

Welcoming the Stranger:

A Look at Biblical Hospitality



Worship Resources for the Creative Church

Hunger Emphasis 2015

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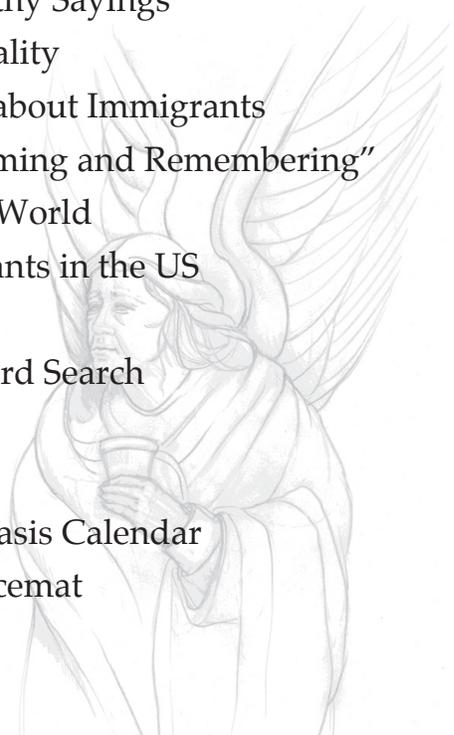
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Seeds of Hope, Inc., is a private, independent group of believers responding to a

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common burden for the poor and hungry of God's world, and acting on the strong belief that biblical mandates to feed the poor were not intended to be optional. For 23 years, the group has sought out people of faith who feel called to care for the poor; and to affirm, enable and empower a variety of responses to the problems of hunger and poverty.

Editorial Address

The Seeds of Hope ministry is housed by the community of faith at Seventh and James Baptist Church. The mailing address is: 602 James; Waco, TX 76706; Phone: 254/755-7745; Fax: 254/753-1909; E-mail: seedseditor1@gmail.com. Web

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A Word about This Packet

For this Hunger Emphasis packet, we chose the theme “Welcoming the Stranger,” to partner with the most recent issue of *Hunger News & Hope*, which was a special issue about immigration. However, as Grayson Wolf points out in the theme interpretation that begins on page 4, the stranger comes in many guises. (Grayson was our summer 2015 intern, and he continues to write for us.)

Throughout this packet, we have tried to hit upon a number of these guises of strangers, including a number of resources having to do with immigrants.

We included in these pages a liturgy written by Malkhaz Songulashvili, a Baptist bishop in the Republic of Georgia. We are grateful to Bishop Songulashvili for his generosity in allowing us to share it with you.

As always, we have had input from Deborah Harris—our longtime brainstormer, lyricist and copy editor—from the beginning of the process to the end. You will see several pieces here that she wrote especially for this packet.

We are grateful to Erin Conaway for allowing us to print his sermons, and we are grateful for his creative spirit and his unflagging support of the Seeds ministry, which is housed by Seventh & James Baptist Church, the church he pastors.

We have included a list of common myths about immigrants from the Office of Social Justice and the Office of Race Relations of the Christian Reformed Church. You will also find, along with the usual hunger statistics, some facts about immigrants in the US, a citizenship quiz and an immigration word search, created by our fall 2015 intern, Karoline DaVee.

We have sprinkled the packet with art from several of our longtime Seeds artists. The cover art and two new pieces are the work of Jesse Manning, a budding young artist whom we discovered a couple of years ago in the youth department at Seventh & James.

We continue to be profoundly grateful for all of the people who are so generous with their time and creative gifts, and who think of us when they have written worship

materials or conceived of innovative ideas for worship themes.

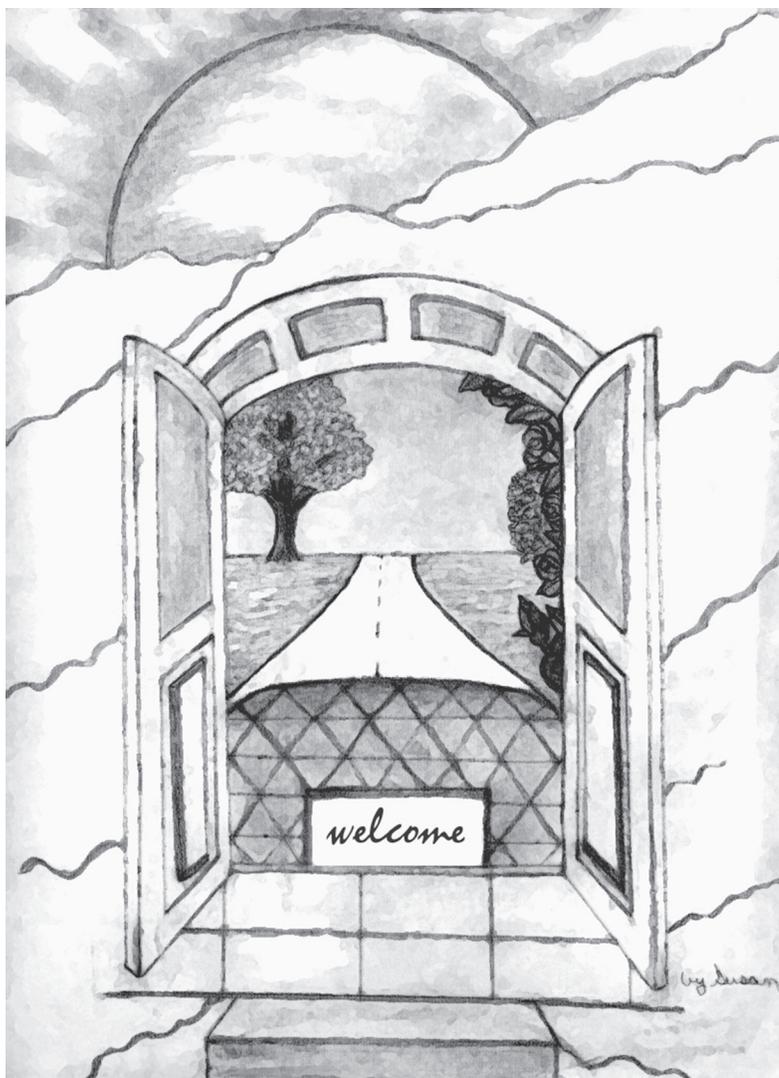
We are also deeply grateful for all of you who subscribe to *Sacred Seasons*, and who make use of these gifts in your worship and work.

