



THREE WAYS YOU CAN WELCOME REFUGEE CLAIMANTS IN THE POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

SEEKING SAFETY

Refugee claimants are those who cross international borders seeking reprieve from their trauma and safety from persecution. In 2019, 3850 refugee claimants arrived in British Columbia. In 2020, with the pandemic causing border closures and restrictions on international travel, there were still 2165 refugee claims made in BC.

In 2021, there is pent-up demand for those who are forcibly displaced to move to spaces of refuge. Government agencies are partnering with local organizations to plan and prepare for an anticipated surge in refugee claimant arrivals when the borders reopen.

Many of the people who arrive in Canada seeking refugee protection face numerous challenges and vulnerabilities. No one is there to meet them at the airport or border. They have no idea where to go or what to do next. Refugee claimants struggle to navigate complex systems and to meet their basic needs like finding shelter. Connecting to social networks, to people they can trust, is something they long for, yet struggle to make happen.

You can help.



REFUGEES
WELCOME

WHO ARE REFUGEE CLAIMANTS?

There are people in our world facing crisis.

They are losing their homes, mourning the disappearance of loved ones, experiencing torture, receiving death threats, hiding from “ethnic cleansing”, and facing possible imprisonment. Why?

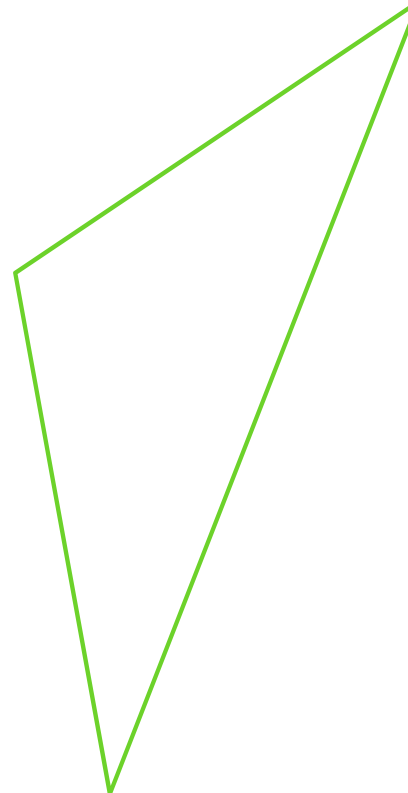
Perhaps they possess the wrong physical traits, they follow the wrong religion or they choose to speak up for the oppressed. The reasons for their endangerment are many, but one thing unites them – they have all made the courageous decision to seek safety and justice, sacrificing everything to make it to Canada with the hope of starting a new life here.

A refugee claimant is a person who has fled their country and is asking for protection in another country. We don't know whether a claimant is a refugee or not until their case has been decided.



To find out more about the refugee claim process visit:

<https://irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/applying-refugee-protection/pages/index.aspx>



3 WAYS: EDUCATE, ENGAGE, EMPOWER

We want to make it easy for you to get involved supporting refugee claimants which is why we've put together this handy guide to accompany our webinar.

The next sections of this booklet gives more details to the three ways we suggest getting involved, along with some practical steps, further reading and weblinks to connect with agencies near you.

1/ EDUCATE

Find out more about the issues, meet the organizations on the ground and equip yourself with some knowledge about refugees

2/ ENGAGE

Connect with agencies, learn about volunteering and practicing welcome. There are lots of ways to get involved.

3/ EMPOWER

Learn more about supporting local organizations, how you and your church can provide resources and financial support - along with prayer, care and much more





EDUCATE

It's sometimes difficult to know how to help or what to do. One of the best things you can do is find out more about the issues involved with people seeking refugee protection in Canada - and around the world. The issues are often complex and challenging.

the good news is that there are a lot of resources available to help get to grips with the issues and to understand what it means to become a refugee, what resources are available, what Canada is doing to provide safety and which organizations are supporting refugee claimants. Plus, there's opportunity to hear from refugee claimants themselves to hear first hand what they have been through.

We would encourage you to find out more using the resources included in this booklet.

