

A Refugee's Story

Story Date: November 2025



My name is Samoel. I am a newcomer to Canada through the refugee resettlement program. On February 13, 2025, after 11 long years as a refugee, I immigrated to Canada as sponsored refugee, through the support of ORAT and my sponsor group, Joy City church.

I was born into a Christian family in a Muslim-majority country of Iran, where my father served as a pastor. In 2006, I moved to Armenia to pursue studies in music—an opportunity not available to me in my home country due to my Christian background. While I was away, my parents were arrested twice for their faith. After their second arrest and year-long imprisonment, they were forced to flee to Turkey and seek asylum. Two months after completing my master's degree in piano performance, I joined them in Turkey, as returning home was no longer safe or possible.

I remained in Turkey as a refugee for many years. During this time, Joy City Church generously offered to sponsor me. They encouraged me to use the waiting period wisely improving my English, learning about Canadian society, and preparing for a new life. Thanks to that preparation, my transition has been smooth. Just three months into living in Canada, I've already obtained my driver's license, opened my bank accounts obtained my health cards, Social Insurance Number and done all my necessary paper works, and found myself a good family doctor and adjusted quickly to daily life.

Based on the initiative I showed during the preparation phase, and with their confidence in my abilities, the church accepted my proposal to launch a piano studio here in the community.

I'm incredibly grateful for their trust and support. My next goal, once the studio is established and running well, is to pursue a PhD in music here in Canada. Thank you to all of you in ORAT and related congregations that care enough to pray and help people like me to move to a place of freedom and safety.