As always, we want you to feel free to play around with these liturgies and services, and adapt them to your congregation’s needs and resources. If you come up with something creative and different, we would love to hear about it.

The contents of this packet are your congregation’s to use freely and share with others as the need arises. We really do pray that our materials, and this packet in particular, will help you and your congregation as we learn together to welcome the stranger.

—Gratefully,

The Seeds Staff and Council of Stewards



art by Susan Smith

Welcoming the Stranger: Biblical Hospitality: A Theme Interpretation

by Grayson Wolf

Text: Genesis 18 -19

This issue of *Sacred Seasons* focuses on “Welcoming the Stranger” in order to help Christians fully and faithfully interact with the people around them. What is the Christian’s duty to the immigrant, to the minority, to the societal outcast?

It is tempting make a list of requirements to fulfill and then forget, but Christian discipleship is not about fulfilling obligations. Christians are called to think and act a certain way. Turning to Genesis 18 and 19 provides insight into what that looks like as it pertains to welcoming the stranger.

Genesis 18 and 19, scholastically regarded as a single literary unit, is an excellent example of God’s punishing the wicked and rewarding the righteous. Three angels appeared as men to Abraham to inform him that Sarah would one day give birth to a son.

Not yet knowing why they came, Abraham insisted they be given respite from their travels. He ordered a calf be slaughtered and fresh cakes to be made for his strange visitors.

Having prepared a meal for his guests, “he stood by them under the tree while they ate” (Gen. 18:8). Once attended to, the angels delivered their message to Abraham and left to pronounce judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah.

Their reception in Sodom was significantly less hospitable than at Abraham’s tent. Lot, Abraham’s

nephew and a resident of Sodom, took them into his house, showing similar hospitality to that of Abraham.

However, a mob demanded the visitors be relinquished so that they might violate them. Lot did not permit this to happen, so he and his family were spared destruction.

Topically, these chapters are concerned with righteousness and punishment. Thus, Abraham and Lot are rewarded by God while the wicked are destroyed.

This familiar tale teaches that inhospitality is a characteristic of wickedness. Conversely, hospitality is a

The familiar tale of Sodom and Gomorrah teaches that inhospitality is a characteristic of wickedness.

prerequisite to be deemed righteous. Ezekiel 16:49 says, “Now this was the sin of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters were arrogant, overfed and unconcerned; they did not help the poor and needy.” This verse condemns the people of Sodom and Gomorrah for failing to love one another.

An exhaustive survey by Dr. J. A. Loader determined that Jewish thought and subsequent scripture in both testaments ascribed the patterns of wickedness found in the Sodom and Gomorrah tradition to those cities’ lack of hospitality.

In the Patristic Age, the Sodom-and-Gomorrah tradition began emphasizing other elements of Genesis 18 and 19, such as its Christological and evangelical implications, sometimes at the expense of the hospitality narrative. However, welcoming the stranger did not and ought not completely disappear from tradition.

Understanding hospitality is crucial to understanding the contrast of righteousness and wickedness, in that it frames them as states of being rather than titles dependent upon specific actions. There is a distinct difference between the acts of the righteous and the unrighteous, but the meaningful distinction between these two groups lies in paradigms.

Righteous acts aren’t acts that simply meet a checklist of proper action; they must originate within a righteous

art by Jesse Manning



person. This notion is holistic, in that a righteous person must both think and act righteously. A Fourth-Century, Pseudo-Tertullian¹ dramatization of Sodom and Gomorrah declares:

*Gone are the men of Sodom; gone the glare
Of their unhallowed ramparts; all the house
Inhospitable, with its lords, is gone (...)
Such Sodom's and Gomorrah's penalties,*

*To “welcome the stranger” is to
embrace a mentality of care that
puts another’s welfare above your
own convenience.*

*For ages sealed as signs before the eyes
Of unjust nations, whose obdurate hearts
God’s fear have quite forsaken, will them teach
To reverence heaven-sanctioned rights and lift
Their gaze unto one only Lord of all.*

In this excerpt, the connection between hospitality and the condition of one’s heart is explicit. Discipleship demands more than acting properly; one’s entire being must take part. In Genesis 18:5, Abraham entreated the travelers to find rest in his camp “since you have come to your servant.”

In his acts, Abraham showed servitude to the point that he, a patriarch, stood humbly by in attendance as his guests ate. To “welcome the stranger” is to embrace a mentality of care that puts another’s welfare above your own convenience.

Genesis 18 and 19 is a critical passage in the Bible for establishing Christian tradition on welcoming the stranger, a tradition that emphasizes a heart of service. Miriam Schulman and Amal Barkouki-Winter of Santa Clara University note that the Sodom and Gomorrah tradition is prominently featured in hospitality teachings of the Abrahamic religions because it shows that Abraham, a righteous man, has attended to the needs of the stranger at his own expense with no reason to expect recompense.

