

HISTORY OF REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP AT
AT ST. DAVID'S UNITED CHURCH

1972 The Modi Family from Uganda

Bharat, Bharti, Bhavesh and Mitul

The Modi family was warmly welcomed by our church as they fled the oppressive political regime in Uganda. In time, Bharat became an accountant and the family moved to the United States where he continued to work until he and Bharti retired in California. Both sons married and had children, all of them becoming highly successful in their academic studies and their professional careers. Bharat and Bharti shared many happy years together which included wonderful and interesting trips throughout the world. One year, they revisited the roots of each in India and Bharat was able to see the now big, healthy mango trees he had planted on their land almost 50 years before. In the spring of 2021, this close knit, loving family was devastated with Bharat's diagnosis of pulmonary fibrosis and so Bharat and Bharti moved to Phoenix to be close to Mitul. Sadly, Bharat passed away in March of 2022. Bharti continues to live in a senior's community close to her son and family.

1978 The Chanthalansy Family from Laos

Bountavy, Viencomme, Lepinsy (3) and Daovy (born in Montreal en route)

Lepinsy won the English prize, was an Ontario Scholar and valedictorian at CASS in Grade 13. He attended RMC in Kingston where he graduated with honours and now serves with the Canadian Security Intelligence Service. Daovy graduated from WCI., then attended college. He was a skilled athlete.

1979 Kim and Ted Phuong were privately sponsored by Brian and Susan Brown with much financial help from St. David's. After 18 months, Kim asked if they could move to Toronto where she supported herself and her brother by sewing. Kim put Ted through university and also sponsored their parents to come to Canada.

1987 The Zekarius Family from Ethiopia

Zekarius (Habte), Abrhazion Temnewu, Terhas, Daniel, Abrehe, Azieb

Habte has driven a taxi for many years in London where the family now lives. Over the years, this family has generously co-sponsored (with assistance from St. David's) other relatives to come to Canada, offering housing, food and essentials. These people include several nephews and Abrahazion's mother. They financially support relatives still living Europe.

1994 The Grgic Family from Bosnia (Croatia)

Dr. Alojzije— gynecologist, Franciska (lab technician)
Delezer, Danijela, Maria

Dr. Grgic studied English in order to pass exams to receive a license to practice his profession in Ontario. Twice he failed due to a language barrier and so in 1996, he and his daughters returned to Croatia. His wife continued working in the cleaning department of the hospital for one more year so their son could complete his year at HPSS. The eldest daughter Delezer, became a medical doctor and returned to Woodstock at one time to thank those who helped with her family's sponsorship.

1998 The Zekarius Family from Ethiopia

Dawit (brother of Zekarius Habte) Mehret, Mussie, Hanna

Mehret and Dawit own a home in Woodstock. The children have left the city to follow their chosen careers.

2007 Amaniel Temnewu from Ethiopia (brother of Abrhazion Temnewu)

Kidisti and 4 children – Hakim, Amlesom, Germawit, Mazret arrived at a later date from the Sudan. A fifth child, Helen was born 1 year after. They moved to Kitchener but have since separated. Hakim now lives in London in an apartment next door to his grandmother who was sponsored to come to Canada by her daughter Abrhazion Temnewu.

2016 The Mira Family from Syria - This was a group effort of many United Churches in Oxford County

Mohamad, Manal, Maysam, Mayam, Sama

The Mira family is still living in Ingersoll in the home that was initially obtained for them through CMHA (Oxford). Mohamad works as a truck driver. Additional children born in Canada - Salah (2018), Adam (2020), Adib (2022)

2022 Bisrat Yemane from Eritrea

Bisrat obtained refugee status in Khartoum, Sudan and was co-sponsored by the Habte Family (cousin) after his mother was turned down for sponsorship. He is presently living in Guelph with other relatives sponsored the Habte family.

2023 Selam Ghebrehiwet from Eritrea
Sara Hagos Temnewu and sons Fithawi and Naod

Selam, niece of Abrhazion Temnewu arrived in August and her mother Sara Hagos Temnewu (sister of Abrhazion Temnewu), brothers Fithawi and Naod followed one month later. All were co-sponsored by Abrhazion Temnewu and are living in London.