RESOURCES



REFUGEE HIGHWAY PARTNERSHIP NORTH AMERICA

As a Christian network, The Refugee Highway Partnership North America seeks to connect and mobilize leaders, churches and organizations to engage with refugees.

<https://www.rhpna.com/about>



THE CANADIAN COUNCIL FOR REFUGEES

A national non-profit umbrella organization committed to the rights and protection of refugees in Canada and around the world and to the settlement of refugees in Canada.

<https://ccrweb.ca>



UNHR CANADA

The UN Refugee Agency is a global organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees and stateless people

<https://www.unhcr.ca>



MAP BC

MAP is a collaboration between over 40 Government, NGO and not-for-profit agencies in BC that work with and for refugee claimants in British Columbia.

<https://www.mapbc.org>



REFUGE REIMAGINED

In their book *Refuge Reimagined*, Mark and Luke Glanville offer a new approach to compassion for displaced people: a biblical ethic of kinship. It equips those interested in refugee issues to understand the biblical model and how it can transform our world.

<https://www.ivpress.com/refuge-reimagined>



ALONG THE WAY

Hear the stories behind the headlines and statistics. *Along the Way* is a podcast that highlights stories of real people who had to make heartbreaking decisions and perilous journeys to find peace, safety and a life of freedom.

<https://www.alongthewaystories.com>



READY FOR MY REFUGEE HEARING

Designed for refugee claimants and those supporting them, this resource helps refugee claimants prepare for their refugee hearings. Read the Refugee Hearing Preparation Guide to learn how refugee claimants can best prepare for their hearings.

<https://www.refugeeclaim.ca/>



ENGAGE

Once you've found out more about who refugee claimants are, the barriers they face and the challenges they've overcome, it's important to know how you can get involved in supporting them. There's some deeply practical ways to walk along side refugee claimants and we've gathered together some of the ways you can make a difference.

Depending on your availability, time commitments and willingness to "go deep", you'll find a lot of options in the next few pages about how you can engage with refugee claimants and some of the agencies that serve them. We've also included a story of a couple whose lives changed completely after volunteering with one of our organizations.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

VOLUNTEER

There are so many ways to volunteers with agencies and ministries that serve refugee claimants. They have all kinds of events, community dinners, friendship opportunities and more. Whether you like to cook, can do home maintenance or yard work, there's something you'll be able to do. And once you're involved you'll get to meet the incredible people who have travelled across the world to find safety in Canada. It'll be an amazing experience. Plus, there are as many opportunities as there are ideas - so just contact your local agency to find out more.

TEACH ENGLISH

Do you have experience teaching English? Are you a certified ESL teacher? Then there are often lots of ways you can get involved - conversation circles, one-on-one lessons, group lessons, online lessons and more. English skills are vital to the success of refugee claimants in BC - so why not put your teaching ability and experience to incredible use by working with refugee claimants?

EDUCATE YOUR SMALL GROUP

If you care about refugee claimants and the issues around seeking protection, why not involve your small group or community group? You could hold a Bible study using refuge as a theme, or hold a book club using Refugee Reimagined as your book choice. Become an ambassador for refugee claimants in your network!

PRACTICE WELCOME

And if you want to "dive deep" into supporting refugee claimants, there are some amazing ways groups and individuals can practice welcome. Many agencies will have schemes where you can help to provide accommodation for people seeking refugee protection. They'll offer training and support and it will be an incredibly rewarding and exciting relationship journey you'll be on. These are the ways that our agencies provide an extended welcome:



1. Communities of Welcome - Journey Home Community
2. Beyond Refuge - Kinbrace
3. Welcome Homes - Inasmuch Community Society



IT TURNED OUR LIVES UPSIDE DOWN - FOR THE BETTER!

“

We'd been looking for ways we could serve God together. Being an English teacher made it easy for me to get involved – but neither me or my husband ever expected to find it such a rich and rewarding experience.

The people we've met through volunteering are amazing. They've enriched our lives so much. Being perfectly honest it feels like we get way more out of it than we put in. We were inspired by the parable of the Good Samaritan – and how it's vital that we don't walk past on the other side.

