

Crossing the



...a journey toward Justice

A Service of Worship –
with reflections and resources on Immigration
Hudson River Presbytery
January 27, 2009

GATHERING IN GOD'S GRACE

GATHERING CONVERSATION

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Life! Life! Who wants Life?
All: We journey together to God's Kingdom,

We are wanderers on the way to abundant Life.

One: Hope! Hope! Who wants hope?

All: We seek bread for the journey, and the promise of a
new day for all God's children.

One: Justice! Justice! Who wants justice?

All: We hear your voice crying in the streets.

Gather us now, O God.

Open us to your presence and your people.

SONG

"Bread for the Journey"

(Bret Hesla—
USA)

Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.

Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.

When our legs are getting heavy, and we're hanging down our heads,

Give us bread for the journey, give us bread.

Make us one with each other, make us one.

Make us one with each other, make us one.

All the walls we've built around us, may we learn to tear them down.

Make us one with each other, make us one.

SCRIPTURE

Psalms 137: 1-6

TESTIMONY

Members of the Youth Arts Group

THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY

Immigrants are responsible for \$229 billion in economic output in New York State – 22.4% of the NY State Gross Domestic Product.

Immigrants make up 21% of the population in New York – 37% in New York City, and 18% in the Downstate Suburbs.

Your congregation can host a Rural and Migrant Ministry Sunday – joining with RMM to celebrate diversity and work together toward dignity and opportunity for all. Visit www.ruralmigrantministry.org, or contact Rev. Richard Witt.

PRAYER

(Sara M. De Hall—A hymn from Argentina)

One: Si fui motivo de dolor, oh Dios; si
por mi causa el débil tropezó; si en tus
caminos yo no quise andar, ¡perdón,
oh Dios!

All: If we have been the source of pain, O God;
if to the weak we have refused our strength; if,
in rebellion, we have strayed away.
Forgive us, O God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

(from a prayer by Rev. Enock De Assis)

One: Guiding God, our journey through life is long and hard.
All: We cannot make this trip
alone; we must walk together on the
journey.
One: You promised to send us a helper, your Spirit.
All: Help us to see your Spirit in those you send to journey with us.
One: In the refugee family, seeking safety from violence,
All: Forgive us when we fail to see your Spirit. Open our eyes. One:
In the migrant worker, bringing food to our tables,
All: Forgive us when we fail to see your Spirit. Open our eyes. One:
In the asylum-seeker, seeking justice for himself and his family,
All: Forgive us when we fail to see your Spirit. Open our eyes.
One: When we fail to open doors to your people, when we participate in systems of injustice
All: Have mercy on us.
One: Teach us to recognize that as we walk with each other, you are present.
Teach us to welcome not only the strangers in our midst but the gifts they bring as well:
the invitation to conversion, communion, and solidarity.
All: This is the help you have sent: we are not alone.
We are together on the journey, and for this we give you thanks.

SONG #2277

“Lord, have mercy”

(Singapore)

Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Lord, have mercy on us.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

One: God has crossed the borders. Grace, that gift most foreign, is alive and well among us.
All: Love breaks through hatred; Hope breaks through despair; Life breaks through death.
In Christ we are set free.

RESPONSE TO GRACE 2026

(Trinidad and Tobago)

Halle, Halle, Halleluja! Halle, Halle, Halleluja!
Halle, Halle, Halleluja! Halleluja! Halleluja!

LISTENING FOR GOD’S LIVING WORD AMONG US

SCRIPTURE

Psalm 32:8

TESTIMONY

Words from Alice Otino-Pala

THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY

In the downstate suburbs, more immigrants work as registered nurses than any other occupation. In upstate New York, immigrants make up 20% of all professors, four times their share of the overall population. In health care, immigrants make up 35% of physicians and surgeons. These studies do not include immigrant farmworkers, who are estimated to make up 80% of the seasonal workers who gather our crops.

Fully one third (34%) of all children growing up in New York State are part of an immigrant family.