Consequently, hospitality became a hallmark of the righteous person:

Indeed, hospitality to the stranger is equated with welcoming God. In the book of Matthew, Christ separates the nations into the cursed, who refused him food and drink, and the blessed, who received him. When the blessed ask, “And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?” he answers, “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me” (Matthew 25:40)

Acts of hospitality and righteousness in general necessarily must be relative to one’s circumstances. In *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*, Dr. Hugh C. White asserts that the rhetorical purpose of God’s dialogue

with Abraham in Genesis 18 is to mitigate the human tendency to apply inflexible characteristics to God. God’s divine justice can’t be contained by limitations of human language. Therefore, the path to righteousness is not a normative procedure but rather a reorientation of being.

Welcoming the stranger is an interpersonal and intimately compassionate response to encountering others, and the definition of *stranger* is broader than one may typically think. Clement of Alexandria once asserted that “stranger” is an all-inclusive term, claiming, “guests are strangers; and friends are guests; and brethren are friends.”

The foreigner is certainly a stranger, but so is the receptionist at the office. The new student is a stranger to her classmates, but not any more so than the boy who sits by himself at lunch. The Sunday-school teacher is just as much a stranger to the congregation as the first-time visitor. No matter what their social contexts are, Christians are surrounded by strangers.

Interacting with a world full of strangers requires a certain frame of mind: perpetual humility. The righteous person shows respect to all he or she meets. Moreover, righteous people will consider the good of those around them on par with their own pursuit of good.

There is no option allowing one to ignore the necessity of welcoming the stranger. Abraham did not agree with God’s plan to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, but he did not waylay the Lord’s angels.

Sometimes society disdains the stranger: the poor, the hungry, the soldier, the imprisoned, the scoundrel, the stripper, the transgender person, the Christian, the drunkard, the Muslim, the policeman, the addict, the judge, the sinner. All are strangers, and God has a plan for all. The Christian vocation is to actively and uniquely love each of these individuals not based on their merits but solely on their status as God’s creation.

—Grayson Wolf is a religion and English major at Baylor University. A native of Waco, TX, he was a Seeds of Hope intern during the summer of 2015.

Endnote

1. Pseudo-Tertullian is the name that scholars attach to the unknown author of an appendix to the work of Tertullian, a third-century Christian writer from Carthage who is considered one of the major Church Fathers.

Sources

1. Miriam Schulman and Amal Barkouki-Winter, “The Extra Mile,” *Issues in Ethics*, Vol 11 No 1, Winter 2000, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA.
2. J.A. Loader, *A Tale of Two Cities, Sodom and Gomorrah in the Old Testament, Early Jewish and Early Christian Traditions*, Leuven/Louvain, Belgium: Peeters Publishers, 1990.
3. Hugh C. White, *Narrative and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.
4. Robert Ignatius Letellier, *Day in Mamre, Night in Sodom: Abraham and Lot in Genesis 18 and 19*, Biblical Interpretation Series, 1995

A Communion Liturgy

by Bishop Malkhaz Songulashvili

Editor's note: Malkhaz Songulashvili is a bishop in the Evangelical Baptist Church of Georgia and senior pastor of the Peace Cathedral in Tbilisi in the former Soviet republic. He is also a lay Franciscan.

Bishop Malkhaz says he wrote the following liturgy with inspiration from John Chrysostom, Shota Rustaveli, Mawlana Jalaluddin Rumi and Donald Rives.

Before the service, the table is laid with five cups or chalices with wine, five loaves of bread and two large, cooked fish. During the service of this liturgy that I attended, Bishop Malkhaz taught the congregation to sing a beautiful version of the "Kyrie Eleison." When the time came in the service for the "Kyrie," the congregation responded chorally.

Five ministers, representing different denominations, led the service. The words of the celebrant below were distributed among the five, so that each minister raised a cup or a loaf. The words and actions of the deacon and sub-deacon were also done by the ministers in turn.

After the service, the congregation came up to the altar table and shared bread and fish while they visited with one another.

Invocation

CELEBRANT (*dispensing incense*): God of compassion and mercy, God of beauty and love, show yourself to the faithful who call upon your name. Accept from my sinful hands this frankincense as you have accepted prayers and supplications from all your children, from generation to generation.

As this incense is rising before you and fills up this room with sweet smell, so fill our hearts, minds and souls with the fragrance of the knowledge of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Confession

CELEBRANT: Almighty God, we confess before you all the sins we have committed by thoughts, words and deeds. We confess that we have failed to love you the way you love us. We have failed to love both neighbors and enemies the way your children should love.

Forgive us the sins that everybody sees.
Forgive us the sins that nobody sees apart from us.
Forgive us sins that only you can see.

DEACON: Amen.

Absolution

CELEBRANT: May the Almighty God, who pardons all who truly repent, pardon and deliver you from all your sins and guilt.

DEACON: Amen.

Liturgy of the Word

Eucharistic Prayer

CELEBRANT: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

CONGREGATION: And with your Spirit.

CELEBRANT: Let us lift our hearts.

CONGREGATION: We lift them to the Lord

CELEBRANT: Let us give thanks to our Lord.

CONGREGATION: It is right indeed to worship Creator, Christ and Holy Spirit: the Most High Trinity, one in Essence and undivided.



CELEBRANT: It is right to sing hymns to you, who created the firmament by Your power and might, who caused your creatures to breathe with a spirit from on high, who made earth with its myriad forms and assigned it to us humans for our dwelling.

