

Kinda: Baby Canada



In December 2016 and January 2017, two babies were born to refugee families in Canada. Baby Eyad's story can be read [here](#). Below is Baby Kinda's story (Kinda is Arabic for Canada), written by Jamie Henderson, who is part of [Mission Creek Alliance Church's](#) refugee sponsorship team (Kelowna, BC).

The Family Story

Baby Kinda's parents, Maher and Emtithal, and her brothers Aboud (3) and Mounzer (2), lived in Homs, Syria, when the war started in 2011. Maher and Emtithal were setting up a life as newlyweds. Maher was a construction foreman for his father's construction company that worked on large buildings. The family tried to stay there as long as they could, but Maher was shot at just for going out to get milk for his young son.

Maher also had to protect his son with his body when bombs were dropped on their neighbourhood. They soon left for Lebanon with some family members.

Maher and Emtithal stayed in Lebanon for two years before they were selected for resettlement, and it would be another 18 months before they were approved for travel. They had no idea where they would be sent. Maher constantly had his phone out and would rock back and forth on the couch, staring at the phone, willing it to ring with news that they were finally approved.

One day, the phone rang, and they were informed that they were going to Canada in two weeks.

Bumps Along the Way

In December 2015, the family flew from Lebanon with a group of Syrians. Up until they were on the flight, it was still precarious whether they would be able to leave.

As they approached the airport, Lebanese soldiers separated the men from the women and children and took their money, phones, and watches before allowing them to join their families in the airport.

When the Canadian official heard about it, she went into a rage and reamed out some of the soldiers saying that these people were now protected by the laws of Canada, but they didn't get their items back.

Thankfully, the Canadian refugee program had set up everything that the family needed for food and clothing as they made the long trip from Lebanon to Toronto. Maher almost passed out from the cold in Toronto. They are now settled in Kelowna, BC.

Emtithal says the best day of her life was when she walked off that airplane in Kelowna and saw the crowd gathered to welcome her family.

Settling in Canada

The family loves Canada! Maher has been taking English classes almost

every day since he arrived, and his English is strong. Emtithal had at-home tutoring for the first six months, as there is no childcare at the LINC (Language Instruction for New Comers) classes. She understands almost everything that is spoken to her. The two boys are fluent now and are absolutely adorable and hilarious.

Maher is going to start working with an electrical company in May 2017 when he completes his English courses at the college.

The hardest part about their journey has been seeing the struggles that their extended family is still experiencing overseas. It is believed that Maher's mother and brother were killed in an airstrike last year, as they never made it to Turkey with the rest of the family, who had all split up so it would look like they were not fleeing the area.

On Family Day, Maher spoke these words to his church family at Mission Creek Alliance Church,

“Mission Creek Alliance gave us life. We are very thankful for our health and our lives. I can't explain in English how thankful we are. I didn't come here to save my life, but the lives of my sons and my wife. We didn't need much; we just wanted life.”



Refugee Sponsorship

Mission Creek Alliance Church has sponsored two refugee families so far. The church has paperwork submitted to sponsor one of Emtithal's three sisters, Samaher, and her family. Mission Creek Alliance is also collaborating with other churches to sponsor three more families.

GO

Learn how you and your church can be involved in sponsoring refugees: cmaacan.org/refugee-sponsorship

Pictured: Jamie Henderson with Baby Kinda.



The C&MA in Canada

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