

Syrian Asylum Seeker Shares Experience in Interview

Former Syrian airline pilot Adel Jaber, interviewed by Pastor Darryl Kistler, shared the story of his family's escape to the US from deteriorating conditions in Syria. He extolled the virtues of his beloved Damascus, counting among its beauties a well-developed tolerance for diverse cultures and religions, noting that Damascus had over 150 faith traditions. But that sense of beauty and tolerance came to an end, in 2011 and was replaced by growing fears when the Syrian revolution was sparked by the deaths of children and their parents after minor protests. Adel, who flew Boeing 737s and 747s for Syrian Airlines, came under increasing pressure for having declined to join the ruling Ba'ath Party and, as conditions worsened, was repeatedly arrested, his friends and colleagues summarily executed. His house burned down by military agents and bank accounts seized, Adel left Syria on a pilot's visa and brought his family to San Diego

Things have been tough. Adel and his family have lost everything but they have regrouped. Adel says his sense of safety has been restored by living in the US and his sense of hope restored by friends of the church and the support of the congregation. He's worked in a restaurant and taken odd jobs recently but can't apply for permanent jobs until he receives a work visa. Adel's wife, Nibras, an artisan jewelry maker has brought her craft and her jewelry to San Diego too.

The church has offered support to Adel, Nibras and their boys with donations of household goods, as well as with a special offering taken in worship. We are continuing to explore ways to support the family in their transition.

-Brock Allen