CELEBRANT: O God, you who are One, you who give shape to all things, be our defender. Shield us, grant us the power to vanquish evil, to cherish love's desire until death, and lighten for us our load of sins in the final hour.

You, who are the light that shines in the darkness,
You who are the Spirit of comfort,

We give thanks to you for this liturgy, which we offer you from our hearts and minds. Therefore, with thousands of angels, the cherubim and seraphim and all the company of heaven, we are singing, crying and shouting the triumphal and celestial hymn and saying:

CONGREGATION: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

CELEBRANT: O Lord, we cry aloud and say: Holy, are you, our God, and holy and magnificent is your glory. You so loved your world, as to give your only begotten Son that all who believe in him should not perish but have eternal life.

In the night in which Christ was betrayed for the life of the world, he took bread in his holy, pure and blameless hands and, when he gave thanks and sanctified and broke it, he gave it to his disciples and apostles, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for, you, for the remission of sins."

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CELEBRANT: In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup, saying: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins."

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CELEBRANT: Remembering, therefore, this commandment of yours, and all those things that have come to pass for our sake—the cross, the tomb, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand—and for the second coming, Lord, we give you thanks.

CONGREGATION: We sing to you, we bless you; we give you thanks, O Lord. We pray to you, our God.

CELEBRANT: We ask you, we pray and we implore you: send down your Holy Spirit upon us and these gifts to be for us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

Blessing of the Bread

CELEBRANT: The body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken for us.

(The first loaf is raised.) We break this bread for those who love God, for those who follow the path of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism or any other faith traditions, so that one day we may be as one.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The second loaf is raised.) We break this bread for our green earth, destroyed forests, fields and flowers, contaminated waters and air, that one day God's creation will be restored.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The third loaf is raised.) We break this bread for those who have no bread, the starving, the undernourished, that one day all people will have enough to eat.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The fourth loaf is raised.) We break this bread for those who have no home, the homeless, refugees and strangers, that one day this planet may be a home for everyone.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The fifth loaf is raised.) We break this bread for the broken hearts of ourselves, the wounded child in all of us, for our broken relationships, that one day we may glimpse the wholeness that is of Christ.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

Blessing of the Cup

CELEBRANT: The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed for us.

(The first cup is raised.) We raise this cup for the depressed, for the hopeless, and those who are tormented by fear and guilt, that one day they find comfort in Christ.

DEACON: Amen.

SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)

CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The second cup is raised.) We raise this cup for those who are forgotten, those whose hearts are broken and for those nobody prays for, so that one day they find happiness in Christ.

DEACON: Amen.
SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)
CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The third cup is raised.) We raise this cup for the persecuted, prisoners of conscience and faith, for all the marginalized minorities, so that one day God will comfort the persecuted and turn the hearts of stone from the persecutors and give them human hearts.

DEACON: Amen.
SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)
CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The fourth cup is raised.) We raise this cup for those who are forced to leave their homes and flee to different lands where they will be strangers, that all people will be welcomed and loved in all lands.

DEACON: Amen.
SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)
CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

(The fifth cup is raised.) We raise this cup for the suffering caused by wars and bloodshed, that one day those who suffer will celebrate peace and justice.

DEACON: Amen.
SUB-DEACON: (Rings bell)
CHOIR OR CONGREGATION: "Kyrie Eleison"

CELEBRANT: As we celebrate this Holy Communion, we remember those who have gone to their peace in faith.

Invitation to the Table

CELEBRANT: We thank you, O Lord, for counting us worthy to call upon you, the God of Heaven and Earth, and say:

CONGREGATION: Eternal Spirit,
Earth-Maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver
Source of all that is and all that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God who is in heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by people
of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our
hope and come on earth.

With bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

CELEBRANT: For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. May it be so. Amen.

CONGREGATION: Amen.

CELEBRANT: With reverence to God, with faith and with love to our neighbors, draw near and receive this bread and wine as disciples of Christ, remembering that the body of our Lord was broken for us, and the blood of our Lord was shed for us on Calvary.

Come, Come, whoever you are, wonderer, worshipper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter.

Ours is not a caravan of despair. Come, even if you have broken your vow a thousand times. Come, yet again, come, come to the Lord.

Distribution of the Elements

CELEBRANT: We thank you O Lord, who loves humankind, for counting us worthy to participate in your Holy Communion. Bless and protect us, for we are cleansed in you and to you we worship you.

DEACON: Amen!

CELEBRANT: Lord, bless all those who have been created in your image and likeness. Bless your faithful and the worshippers who love your beauty. Do not forget those who trust in you.

DEACON: Grant your peace to the entire world and its inhabitants—the orphans and widows, the poor and sick, the hungry and thirsty, prisoners and refugees, the side-lined and shelterless, the stranger. For all good and perfect gifts come from you, God of Light. We praise and worship you.

CONGREGATION: Amen!

Benediction

DEACON: May God guide us through our lives and help us to live into this liturgy.

CELEBRANT: The Lord bless you and keep you. May God's face shine upon you and be gracious to you. May God's countenance be upon you. May God give you peace. Go to serve God and your fellow human beings.

Note: We recommend these two choices for the "Kyrie":

(1) "Kyrie," Music: Russian Orthodox, Arranged by John L. Bell; copyright 1990 Iona Community, GIA Publications, Inc.; (2) "Penitential Act," Music: David Hass, Mass for a New World; copyright 2000, GIA Publications, Inc. ■



art by Jesse Manning

Home Is Where God's Heart Is

(Tune: HYMN TO JOY)

Words: Deborah E. Harris, 2015

Music: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824
arr. by Edward Hodges, 1864

1. Home is where God's heart is, ho - ly grace em - bra - cing us;
2. Home is where God's heart is, re - fuge from hos - til - i - ty;

Home is where God's heart is, dwel-ling place of truth and trust.
Home is where God's heart is, shar - ing hos - pi - tal - i - ty.

