



## Refugee Sponsorship @ Bow Valley Christian Church



### **A, B & Z (from Pakistan)**

ABZ are settling into life in Canada. Little Z, who is 5, started Kindergarten in January and is thoroughly enjoying it. She is eager to go to school and is making new friends. B, the husband, is diligently studying English making use of the free ESL classes at BVCC and the Calgary Public Library. His English level is somewhat lower, but it is very easy to have a conversation with him. In early April he started the Pathways to Employment course at Calgary Catholic Immigration Services. Finding employment is a key goal for him. Formal English classes will start in September. A, the wife, has excellent English skills and is also looking for suitable employment.

The Canadian winter has been a real shock for them. But, Z discovered sledding and how much fun that is. They are embracing some winter activities.

The family is attending church at BVCC regularly. They are eager to meet you. Remember, we are their stepping stones to becoming fully integrated into Canadian life. This involves building friendships and involvement in day to day activities, conversations to help with language development, explaining and modeling the customs and culture. This is an opportunity for all of us at BVCC to unleash love!

### **Khalid, Enaam, Noor, Ahmed & Wajdy (from Syria)**

We are co-sponsoring the refugee applications of Jamal's immediate family (parents Khalid & Enaam, older sister Noor, younger brother Ahmed) and cousin (Wajdy) with him and his aunts who live in Calgary. Jamal, a young man originally from Syria, was the first refugee BVCC sponsored. He arrived in Canada in 2019 and has done very well for himself. He is currently enrolled in university to finish his degree.

The applications for these family members have been submitted and are in the earliest stages. We anticipate a 2 to 3 year wait before their arrival.

Pray for their protection and safety. Pray that God's love would be evident to Jamal and his aunts here in Calgary as we work with them to bring their family members to safety.





### **Wassim, Reem, Melanie, Miriam (From Syria)**

Wassim is a priest in the Orthodox Church. The family experienced persecution in Syria because of their Christian faith and Wassim had several attempts on his life. They fled to Lebanon, where they are currently in asylum.

Life in Lebanon is not easy. Syrians are not welcome there and are persecuted. He is unable to find work. They were robbed of all their money and possessions. The children are not able to go to school. Church members provided them with housing, but they struggle to provide food for the family.

The refugee application for this family is in its earliest stages. Bow Valley Christian Church is sponsoring them in collaboration with other family members who are currently here in Calgary. Bow Valley has committed to raising \$15,000 to support this family on arrival. It is anticipated that there will be a 2 to 3 year wait until their arrival in Canada.

Pray for this family. For their safety. Provision of basic needs. That their faith would remain strong and grow stronger during this time of waiting.

### **Akhgar Family (from Afghanistan)**

Meet the newest family that BVCC is sponsoring. Mutahar Shah Akhgar, is a university educated man, married with 5 children. His wife is an elementary school teacher, and together they have 2 boys and 3 girls. He speaks perfect English, and spent much of his time working with the UN and other agencies trying to de-mine Afghanistan. The Taliban are quite displeased with this de-mining program, as they want these mines scattered throughout the country. He also writes poetry professionally. A few of his poems have been made into songs by local artists. Because of that, his life is in further danger, as the Taliban believe music is unacceptable in Islam. Also, this family comes from a minority group in Afghanistan, called the Tajiks, and the Taliban are predominantly Pashtuns, as such, their ethnic group witnesses a lot of harassment, kidnapping, and discrimination. Those 3 factors have combined to make life in Afghanistan intolerable. This family fled Afghanistan and is currently in asylum in Pakistan. Pakistan is unwilling to grant them permanent protection and they are, therefore, at risk of being sent back to Afghanistan.

BVCC is sponsoring this family in collaboration with extended family members who are currently in Canada (since 2006).

Pray for this family. For safety and the provision of basic needs. Pray that God's love would be evident to the family here in Calgary as we work to bring their extended family members to safety.



## Financial Update

Thank you for the generous donations of money and gifts-in-kind that you, the Bow Valley Church family, have provided. God is demonstrating His faithfulness through your faithfulness. As we continue to sponsor more refugee families the financial need continues. While the Government of Canada stipulates a minimum amount of financial support, the reality of each families' needs varies and unanticipated expenses often arise. Please consider donating regularly to the Refugee Sponsorship Fund at Bow Valley Christian Church.