The folks we serve have been through so much and yet they smile and laugh and want nothing more than to help each other. And now that we're involved we couldn't imagine ever going back to our comfortable lives.

Sure it's good to make a difference, but we can't believe what a life affirming experience it's been.

”

SARA AND ANDREW, VOLUNTEERS

WHERE TO GET INVOLVED



JOURNEY HOME COMMUNITY

Journey Home Community welcomes refugees into community by offering housing, settlement support, and relational care. JHC envisions a society where all refugees experience hope and belonging as they engage in meaningful participation in their community and flourish in all aspects of life. <https://www.journeyhomecommunity.ca>



KINBRACE

The Kinbrace community in Vancouver welcomes refugee claimants with housing, education, and support. Kinbrace is BC's longest-serving housing provider for refugee claimants, offering dedicated support and accessible educational resources across Canada. <https://www.kinbrace.ca>



INASMUCH COMMUNITY SOCIETY

Abbotsford-based Inasmuch Community Society provides transitional housing, settlement services, customized employment counseling, English Language training and basic living support for up to six months. <https://www.inasmuch.ca>



NEW HOPE

New Hope provides housing and support services for refugee families as they transition into life in Canada. We own and operate a 13-unit apartment building in Surrey, BC and partner with community agencies to help refugee families access resources they may need. <https://newhopecs.org>



MOSAIC

MOSAIC is one of the largest settlement non-profit organizations in Canada. We serve immigrant, refugee, migrant and mainstream communities in Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley as well as throughout the province of BC and overseas via online programs. <https://www.mosaicbc.org>



ISS of BC

ISSofBC is the largest agency of its kind in Western Canada, with targeted programs for refugees, women, children and youth, plus support services in over 45 languages. Its programs and services are available throughout Metro Vancouver, Squamish and the Okanagan. <https://issbc.org>



EMPOWER

There's already amazing work being done to support refugee claimants in and around BC. And all the work needs your support - whether in person, or financially, or through prayer support. You can make a real difference in empowering these wonderful initiatives.

On the next page, we've listed a few ways you can empower organizations to carry out their work. We would love you to consider how you can get involved in the work of welcome - and how you can help refugee claimants find safety in Canada.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

PRAY

You only have to read the news headlines, or look at agency websites to understand why we do what we do. Sometimes it's tough and sometimes the needs can seem overwhelming. We'd love it if you'd pray for us.

CONNECT

Don't be a stranger! Connect with our agencies and find out what we do and how it could fit with your church's mission and outreach. We're always happy to provide guest speakers to talk to your folks and it's often a great way to network and find out what's happening to support refugee claimants in your community.

HOUSING

The pandemic has caused many churches to think about how they use their buildings and land - some are even thinking of using parking lots of affordable housing. We'd love to partner in these plans to expand the capacity for housing refugee claimants and have lots of ideas and experience to help. But it doesn't have to be as drastic as that - we would love to talk more with your community on how we can utilize rooms, suites, basements and more!

FUNDRAISE

Many agencies get very limited government or municipal funding so rely on donations and some grant funding. There are many ways you can empower your local group by fundraising, from bake sales and bottle drives to more formal events like the ever popular Ride for Refuge. We would be so grateful for your support!

GET ON BOARD

Another way to empower a non-profit society that's supporting refugee claimants is consider bringing your skills, business experience and knowledge to an organization's Board. We're always looking for people with vision and strong marketing, fundraising and strategic planning experience to help guide our agencies as we seek to grown and serve an ever expanding community.

QUESTIONS?

We would love to hear from you...

Journey Home Community

7175 Royal Oak Avenue,
Burnaby, BC, V5J 4J3
604.568.4892
info@journeyhomecommunity.ca

Kinbrace

PO Box 21732, 1424 Commercial Drive
Vancouver BC, V5L 5G3
604.255.9691
info@kinbrace.ca

Inasmuch Community Society

108A-32883 South Fraser Way,
Abbotsford, BC. V2T 2Z1
604.850.9214
hello@inasmuch.ca





<https://www.journeyhomecommunity.ca>



<https://www.kinbrace.ca>



<https://www.inasmuch.ca>