Your congregation can support immigrant workers rights through organizations such as the LaborReligion Coalition of New York State. Visit www.labor-religion.org for more information.

PRAYER

One: If we have spoken words of cruelty;
if we have left some suffering unrelieved;
ALL: condemn not our insensitivity;
forgive us, O God.

SONG

“Bread for the Journey”
Light our way as we travel, light our way.
Light our way as we travel, light our way.
With so many roads before us, where to go is hard to say.
Light our way as we travel, light our way.

SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1:16-17

TESTIMONY

Rick Ufford-Chase

THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY

Since the implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) over 5,000 men, women, and children have lost their lives trying to cross the U.S./Mexico border without documents.

The average “take-home” pay for the approximately 1.2 million Mexicans working in U.S. factories in Mexico is US\$60 per week. In Mexico, a gallon of milk is US\$4.50 (three hours work), three dozen diapers is US\$7.00 (5 hours work), and 50 gallons of non-potable water is US\$2.00 (1 ½ hours work.)

Purchasing Fair-Trade coffee for yourself and your congregation is a simple way to begin supporting fair wages for workers. Working with a Presbyterian border ministry, Frontera de Cristo, \$20,000 began a project that has lifted a community in Mexico from despair and given them hope and opportunity in their homeland. Visit www.justcoffee.org for their story, and their coffee.

PRAYER

One: Si por la vida quise andar en paz,
tranquilo, libre y sin luchar por ti
cuando anhelabas verme en la lid,
¡perdón, oh Dios!

All: If we've insisted on a peaceful life,
Far from the struggles that the gospel brings,
When you prefer to guide us toward the strife,
forgive us, O God.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S LOVE AND CALL

OFFERING

Today's offering will support the ongoing work of the Rural and Migrant Ministry, a covenant partner with Hudson River Presbytery, in striving for justice for all God's people.

SONG # 400 "Pues Si Vivimos When We Are Living" (Mexico)

SCRIPTURE Psalm 89:13-18

TESTIMONY Martha Louise Harkness

THOUGHTS FOR THE JOURNEY

Undocumented immigrants are estimated to comprise 29% of all immigrants in the United States and 4% of the total population.

A Congregational Handbook, entitled "For You Were Once a Stranger: Immigration in the U.S. through the Lens of Faith" is freely available online through the New Sanctuary Movement - visit www.newsanctuarymovement.org/resources.htm. (A link will be provided at www.hudrivpres.org.) Other resource materials are in development through the Office of Immigration Issues of our own PCUSA - visit www.pcusa.org/immigration.

You can make a difference. Join with RMM as a Justice for Farmworkers Advocate, where you'll get more acquainted with issues through an informational packet, contact NY legislators as ask them to pass legislation that would provide equal rights to farmworkers, help oppose deportation raids, and more.

PRAYER

One: Recieve, O God, our ardent words of prayer,
and free us from temptation's subtle snare,

All: With tender patience, lead us to your are.
Amen. Amen.

WE CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF GOD'S GRACE

PREPARATION SONG #2232

"O-so-so"

(Korea)

Come now, O Prince of Peace, make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

PREPARATION FOR THE FEAST

(Itzel Fernandez, 2006-Youth Arts Group)

Looking out my window, 65 degrees, leaves falling down, winters almost here, it's
running through my mind
Hungry and bit cold, I search the kitchen for a bite to eat
In the deep under woods of my refrigerator, I see but a shiny red luminosity
Curious and eager for a little meal
I reach in and pull it out
It's an apple
Looking fresh, at its best
Ready to be eaten

