

Refugee Week 2024

Finding Family

We are a family.

This week – 16 June to 22 June 2024 is Refugee Week. Each year Refugee Week has a theme, and this year the theme is Finding Family.

Finding Family

The Refugee Week theme is chosen by the Refugee Council of Australia.

<https://www.refugeeweek.org.au/theme/>. This year's theme is apt for us at MARS and those at LMAP who have embraced Raziye and Marzieh. The theme invites us to explore the stories of refugees who, despite the challenges they encounter, discover a source of freedom within the embrace of their families.

We have become a family for Raziye and Marzieh as they have commenced their journey in Australia, living amongst us.

Our formal commitment to Raziye and Marzieh was for one year – to help them settle and integrate into our community. In all we do, and in all our encounters with them and those who we met along the settlement journey, we aim to represent our Lord Jesus.

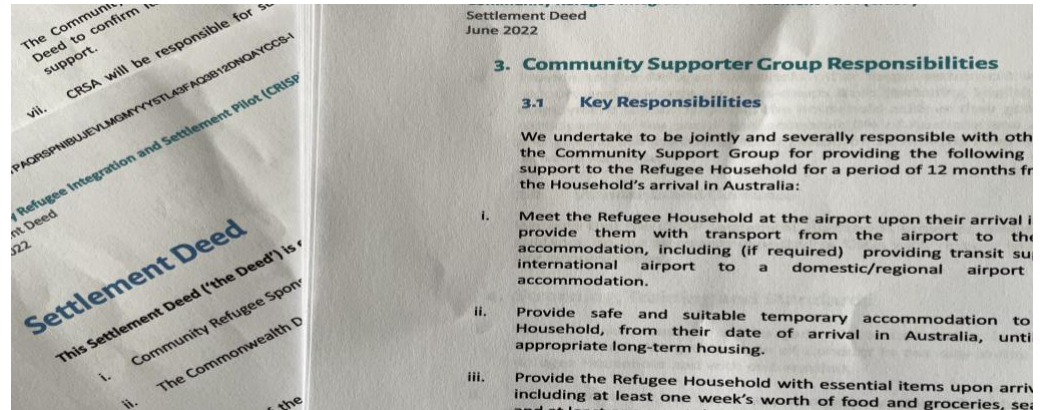


Marzieh had a birthday and we had a party for her. This was a different type of party to what she had in Iran.

We were also able to work with other groups we met along the way with mutually beneficial outcomes who also became blended into our 'family'. Two groups we particularly mention are the 'Grace Community' (Lara and Ben Penrose from the Afghan Community Centre), Merrylands and the Persian congregation from St John's, Parramatta where Raziye and Marzieh could hear the bible read and preached in their own language.

*A lot in one year!
Your help,
generosity and
prayer made all this
possible.*

Key Responsibilities



Just over a year ago, we welcomed Raziye and Marzieh as Refugees from Iran (Their ethnicity is Afghan) under the Community Refugee Integration Settlement Pilot (known as CRISP).

CRISP is a government program that involved local community groups supporting refugees to settle in Australia. We saw this scheme as an opportunity to step out in faith, to give a practical demonstration of our faith in Jesus, by serving those with a need.

Under the CRISP program there were a number of key responsibilities that we were to complete over the year of our formal responsibility. These included meeting these women at the airport, assisting them to set up a home, enrolling them in English classes, connecting them to health services. Most importantly, befriending them and walking beside them through their first months of life in Australia

*You prayed for
Raziye*

Raziye's journey.



With your help, Raziye has improved her English skills. She has just finished her English Course at Kingswood TAFE at the end of this term. She has also completed a short TAFE baking course, achieved her Drivers Learners Permit (completing the test in English), met and married Mohammed, and set up a home in the local area. She has also spoken at events to promote Refugee issues. Raziye hopes to pursue nursing as a career. She has found casual employment using her catering skills.

*You prayed for
Marzieh.*

Marzieh's Journey



With your help, Marzieh has completed her English language courses at Kingswood TAFE. She has also just completed a course in Cyber Security at Blacktown TAFE, and now added another course in cloud technology. She has set up a home in Blacktown with another lady she befriended at TAFE. Marzieh has also obtained her Driver's Learners permit and has spoken at a number of key events in support of community sponsorship of refugees. She has found casual employment using her tailoring skills. Marzieh hopes to do further study and find employment in the cyber security field.

*Thank You for your
partnership!*

What's next.



MARS is an enduring ministry. We are preparing ourselves for sponsoring another refugee household.

We have had the opportunity of expressing our faith in Jesus in practical ways as well as being able to share with Raziye and Marzieh about Jesus in response to their questions. We have seen God answer our prayers in so many ways.

We want to thank you for your participation with us in this cross cultural ministry right here at LMAP. You have helped in so many ways

Family

Consider being part of the ongoing journey.



This year's Refugee Week theme is Finding Family. We have, from the onset of developing this ministry spoken of being Ambassadors for Christ (2 Corinthians 6:20). We know that all our actions either draw credit to Jesus, or detract from him being known.

We are part of a Church that places value on Jesus being known by as many people as possible. Both Raziye and Marzieh emigrated from a country where comparatively few people know Jesus, and to change religion (especially from Islam) is a punishable offence. Therefore, even to step inside a church is a difficult thing. Our Church family has warmly welcomed these two, (and others) through the year, clearly showing that knowing Jesus is for everybody.

This is a relationship ministry – where we did not know in advance, how we would be received, and what the outcomes of the year would be. The ministry required us 'to step out in faith' and do something out of our comfort zone, a little bit risky, but well worth it. We invite you to continue to partner with us in the ministry of MARS.

Donate

Your Contributions are Valued

Donations to MARS are valued and enable us to meet required expenses in the process of sponsoring and supporting a refugee household. Community Refugee Sponsorship requires us to have at least half our financial budget in place before they will assign us a refugee household. This is because a significant portion of our budget is expended in the first months of their arrival – in temporary accommodation, clothing and other essentials.

You can donate to us by direct bank transfer.

MARS-LM
Great Southern Bank
BSB 814282
Account: 51806625

And/Or Recycle your drink containers and donate the proceeds to MARS.

Support Mountains Anglican Refugee Support and Recycle at the same time

Support us, donate your 10-cent refund with the Return and Earn app from any machine in NSW

Pray for Refugees

A Prayer For Displaced Persons, Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

Heavenly Father,

In Jesus, you are our strength and refuge.
We pray for all those in our world who seek refuge,
The displaced, the refugees, the asylum seekers.
May they know peace, security, and what it means to feel safe.

May we, who have Jesus as our strength and refuge,
Be able to share his love in deed and word,
May we have a heart to befriend those refugee and asylum seekers
That we meet.

May we, as a Church warmly welcome those refugees and asylum seekers
Who come our way.
May we go out of our way to understand and walk with them.

May we all appreciate and understand, that if it were not for Jesus' sacrificial love,
We would be all displaced from your kingdom.
Therefore, as we have been accepted by that sacrificial love,
May we show sacrificial love to others.

And may the Holy Spirit give us that power and boldness,
To welcome, befriend, guide and support
The displaced, the refugee and the asylum seeker.

We pray this in Jesus name. Amen



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