Fam' - ly born of peace and mer - cy, grate - ful chil - dren all are we;
Break-ing bread as sis - ters and broth - ers, wel - com-ing neigh - bors found in need;

Home is where God's heart is - all are wel - come, all are free!
Home is where God's heart is - hope our mis - sion, love our creed!

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I Want to See Again...

A Sermon by Erin Conaway

Mark 10:46-52

I wonder when he realized he was going blind. Did it happen gradually and one day he realized he had to stand by the window all of the time in order to do anything with his hands? Did he start complaining to anyone who would listen about how dark things were getting in people's homes and how you can't see what you're eating anymore?

Or did he wake up one morning and realize things that were clear are now fuzzy and the world through his eyes was beginning to lose distance and depth? The mountains disappeared in the background, the storms snuck up on him—he just didn't see them coming anymore?

That moment when you realize you are blind...that is a crucially important moment, isn't it? And as obvious as it seems like it would be—that kind of self-awareness, the realization that we are blind or are going blind—it often eludes us.

At some point, whether it was a long good-bye to his sight or it happened in a heartless instant, it became obvious to this man and to those around him that he could no longer see and therefore was no longer any use to society. Well, he was still a person, but they treated him more like a pet. Instead of taking care of him within their family and their village, they would lead him to this choice spot on the way out of town towards Jerusalem.

Jericho is the town where you go when you have to go around Samaria on your way to Jerusalem. So, by placing him by the road out of town on the Jerusalem side, he is perfectly positioned to interact with those who are on their way to the Temple to worship, or those who are returning from their time at the Temple.

And there they would have gotten their guilty reminder to care for "the poor among you." And then, before you can even get into the next town, here he sits, poor blind Bartimaeus, by the road, living at the mercy of the pilgrims going and coming.

And because he is blind, he cannot give the passers-by the pitiful

"look." because he doesn't know when they would be looking at him. Poor, blind Bartimaeus also doesn't know that we don't actually look at poor people. In fact, we hardly see them at all. It's like the light isn't very bright where they are sitting. They're just hard to see. So we don't.

Bartimaeus didn't know this, unless he remembered it from his sighted days, and, since he is blind, he has to call out for mercy and pity and charity and love. He has to ask for it—loudly, if he wants to be heard above the travel chatter—and his life depends on tenderhearted people hearing him...and seeing him.

I heard a very moving story on the radio on Thursday about a man named John Paine. He was working out one day when his tricep started twitching, and it wouldn't stop. And then he noticed a significant loss of strength. A few doctor's visits and numerous tests later, he was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS.

He talks so openly and plainly about his journey. They gave him two to five years to live, and now, 15 years later, he is finishing his book about his journey. Recently a film about his life and family opened in Dallas.

John talks about his numerous goodbyes along the way. He said, you say goodbye to taking a walk. You say goodbye to holding your wife's hand. You say goodbye to taking a shower. You say goodbye to getting yourself dressed.

A relentless series of goodbyes, but, as he was saying goodbye to the various movements and independence, he was discovering a different kind of strength in his body: an inner strength that just kept getting stronger.

He realized what he most valued in life, and how he was gaining those things in ways he never would have if he didn't have ALS and all of the illusion-shattering limitations that come with it.

I wonder about Bartimaeus. Has he learned some things in his blindness that he would have never seen during his sighted days? In his blindness, is he seeing now in ways he didn't and perhaps couldn't before?



art by Rebecca S. Ward

Of course he is, and that's why this story is so poignant in its placement in the Markan narrative.

Three times Jesus announces his death. Three times Jesus tries to tell them that he is going to be arrested, betrayed, handed over, mocked, spit upon, beaten, flogged and then crucified. And three times the disciples who are with him and who are hearing this word of truth prove they are completely blind.

They cannot see that Jesus is the Messiah in the way that he is the Messiah. "Suffering Savior" doesn't make sense to them; it doesn't make sense to us. So they ignore it like they don't even see it. We do the same. We talk of

Poor, blind Bartimaeus also doesn't know that we don't actually look at poor people. In fact, we hardly see them at all.

Jesus the Vanquisher, conquering sin and death. We like to skip over the passion and ride the colt of Palm Sunday right into the resurrection of Easter.

The disciples can't see it. We often cannot see it. But somehow, Bartimaeus, in his blindness, can see that Jesus is the Messiah. He demonstrates that by making a scene as Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem.

"When he heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, 'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'" But everyone knows nothing good can come from Nazareth. Anyone with eyes can see that the Messiah can't come from Nazareth.

Blind Barimaeus sees it is the Messiah, though; he calls him the son of David—which places Jesus in the kingly line of succession—and he asks him for mercy.

What a beautiful testimony and witness. It should melt the hearts of all those around him. But it doesn't. Many sternly order him to be quiet.

Wait...why do they do this? Because Jesus is on the way to Jerusalem. This is a big moment. People are about to lay down palms and their cloaks to welcome the Messiah. Jesus has set his face towards Jerusalem. He doesn't have time for sideshows and distractions.

The people know this. They understand how pre-game works. You can't risk Jesus losing focus this close to the kick-off. He's got to stay in the zone, and we all know how Jesus can get distracted and lose focus and have compassion and stop the procession, and then, the next thing you know, we're feeding 5,000 or we're eating at a tree-climbing squatty tax-collector's house instead of pushing onward to glory.

