



MET Refugee Sponsorship – Update #5

Thank you for your heartfelt interest in The MET Refugee Sponsorship. Below will outline the most up to date information about the families we have applied to sponsor and the sponsorship process itself.

Updates

Application Updates

There have not been many changes in the application status of the refugee families since our last update. This is no cause for concern, as it is very typical during the refugee sponsorship application process to not receive updates if the paperwork is being processed and there are no issues.

As it stands, both families have received contact from their respective VISA offices in Jordan and Beirut. The family of 5 (husband, wife, teenager daughter, two boy children) in Beirut has completed a portion of their immigration interview with government representatives from Canada. The other family of 4 in Jordan (husband, wife, baby and grandmother) is waiting for the invitation to complete their immigration interview. Once their immigration interviews are complete, both families will need to complete a detailed health and security screening. We don't have an estimated time of arrival for either family if they are accepted as refugee immigrants into Canada. We do know that Citizenship and Immigration Canada has confirmed that they are aiming to have all the Syrian refugee sponsorship applications that were submitted by March 31, 2016 processed by February 2017. We know for sure that one of our applications was submitted by March 31, 2016 and should be considered under this proposed timeline.

To provide context to the length of time it is taking to have our sponsorship applications processed, since November 2015, Canada has welcomed over 35,000 Syrian refugees and they currently have over 20,000 applications in process for Syrian refugees. Needless to say, Citizenship and Immigration Canada is very busy! Find more key statistics on Canada's Syrian Refugee Immigration efforts here:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/refugees/welcome/milestones.asp>

Support for Churches in Lebanon and Jordan

Thanks to the grace of God and your faithful giving, we have more than enough funds to fulfill the required amount asked by the government of Canada for each refugee family. As was initially planned in The MET refugee sponsorship budget, we have fulfilled our goal to send financial support to two local churches located in the cities where each refugee family is currently living. The two churches that received our support have been going above and beyond to support refugees in their area, including the families that we hope to sponsor to Canada. Additionally, there were enough funds in our budget to send support to Cedar Home orphanage in Beirut. Thank you for your generous donations!

In-Kind Donations

Thanks to the more than generous donations of The MET church family once again, most of the major household items that were needed for the families have been donated! IMPORTANT NOTE: Our storage unit is now full; therefore, we cannot take any more in-kind donations at this time. For those who have committed items already, we understand if you are no longer able to store them due to the unforeseen waiting period we are currently in. There is always the option to donate them to Matthew House Furniture Bank that goes to support refugee families already in the Ottawa area.

Information and details at: <http://matthewhouseottawa.org/>.

Prayer Requests

Please join with us as we pray for God's provision and wisdom throughout the sponsorship process. Below are a few specific prayer requests you may want to consider.

Please pray:

- For the safety, health and physical and spiritual needs of both families.
- For God to continue to provide direction and peace to both families as they face serious daily challenges and danger.
- That the family of 4 in Beirut will be called for their immigration interview and that it will proceed without hiccup.
- For ongoing protection and strength for all churches in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and surrounding countries that are working hard to support and protect refugees.
- For the speedy processing of immigration paperwork for both families.

Get Involved

There are several ways to get involved in giving of your time and your resources in support of these two refugee families:

1. **Pray.** Your prayers for the two Iraqi families and for the entire sponsorship process are much needed. There are many different factors at play in the sponsorship process, and we need to pray for God to pave the road for our families to make it to Canada.
2. **Join a Refugee Sponsorship Action Group** in an area of refugee sponsorship that you are passionate about, experienced with or simply interested in learning more about. Your skills/knowledge can play an important role in assisting the sponsored families upon their arrival.

Thank you for your interest in The MET's refugee sponsorship. We appreciate your prayers and support as we move closer to welcoming these families to Canada. If you have any questions or if you would like to be involved, please do not hesitate to contact the Refugee Sponsorship Team through Anne McGregor at AMcGregor@metbiblechurch.ca.