Sitting back in my room
Singing along to the lyrics of Bon Jovi
While taking small bites at every chance I get
Then, with a sudden remark
I think about the life of the apple
Almost as if retracing its soul
Thinking about the journey it must have been through
before it came to me
The seed it once was,
The tree it once grew,
The branch it once hanged on, The
leaf it once left.
And then
I think more clearly
Of course, it could not get to me without a little help Or
more should I say?
Because, you see
The apple cannot talk, it cannot see, it cannot walk
So under its luscious cherry -looking skin are the
marks of small, brown fingers Crescents of dirt
under unkept nails
Working from dawn till dusk
For money worth less than dimes
Who work in a place where nobody knows who Bon
Jovi is or Marilyn Monroe.
It was grown in a place, where people work hard
Break their backs,
Expose their lives to pesticides.
Sometimes get treated badly for the supposed crime they hide.
Working hard.
Is that a crime?
The apple was picked from its branch to
a bin
To the bag, to the truck, to the store, to my hands.

And now, as I lay still, thinking about it.
I smile because I know that if I join the farmworkers
I'll make a difference in my life and the one of others.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE
PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Susan Andrews

- Leader 1: The Lord, who is everywhere, is here.
People: God's Spirit moves within us.
- Leader 2: God calls us to transcend the borders of this world.
People: We lift our hearts to heaven.
- Leader 3: Let us give thanks to the One who unites us.
People: To the One who makes us one, we give thanks.
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- Leader 1: You are the source of all life and goodness, faithful
God. You have created all things from the beginning
– forming a world without borders, where sand and
sea and sky dance together in the cycle of life.
We draw lines where you made
none. In your grace, forgive us,
and draw us together that we
may be one.
One with each other, one with you, one with the eternal choir
we sing:
- People: Holy are you, O God, make us one body,
(singing) Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.
-
- Leader 2: In the fullness of time, you immigrated from the comforts of
heaven to the cruelty of this world.
In Jesus, you broke every boundary –
healing the sick, binding up the
brokenhearted, eating with outcasts,
speaking truth to power, speaking
peace into every storm.
In the Risen Christ, you shattered the bonds of death's
captivity, and stormed the very gates of hell.
Your Love knows no bounds.
- People: Come now, O God of Love, make us one body.
(singing) Come, Risen Jesus, reconcile your people.
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- Leader 3: Embracing, Inviting God,
Your love draws us to this table.
Pour out your Spirit upon this community of faith,
and upon these gifts prepared for us.
Bless the hands that worked the fields and worked the dough.

Bless all hearts that now receive, that we may go on to give. Holy One, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

People: Come, Hope of unity, make us one body.
(singing) Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

Leader 1: As we gather at this table – we do not stand here alone.
As we celebrate this foretaste of the Resurrection Feast,
We give thanks for all those who have prepared the way.

Leader 2: For those who have tilled the soil,
Leader 3: and those who have told the story.

Leader 2: For those who crossed the borders,
Leader 3: and those who crossed their t's and dotted their i's.

Leader 2: For elders who paved the way to a new world,
Leader 3: and Elders who paved the sidewalk.

Leader 2: For all those whose work brought us food,
Leader 3: and those whose work fed the hungry.

Leader 3: As we remember that great communion of saints who join us at this feast,
We recall those Elders who crossed the border into the Church Triumphant in 2008.
As you hear the name of sisters or brothers in your congregation, you are invited to stand, and remain standing.

- The names of those remembered in the Necrology report are read aloud. -

Leader 3: In Christ we are all made one, therefore let us all stand together, one family in memory and hope, as that great cloud of witnesses gathers round us.

And let us pray together that prayer handed from down from generation to generation – crossing time and space with the words Jesus taught us.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

We share this prayer together in whatever language we are most comfortable.

SHARING IN THE STORY

Breaking of the bread

Richard: This bread was grown and gathered and ground,
mixed and kneaded, baked, bagged and bought to be broken.

ALL: In the hands that bake and the hands that break, we recognize the Risen One.

Pouring of the cup

Richard: The grape, like the apple, was picked from its branch,
to a bin, to a vat, to the bottle, to the truck, to the
store, to our hands.

ALL: In the hands that pick and the hands that pour, we celebrate the grace of Christ.

