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Winter 2017



Waiting for Sunday to Come: A Refugee Mom's Story

Last year, we had the privilege of meeting dear PCC mom, Besa*. She is a positive, driven and radiant mom-to-be who we have seen come from a Muslim background to finding God's blessing in Christian community. Besa would like to share her story with you-- a story of how God has worked through our First Response churches to provide emotional and spiritual support for a refugee mom alone in a new city.

You stumbled upon the Christie Street Baptist Church community quite unknowingly after moving to Toronto last summer. Tell me about that. "I moved into a shelter that was 5 minutes away from the church. One Sunday morning, I was walking to the farmer's market when I saw it. I really wanted to go in, because I was feeling sad and wanted to feel close to God. There was something about being in a church that made me feel like I was close to Him. I was also feeling so lonely here with no friends and family. I grew up in a Muslim tradition, but always believed in God and prayed to only Him. When I went in to Christie Street, everyone was so friendly and welcoming. I met a lot of the women there the first time I went who all came up to me and gave me a big hug after. I had never experienced that before."

What was your experience there like?

"After the first Sunday of being there, I started to feel amazing every time I left. I started waiting for Sunday to come around because it became my favourite day. When I went there, I felt like I was a part of a big family. It's like God brought me another family. I started to get to know many of the people, and they would invite me to eat with them, and help me run errands. When I was in the hospital

How you can help

1. **PRAY:** Pray for women and couples facing unexpected pregnancies - pray that they would hear the truth and have the courage to choose life.
2. **ACT:** Distribute PCC brochures to churches and youth programs in your neighbourhood. Call 416-229-2607 for more information.
3. **GIVE:** Donate today by mail or online at PCCfriends.ca

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after giving birth to Declan [pictured above], they came to visit us."

When some members of Christie Street Baptist brought you to PCC, what did you find most helpful?

"I really appreciated meeting with other women in the LifeBoat program. The support workers talk with you through questions about preparing for your baby, and about achieving your goals with the baby on the way. It was like we were talking as friends. They got me thinking about questions I've never asked myself before-- questions people don't normally ask you, and that was helpful. I had never experienced something like it. Later on in the year I got to go to the PCC dinner, and that was very moving for me because I saw how the PCC helped other single moms too. I was ready to cry when I heard their stories and how the PCC helped them feel less alone."

Coming from a Muslim faith background, what was different for you when you started meeting Christians?

"It was a big difference. I wasn't very serious about the Muslim faith-- I never went to mosque or anything back home. One example I can think of to explain it is that my Muslim friends in the shelter I was living at started noticing something different about the type of people who were visiting me. Whenever I would come home from church or from being at the PCC, I told my friends at the shelter about the kindness of the people I would see. They would say,

'the people at our mosque don't help us out when we're in need of support. These people are different.' They could start to tell which people were Christians because they are always wanting to help and sacrifice their time. Christians love to serve and sacrifice for one another, and that was the big difference I saw."

How have you seen God answer your prayers between when you first came to Canada and now?

"He's worked in everything. He hears everything, from the beginning until now. I'm thankful to God for everything. I think about all the times I would sit on my bed before sleeping and just pray to Him. He really heard everything. He was with me all the time."

You are now moving to Wings Maternity home. What are you most looking forward to moving into the next chapter of life with you and Declan?

"I'm very excited about moving to Wings. Marion, the director, made me feel so welcome and supported when I first met with her. I am excited to have bible studies during the week with other moms, ESL classes to help my English, and help finding work when I eventually transition out. I will never forget how the people at the PCC helped me get here."

Please pray for Besa and her son Declan in this new chapter of their life. Pray that this new community would be one that sharpens Besa's faith in the Lord, and where she and Declan can make healthy

vide. We will keep you posted on this new development in the next issue.

2) Campus Outreach: This year, we are launching a new Campus Outreach Program to support students who want to make a difference on their campus. Our vision is to help students create a community where a pregnant student can feel supported and loved on campus. Carrying her pregnancy to term does not mean she has to give up her education. If you know a student interested in getting involved, who attends a Toronto campus downtown, please have them contact us.



3) Training More Advocates: From our experience, we know that the first words of response to news of an unexpected pregnancy coming from a parent, friend, co-worker or family member will have a significant impact on the pregnancy outcome. Would you know what to say – or what not to say– if someone you knew shared unexpected pregnancy news? What would your first response be?