And pets are fabulous and wonderful until they become pests. Blind Bartimaeus makes everyone in Jericho feel good about themselves because they do their part and walk him to his begging post every morning and they walk him home every evening. Except on the Sabbath, of course...what does Bartimaeus do on the Sabbath, since

we can't walk him to his spot or escort him back home because that might be work? I bet he does something... he's probably fine.

Maybe that's how Bartimaeus sees Jesus better than the rest, He spends his Sabbath days fasting, because no one invites him to their home to join them. And, in his fasting, he finds a fullness that the others are missing.

I don't know. I'm making all of that up to suit my own sermon narrative, but there is something about Bartimaeus that makes him a model disciple who sees things to which the rest of the people and the disciples are blind. They want him to hush.

Be quiet, and we will quietly take care of you. Don't make waves, and we will also not make waves in our own lives to care for you. Which means we will love you when it is convenient and we won't see you when it's not.

I love caring for people when it fits into my schedule and my constraints and my pre-determined boundaries. But, right now, Jesus is coming by and this is our big moment to watch and see what he will do on his way to Jerusalem. And you're messing it up with your screaming and your inappropriate begging.

Jesus can't be bothered with you right now, blind Bartimaeus. Can't you see the bigger picture? Can't you see what's going on here? Sorry, that was awkward...I didn't mean to poke you in the eye about your blindness...good grief, I did it again. Just hush. Can't you tell you're ruining this moment?

"But he cried out even more loudly, 'Son of David, have mercy on me!'"

Jesus stood still.

I think of the wind and the waves and the gentle rustling of the trees, the crickets and the ants and the lions and the lambs all frozen in place in this moment. Like a deer who hears the sound of a stick breaking too close and stands completely motionless.

I imagine all of creation pausing in this moment, for just a moment. And then everything moves again, as Jesus says to the goons around him trying to keep him on schedule and to keep him on track, "Call him here."

I love that Jesus made them do it. He certainly could have called Bartimaeus to him using his own voice. He did it when he called other disciples into service. But this time he makes the ones around him issue the call.

Things are changing in the life of Christ and as it turns out Jesus is still commanding us to call *him*, to call *her* here. Even those whom we have been trying to silence, the ones who we just know will mess this whole thing up, even the ones we treat like pets and the ones we no longer see. He wants us to call them here.

Will we?

Those around him instantly act like this was their idea all along, "Oh, Bartimaeus! Bless your little blind heart, Jesus is calling you. We were just hoping he would see you and take pity on you. So take heart, blind Bartimaeus. It's your time. This is your moment. And when the master does for you whatever he is going to do, I know you'll remember that I was the one who came and got you and

brought you to him, unlike those others who so rudely tried to tell you to rest your little mouth.”

In the presence of Christ, those shouts of *shhh*, turned quickly to calls of welcome. Unfortunately, it seems to take longer with us. We, the church, we who are God’s chosen ones, we who see so very well, are slower to invite in the ones we’ve shunned. It takes us a long time and a lot of work to get to the place where we open the doors to those whom we have kept out.

Thankfully, we sometimes get there and we call people in. For instance, we finally called women to ministry and to

*We, the church, we who are
God’s chosen ones, we who see
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service, but, good grief, it took us a long time to get there. We now do it like it was our idea all along. But that’s not the truth.

Jesus said to the keepers of order and cleanliness and appearances and righteousness, “Call him here.” Jesus is saying to us who work so hard to maintain order and cleanliness and righteousness, “Call her here...call him here.”

Will we?

Bartimaeus doesn’t wait to be escorted; he doesn’t wait to gather his belongings; he doesn’t wait to count the cost. He throws off his cloak and springs up. His cloak is his collection plate. It is his only hope to survive. It keeps him warm at night and it catches the alms of the passers by during the day. Without his cloak and the money he’s already collected today, he doesn’t have a chance at survival...unless something has changed his life.

He throws off his cloak and springs up and comes to Jesus who then asks him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The same question he asked the two quarrelling disciples on the road as they discussed their seats of honor. But Bartimaeus doesn’t want a seat at the right hand of Jesus when he comes into his glory. He could have asked for that.

He doesn’t ask for a trust fund to take care of his needs while he lives out his days by the side of the road. He doesn’t ask for better friends who would sit with him, or family who would care for him. He doesn’t ask for anything that Jesus can reasonably give him, or worked out for him to get, that would enhance his life and the living of it the way it is.

“Let me see again.” I now see in ways I never did before, let me see again that I might see the things of this world by this new light. Let me see

again. Oh, Bartimaeus, you were the only one here who could see. Your eyes of faith are what guided your heart and your feet along the way. Go; your faith has saved you.

The blind one teaches them to see. The one they kept as a pet—who was better seen and not heard—showed them the way. Jesus asked them to call him to come near, because he had much to show them about love and faith and devotion.

Our children are a beautiful example of people among us who see in ways in which we have long since gone blind. And Jesus is asking us to call them near, because they have much to show us about love and faith and devotion.

There are so many things that they see, that we grown-ups can’t see anymore, and there are times when we get all wrapped up in what’s going on that we try to silence their voices and keep them quiet when they’re telling the truth. When they’re calling us to love beyond the artificial barriers we construct between us. When they’re calling us to care for one another and for creation as if we loved both. When they’re telling us the truth about God, who is quick to forgive, as they are; about the way God sees us as beloved and beautiful.

We’ve grown blind to our beauty because we’ve been staring at our flaws for too long. They have much to reveal to us that we have forgotten or have never seen. So we all join Bartimaeus and ask God this morning, “Let me see again...”

