" to "defend the rights" of the vulnerable (Proverbs 31:8-9).

I pray this is not the end of our partnership, but merely a new beginning. I am trusting the Father for our future and the future of World Relief's Spartanburg ministry. In the meantime, if you have questions about local services or need to contact the office, use spartanburg@wr.org. or for other concerns I am happy to forward them to the appropriate World Relief leadership.

My family is committed to seek the Lord in the days ahead for guidance to what job I am to serve and we invite you to join is in praying for wisdom in what that role will be. No matter what job I am in specifically, I am committed to being a part of His mission to make disciples of all nations. As I move from this role at World Relief **after June 30** I will enter a season of needed retreat with my family, to reflect, to pray, and to prepare for the next season of ministry that God has for us. You can personally contact me by email (psalm963@gmail.com), Facebook (Jason Lee), LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/jasonalee>), or Twitter (@JleelnSC).

Thank you for your prayers, your love, and your support of our refugee community.

Sincerely yours, by God's grace and for His glory,

Jason Lee