SHARING IN THE FEAST

Communion will be served by intinction, as we share the bread and the cup amongst us. Please remain in your seats, as baskets of bread will be passed down each pew, followed by the cup. As you share the gifts with your neighbors, be welcome to offer words of celebration, "The Bread of Life" and "The Cup of Salvation."

We will share together until all are served.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WE PREPARE OUR HEARTS TO GO FORTH IN SERVICE

SCRIPTURE

TESTIMONY Jed Koball

COMMISSIONING

One: We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ,

All: A sign of what God intends for all humankind.

One: The gifts Christ gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets,

All: Some evangelists, some pastors, and teachers,

To equip the saints for the work of ministry,

And for building up the body of Christ.

To Jed Koball:

The grace bestowed on you in baptism is sufficient for your calling, because it is God's grace. In that grace, God has crossed every border to be with us. This is the same God that has called you to a particular service beyond the boundaries. The God of all the nations will be with you wherever you go.

As you step out in this new journey, will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying God's Word and Sharing God's Love? I will, with God's help.

Do you welcome the responsibility of this service because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus, to love neighbors, and to work for the reconciling of the world? I do.

Will you serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit? I will, with God's help.

To the Presbytery:

Do you commit yourselves to support Jed, and all our companions in ministry, with prayer and with necessary resources, so that they may witness to God's reign in the world among all people and nations?

As God's people, we commit ourselves to support our companions in mission with prayer, encouragement, and resources, so that Christ's reign of peace, justice, and love will be known in all our communities and throughout the world.

We proclaim our oneness in Christ. We promise to promote the unity of the body of Christ and to build up God's church in love.

COMMISSIONING SONG "Bread for the Journey"

Send us out as your servants, send us out.

Send us out as your servants, send us out.

May we live in hope for justice, and in mercy have no doubt.

Send us out as your servants, send us out.

Lead us home to the garden, lead us home.

Lead us home to the garden, lead us home.

Where we'll live with all creation, find our place and never roam.

Lead us home to the garden, lead us home.

BENEDICTION

One: Hope! Hope! Who wants Hope?

All: We have bread for the journey to share, and the promise of a new day for all God's children.

One: Life! Life! Who wants Life?

All: We journey together to God's Kingdom,
We are wanderers on the way to abundant Life.

One: Justice! Justice! Who wants Justice?

All: We hear your voice crying in the streets.

Send us now, O God.

Open us to your presence and your people.

SONG "We Will Walk With God"

BLESSING OF THE MEAL

PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE INCLUDE:

Members of the Youth Arts Group - Rural and Migrant Ministry's Youth Arts Group (YAG) is a culturally diverse group in which high school-age individuals come together with a determination to create change in our lives and communities. As members of YAG, we are committed to educating and empowering ourselves and others, developing and practicing our leadership skills, while acting as allies to each other and to those seeking social justice. Through engagement in creative action, we are dedicated to the task of influencing other youth to join in our mission to create political, economic, and social changes.

Elder Alice Otino-Pala - White Plains Presbyterian Church

Elder Rick Ufford-Chase - Co-Director, Stony Point Conference Center, and Co-Founder of BorderLinks
Rev. Martha Louise Harkness - Member-at-Large

Rev. Susan Andrews - General Presbyter

Rev. Richard Witt - Executive Director, Rural Migrant Ministry

Elder Harriet Sandmeier, CLP - Stated Clerk

Rev. Jed Koball - Former Associate Pastor, Larchmont Avenue Presbyterian Church, commissioned to service with the
Joining Hands program - Peru.

Rev. Chip Low - Moderator, Hudson River Presbytery

Paul Vasile, MM - Minister of Music at the Park Avenue Christian Church in Manhattan. (Paul was recently Minister of Music at the Trinity Presbyterian Church in St. Louis - and has been a frequent music/workshop leader at conferences and events around the country. His first published composition, "Let All the World in Every Corner Sing," for children's choir, is distributed by Morningstar Music. Visit www.paulvasile.com for more information on this gifted guest.)