Amen.

—Erin Conatway is the pastor of Seventh & James Baptist Church in Waco, TX, where the Seeds of Hope ministry is housed.

Do Not Disturb

ONE: The responsibilities of faith and love at times disturb our easy peace. We ask forgiveness from the Lord that we have not allowed ourselves to be disturbed. Lord, have mercy.

MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: “Do not disturb,” we say, and we close our eyes to the needs of our neighbor. Lord, have mercy.

MANY: Christ have mercy.

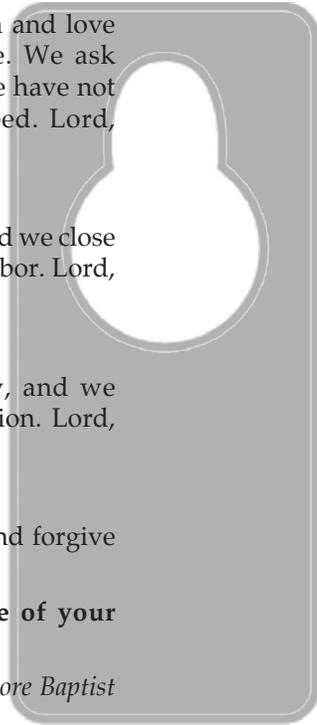
ONE: “Do not disturb,” we say, and we tolerate injustice and discrimination. Lord, have mercy.

MANY: Christ have mercy.

ONE: Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive our complacency.

MANY: Light in us the fire of your Spirit.”

—from a worship bulletin at Lake Shore Baptist Church in Waco, TX





O God, Our Refuge and Redeemer,

You open your arms to us in welcome,
You embrace us to find rest in our relationship with you,
And you cleanse our hostilities with your grace.
No longer do you call us strangers, but friends and beloved ones,
And we are grateful beyond expression.

But many of your children, of all ages and places,
Do not know or trust that such welcoming love exists.
They have been so abused and traumatized by loss,
So hungry and marginalized by poverty,
Their strength is waning along with their hope.

Tragically, as has happened repeatedly in human history,
Millions of your children have been driven from their homelands
By hellish hatred, violence, and oppression;
All of them desperate to find rest and refuge and purpose in a new place,
To find a sense of being valued and accepted.

Call us to follow in the steps of Jesus, our Redeemer,
Who was acquainted with deep sorrow and estrangement;
Mold us and move us to be your instruments
Of kindness and mercy, comfort and hospitality,
As we welcome strangers into our hearts and lives,
That we might make our home together—with you, within you, forever.

Amen

Deborah E. Harris

Quotes, Poems & Pithy Sayings

For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them with food and clothing. You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

—Deuteronomy 10:17-19

Hospitality is the virtue which allows us to break through the narrowness of our own fears and to open our houses to the stranger, with the intuition that salvation comes to us in the form of a tired traveler. Hospitality makes anxious disciples into powerful witnesses, makes suspicious owners into generous givers, and makes closed-minded sectarians into interested recipients of new ideas and insights.

—Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*

We become more human as we discover we are able to love people. And when I say “love people,” I mean to see their value and their beauty, to love people who have been pushed aside, humiliated, seen as having no value. Then we see that they are gradually being changed. At the same time, sharing our lives in community with the weak and the poor, we come in touch with our own limits, pain, and brokenness. We realize that we, too, have our handicaps which are often around our need for power and the feeling that our value lies in being powerful—a power that frequently involves crushing other people. So we’re confronted by two visions of society: a vision of a pyramid, where you have to have more and more power in order to get to the top, or a vision of a *body* where every person has a place.”

—Jean Vanier

What more can we say, God, that you don’t already know? You long for justice for all people, but it is washed away by the flood of violence in our world. You hope that righteousness will walk with us, but you hear the clear cries of those we mistreat. You ask us to speak up for those in need, but we shut our mouths and turn away. Forgive us, God. Have mercy on us.

—from a worship bulletin at Lake Shore Baptist Church in Waco, TX

Hospitality means inviting the stranger into our private space, whether that be the space of our own home or the space of our personal awareness and concern. And when we do so, some important transformations occur. Our private space is suddenly enlarged; no longer tight and cramped and restricted, but open and expansive and free.

—Parker Palmer

Jesus himself provides a special blessing for the hospitable. In Matthew 10, beginning with verse 11, and in Luke 10:5, he instructed Christian travelers to salute and wish peace on the homes of hosts who showed them hospitality. These hosts might well have been hospitable to angels unawares. So might you.

—David W. T. Brattston

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

—Romans 12:9-18



JUST KEEP YOUR
EYES OPEN.

art by Van Darden

A Liturgy of Hospitality

by Katie Cook

Call to Worship

ONE: Time after time we come into this place, into the house of God.

MANY: Time after time, we sing and pray and tell stories.

ONE: Time after time, we listen for a word from God.

MANY: What will we learn today?

ONE: What word of comfort and hope will we hear?

MANY: What word of indictment?

ONE: What challenge will we receive?

MANY: Today, let us open our hearts to the voice of God.

ALL: Let us hear the word for us today.

Musical Invocation

“Hope of the World”

Words: Georgia Harkness, 1954

Music: V. Earle Copes, 1963

Tune: VICAR

Chalice Hymnal, 538

Reading from Hebrew Scripture

Genesis 18:1-15

Reflection: Desert Hospitality

Desert hospitality was a life-and-death matter. For these nomadic people, food and water and relief from the blazing sun were necessities to be shared. In this story, Abraham is resting at an oasis, and he sees three men, traveling alone across the scorching sand. Rabbinic tradition says that he breaks off talking to God to see to their needs. He washes their feet. He asks Sarah to make cakes for them. He personally goes to select a calf to slaughter and gets milk for them. Then he stands under the trees and talks with them while they eat. He understands that this is more important than personal piety.

