



THE Cathedral  
Church of St. James

DIOCESE OF TORONTO | ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA

# Refugee Response Committee

26<sup>th</sup> June 2019

# Global Refugee Crisis: Facts You Need to Know



## UNHCR 2018 Report, Global Trends 2018:

- **NUMBER OF PEOPLE:** Number of people fleeing war, persecution and conflict exceeded 70 million in 2018, the highest level since the Second World War
- **CHILDREN:** In 2018, every second refugee was a child, many (111,000) alone and without their families.
- **TODDLERS:** Uganda reported 2,800 refugee children aged five or below alone or separated from their families.
- **DURATION:** Nearly 4 in every 5 refugees are in displacement situations that have lasted for at least five years. One in 5 have been in displacement situations that have lasted 20 years or more.
- **COUNTRIES:** Syria, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar continue to account for the largest groups of refugees. As well, there is a new major humanitarian crisis in Venezuela - over 4 million Venezuelans have left the country since 2015, including scores of pregnant women and mothers with small children.

<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/press/2019/6/5d03b22b4/worldwide-displacement-tops-70-million-un-refugee-chief-urges-greater-solidarity.html>

# Canada's Role: Resettled More Refugees in 2018 than any Other Country

- Resettlement remains an important life-saving tool to ensure the protection of refugees.
- UNHCR's report also shows that in 2018, Canada took in more refugees than any other country (28,100) overtaking the U.S. for the first time since the 1980 Refugee Act.
- Most were survivors of violence and torture, or refugees whose life, liberty, safety or other fundamental rights were at risk.
- Many were vulnerable women and girls.
- Two thirds of the resettled refugees coming to Canada were privately sponsored by Canadian citizens.



# Alan Kurdi

- Four (4) years have gone by since the photo of a little boy washed up on a beach brought the world's attention to the crisis occurring in Syria



# About the St. James Cathedral Refugee Response Committee

- In November 2015, a group of community members and St. James Cathedral parishioners gathered to respond to the Syrian refugee crisis. It has been a fruitful alliance!
- Through Canada's unique blended visa program, we support these newcomers financially, practically, socially, and emotionally during their first year of resettlement.
- The Committee is accountable to St. James Cathedral and its sponsorship agreement holder, the Anglican United Refugee Alliance (AURA).
- Currently have 17 active committee members.

# St. James Cathedral Refugee Response Committee's Past Sponsorships

Three (3) separate sponsorships have been undertaken and completed:

1. **A single male from Iran** facing persecution due to sexual orientation.
  - Successes: reunited with daughter, attending ESL classes, secured permanent housing
2. **A family of five from Syria** came following a successful fundraising campaign and generous support of over \$125,000 donated
  - Successes: securing permanent housing, mom works full-time sewing and tailoring, dad works full time in a skilled trade, all kids (ages 5, 10 and 12) are in school
3. **A minor from Iran** whose sponsorship was somewhat different as she was the teen-aged daughter of the first individual we sponsored. Having been separated from her father for 6 years, this sponsorship came with its challenges but happy to say she is doing well.
  - Successes: reunited with father, registered full-time in school, registered in extra-curricular activities

**They all continue to embrace their new life in Canada.**

# St. James Cathedral Refugee Response Committee's Future Sponsorship

- Thanks to the generous donations of the community our fundraising campaign has raised enough now for the 4<sup>th</sup> sponsorship!
- Women and girls make up around 50% of any refugee, internally displaced or stateless population and are least likely to be sponsored.
- Based on the potential for significant impact and our now 4 years of experience, we created a profile that was different: single mother with child(ren).
- Details of our upcoming sponsorship:
  - Single mother with 3 year old child from Cameroon facing persecution
  - Arrival date: expected in 4-8 weeks
  - Challenges: affordable, sustainable housing and emotional support

# How you can be involved

Our volunteer opportunities include:

- **Committee members, particularly people who can be available during the day.** We are currently looking for members with professional experience in the public school system, and communications, as well as generalists. The Committee meets weekly, Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., in the Cathedral Centre at 65 Church Street.
- Other ways you can help:
  - ***Affordable housing:*** providing or suggesting temporary shelter or permanent accommodation options in the downtown area.
  - ***Resource referrals:*** providing us with the names of services or other resources that might be helpful to newcomers from specific cultural or geographic backgrounds.
  - ***Donations:*** may be made online via the Cathedral website: <https://stjamescathedral.ca/donate/refugee-response-2/> or by cheque (marked Refugee Committee) payable to St. James Cathedral and sent to the 65 Church Street Toronto, Ontario, M5C 2E9

**Any help you can offer will make a difference.**



# Contact Us

To learn more, feel free to reach out to us:



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