Along with our regularly scheduled trainings, we will introduce an online version of this training available for individuals or small groups who are interested in the month of February. Contact us for more information.

God has blessed your support of the work of the Pregnancy Care Centre. Our desire is to keep you updated on how work is progressing in each area. We trust you will be encouraged and join with us to thank God for enabling us to expand our outreach to more families needing pregnancy support.



Linda Baartse

Christmas Impact 2016



On December 12th and 14th, PCC North York and Scarborough hosted the annual Christmas party for PCC moms and families. Families enjoyed a hot meal, music, and conversation with new friends. Thanks to supporters like you, we had the opportunity to give a gift to each of our families. The gifts included things such as hair products, beautifully handknit baby blankets, toiletries, gift cards, diapers, baked goods and more. There were about 70 women who received gifts and who brought along their partners and children for our time of fellowship. We are so thankful for your support, care and generosity towards PCC families. Below are featured some comments from PCC moms from our Christmas gathering-- a reminder of the effect of your support.

"Maybe for you this is a normal thing, but for me, every piece of support you give makes a big difference in my life. I really appreciate the help, time and support you are giving to me this moment." - PCC Mom

"I'm thankful to have had the support of the PCC through my times of uncertainty. My goal for this year is to go back to school and take care of my daughter. Thank you for praying for me." - PCC Mom

First Response Trainings

This winter, we are holding two First Response trainings in downtown Toronto. If you or someone you know is interested in learning how to offer support to women and men who find themselves in an unexpected pregnancy, consider attending either of the following trainings:

1) Saturday January 28th, 10-4pm @ Jarvis & Gerrard

2) Saturday February 25th, 10-4pm @ Spadina & Dundas

A suggested donation of \$5 is kindly requested to help cover the cost of lunch and refreshments. To register, or to receive further information, please contact us at info@pregnancy-carecentre.org or **(416) 229-2607**.

Coming Soon: New Online Training

For those who were not able to attend these Saturday sessions, we are happy to report that we are working on alternative ways for you to participate in the First Response Training! By the end of this month, we will have an online version of this training designed for individuals and small groups. Through our website, you will be able to complete the first part of the training. The second part of the training can be completed by meeting with one of our staff in any of our locations in Toronto, or by having one of our team members meet with your small group. By having additional trained First Responders, we anticipate many more individuals in Toronto will receive life affirming support and not feel that abortion is their only option.

For more information write us at info@pregnancy-carecentre.org or call **(416)-229-2607**.

Campus Outreach



Students on Toronto university campuses deciding between abortion or giving birth often feel alone and need support but don't know where to find help. They may feel isolated, afraid, or too ashamed to speak to someone about their options. Many Christian students on these same campuses who embrace life want to help, but don't know what to say or what to do. For more information about this new initiative, visit our website at pccfriends.ca/campusoutreach.

From Linda's Desk

"Give thanks to the Lord for he is good and his steadfast love endures forever." Psalm 136:1

This year we served **552** individuals. This represents a **35%** increase in clientele above last year. Of these appointments, there were **294** conversations with individuals deciding between having a baby or having an abortion. We were able to offer help and let them know that support was available. We had the joy of sharing the Gospel and the Scriptures with **143** individuals. We were able to see and hold **65** beautiful babies this year – and those are just the ones we know about. Many mothers stay in regular contact with us. Some are now regularly attending churches they were introduced to through PCC volunteers who cared for them during their pregnancy. Some volunteer with us today. We have so many reasons to give God thanks. We ask you to pray for greater opportunities to serve in 2017. We are excited to focus on the following three projects which we believe will help us reach out and care for more women in crisis pregnancies:

1) Opening a Permanent Downtown Office: Over the past few years, we have offered downtown appointments two evenings a week and on Saturday mornings. We've seen a growing number of clients in the downtown area, however, we have not been able to offer daytime appointments during the week, nor have we been able to offer the complete range of services that a permanent office could pro-

2016 Stats Report

This year, we served 552 new individuals in unexpected pregnancies, we tended to over 1,124 appointments, and we experienced a 35% increase, over last year, in new clientele. **All of this was possible because of your generous support, and for that we sincerely thank you.**

552

new individuals served

65

known births

694

phone calls

1,124

appointments

143

heard scriptures and the Gospel

294

conversations with people deciding between a baby and an abortion

96

prenatal sessions

122

connections made

671

material needs met

130

parenting support sessions

35%

new clients



Pregnancy Care Centre

You are not alone