

## UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

- There are over 1,100 international teachers from 34 different countries working in South Carolina schools each year.
- Five private companies serve as Visa sponsors and provide two weeks of orientation upon arrival.
- Teachers arrive with 2 suitcases and about \$1500 to begin a new life, including deposits on apartments, furnishing an apartment, securing transportation and preparing a classroom.
- Teachers who can afford airfare may bring their spouses and children to come and live in SC after they get settled.
- Others leave families behind and send money "home" to support them.
- Transportation is a great challenge to most teachers. Many walk, bicycle, ride the bus or pay for Uber rides.
- The majority of teachers come from warm climates. Their bodies are not acclimated to cold temperatures, and they do not have the warm clothes and shoes needed for winter seasons.
- These teachers seldom ask for help but may not have essentials such as a bed to sleep on.
- There is a great desire for fellowship with one another and others in the community, but these teachers are often isolated, especially during Covid.

*International teachers come to our country with only two suitcases and limited funds.*



## WAYS TO SERVE

- Are there international teachers at your local school or in your district? Get to know the teacher; encourage them; create a relationship with them.
- Befriend teachers when they enter the country. Greet them with a welcome basket: towels, pillows, cleaning supplies, gift cards to local restaurants, grocery stores or places to purchase supplies.
- Help teachers navigate a new city and a new culture.
- Offer transportation as they are learning to get around.
- Help furnish an apartment. Sometimes this is as simple as a Facebook post asking our friends if they have items to donate.
- Invite teachers to join you and your family for fellowship.
- Consider having your small group or Sunday School class sponsor a teacher for a year.
- Include teachers in special celebrations like Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- Work with the district to identify the teachers in your area and provide opportunities for them to gather for fellowship.