

Faith Community Serves as Lifeline for Foster Children, Families



Irene and Aaron Capen with their five children, Evan, 16; Elam, 15; Erin 15; Ezra, 13; Elyse, 12. Irene is manager of Faith in Motion.

Eight years ago, Irene Capen and her husband made the life-changing decision to become foster parents. They have fostered 11 children, adopted two, and dedicated themselves to helping others build their families.

“The minute they come through that door, they are family, whether they stay for two weeks or 20 years,” said Capen, mother to three biological children.

She is the Faith in Motion program manager at FosterAll, a non-profit organization in Riverside that recruits and guides parents through the foster/adopt process and connects families to community support. She began her journey with the organization as a foster parent and it grew into the job she loves today.

Faith in Motion was created by Riverside County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to fill resource and service gaps. The county contracts with FosterAll to run the program, which relies on more than 100 faith communities and other faith organizations to make it work.

In addition to recruiting loving families for children in need, Faith in Motion serves as an advocate for foster care and child welfare, hosts educational workshops, coordinates support

For more information about Faith in Motion and its programs, contact Irene Capen at faithinmotion@fosterall.org or call 951.228.5553

activities and holds monthly informational meetings with faith leaders. Participating congregations generously donate basic items, such as laptops, clothing, furniture and more throughout the year.

“Faith in Motion is about guiding families through the foster care process and activating the faith community to support them. It really does take a village,” Capen said. “DPSS understands the commitment this takes to foster, and they don’t expect you to do it alone. That’s why they created this program.”

Foster children often arrive in care with few coping strategies. One child Capen fostered slept on the floor every night because she wasn’t used to having a bed.

“These kids just need to be told they are special and need to hear ‘you are loved,’” Capen said.

Faith in Motion organizes an annual high school graduation celebration and a Christmas party for 18- to 21-year-olds. This year, the program supported November Adoptions Day in which judges donated their Saturday to process 40 local adoptions in honor of National Adoption Month.

“We are always in need of resource parents and community partners like Faith in Motion. Not everyone can foster or adopt, but we can all do something to support children,” said Charity Douglas, Assistant Director for DPSS Children’s Services.

Community support can include mentoring foster children, donating money for supplies, providing educational support and much more.

“Our goal is to partner with families in times of crisis, and ensure children have a safe, stable forever home. Faith in Motion is a critical piece of that story,” Douglas said. For more information about DPSS or Faith in Motion or to help children and families in need, visit <https://rivcodpss.org/dpss-programs/children-services>.