

## Ministry for New Canadians - June 5, 2017

Yaser, Amina and little Salma have now been in Elmira for 1 month.

It has been a whirlwind of activity for our new family as well as for a core of our committee members. We set up a bank account for the couple; obtained both OHIP and Social Insurance numbers for the family; and had Yaser and Amina's language skills assessed and registered them for ESL classes. The family has been registered for the Family Child Tax Benefits. The BVOR applications were completed to allow the Immigration to pay for support during months 2 to 6. The family has had an intake appointment at the Woolwich Health Centre with individual medical and dental appointments booked. Regular Friday trips to the mosque have begun. A large "Thank You" to Marianne and Mike Kramer for working through all the details to allow these benefits to start to flow to the family.

Erin Pease from the Diocese met with the family, Fr. Dave, Lisa, and Mike and Marianne Kraemer on May 9th. Erin's mission was to meet the family as well as us and to review with our family the role of the sponsorship program and the myriads of paperwork that they were accompanied with. She seemed pleased with the progress and activities to date, giving helpful suggestions for the ongoing work.

**A big shout out to Lisa Howell**, who has been spending an inordinate amount of time with the family, taking them shopping as well as for some appointments. Although we have used some very outstanding interpreters for all appointments and agency visits, Lisa has managed to develop effective communication skills with Yaser and Amina, which are quite delightful! She has anticipated many of their needs; is teaching them the basics of managing the household, with lessons on recycling for example and now that the weather has improved, she has taken them for walks in the neighbourhood.

Tom Fahey and Derek Goetz have set our family up with cell phones and an iPad which they are delighted with and happily use to communicate with family back home.

Our drivers, Jim Goll, Ray Dennome and Danielle Pilon have frequently driven our family when needed. A special mention goes out to Greg Elliott, who gave so much of his time for the airport pickup, when we first welcomed our family to Canada.

Yaser has been going to ESL in Elmira for 5 days a week since his second week here. Initially, Yaser was driven both ways. We have had Yaser take the bus a few times, and now he is bicycling to 5 Memorial Dr, Elmira by himself. Yaser is signed up for ESL at St. Louis School at 77 Young St. Kitchener starting July 5th every day for 6 weeks. We need more drivers to take Yaser to Kitchener every morning. Pat is going to teach Yaser to navigate the GRT bus back home. At this point, Amina has elected to stay home with Salma, however the hope is she will begin in September with ESL in Elmira.

Audrey has organized "English at Home" every day at 4 pm to help both Yaser and Amina with their ESL. Marty Merlihan, Carol Jongerius, Danielle Pilon and Mary Baldasaro are each helping out a day or two per week.

The family is currently staying in the basement apartment at Pat and Audrey Gleeson's. Mike Mayne and the housing committee secured an apartment for them for July. Due to the very special long weekend, we are planning to move the family on Tues. July 4th at 11 am. Extra hands are always appreciated. Their new address is 31 Flamingo Drive, unit 201 ( building beside our church).

On May 24th, Ramadan started for our family. They do not eat or drink anything from sunrise to sunset ( before 5 am to almost 9 pm ). Their strength and abilities to get much done by late afternoon is quite compromised. Ramadan ends June 24. See this article from the Record about Ramadan .

<https://www.therecord.com/living-story/7349964-7-things-you-might-not-know-about-ramadan/>

Feel free to follow our calendar that is updated most days. You can see what is being done to help the family.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Eii-khalxW3-Qvk7JTtYHAtxxuC8jtDEwLeISHEgdNOs/edit?ts=58f0eeff#heading=h.gjdgxs>

Please join us on Sun. June 11 at 7 pm in the Church Library for the next meeting of the Ministry of New Canadians.