This story is held up as an example of ideal hospitality, and is contrasted with the

story of Lot at Sodom. Abraham was not doing wrong by breaking off his prayers. Spirituality IS service to others, care for others. All of this was later put into law: the need of a human being is more important than your prayer or ritual. And don't give the stranger just anything; give him your best.

—adapted from observations by Rabbi Paula Reimers

Reading from the Law

Leviticus 19:10

Reading from the Prophets

FIRST READER: This is what the Lord says through the prophet Isaiah:

SECOND READER: What have you made of the vineyard that I planted? I had hoped for justice, but all I see is bloodshed.

THIRD READER: Woe to you who add house to house and field to field, until there is room for no one but you.

SECOND READER: The desert is full of refugees, says the Lord, people fleeing from the horrors of war.

THIRD READER: Bring water to the thirsty, says the Lord. Meet the fugitives with bread to eat.

FIRST READER: This is what the Lord says through the prophet Ezekiel:

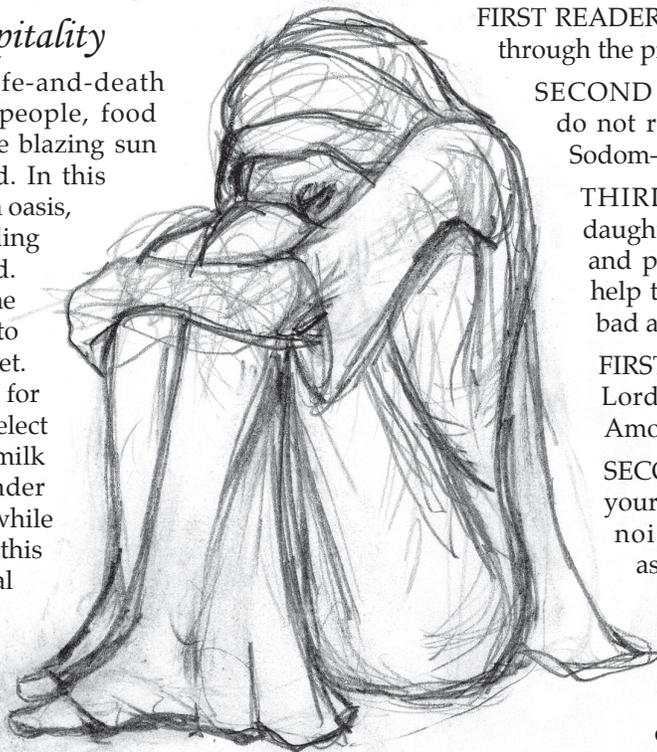
SECOND READER: Hear me now; do not repeat the sin of your sister Sodom—the sin of inhospitality.

THIRD READER: She and her daughters had pride, excess of food, and prosperous ease, but did not help the poor. But she was not as bad as you are.

FIRST READER: This is what the Lord says through the prophet Amos:

SECOND READER: I don't want your sacrifices. I don't want your noisy songs or your solemn assemblies.

THIRD READER: You have turned justice into wormwood. You have sold the needy for a pair of shoes.



art by Sally Lynn Askins

SECOND READER: At these words we cry out, We didn't know this is what you wanted. What shall we do? What do you command of us?

FIRST READER: This is what the Lord says through the prophets:

THIRD READER: Share your bread with the hungry. Bring to your house the poor who are cast out. Cover the naked. Take care of your families.

SECOND READER: If you do these things, you will shine like the noonday sun, you will bring the new heaven and the new earth, you will be the healers, the repairers of broken walls. You will be my people; you will be called by my name.

—from *Isaiah 5:1-10; Isaiah 21:13-16; Ezekiel 16:49; Amos 5; Isaiah 58:7-14*

Hymn

"What Does the Lord Require?"

Words: Albert F. Bayly, 1949 (Micah 6:6-8)

Music: Erik Routly, 1968

Tune: SHARPTHORNE

The Worshiping Church (Hope Publishing Company), #571

Gospel Reading

John 6:1-14

Reflection: We Live in a Desert

But it has become very difficult for us today to fully understand the implications of hospitality. Like the Semitic nomads, we live in a desert with many lonely travelers who are looking for a moment of peace, for a fresh drink and for a sign of encouragement so that they can continue their mysterious search for freedom.

—Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Wounded Healer*

Litany of Confession

ONE: We miss the mark so often, Lord,
Ignoring the needy who reach out to us,

MANY: Judging those who are different
from us, asking more of others than we
ourselves are willing to give.

ONE: Open our eyes to the meaning of
love.

MANY: Let our feet be quick to answer
the cries of the wounded,

ONE: Let our hands lift up the fallen,

MANY: Let our wealth bring healing to
the sick.

ONE: So we shall live the meaning of love,
O Christ.

ALL: Amen.

—from "Communion Prayer" by Mary Ruth Crook, *Fall Fresh on Me*

Assurance of Grace

ONE: Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid. (Isaiah 40:1-2)

MANY: Let us hear the good news: in the grace of God, in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

Epistle Reading

Hebrews 13:1-3

Anthem

Sermon/Homily

Benediction

O God, as we commit ourselves to you,
Fearful and hesitant, strengthen us,
Feed us with your manna in the desert places.
Keep our eyes bright and our voices joyful
As we praise your name. Amen.

—adapted from "Prayer of Commitment" by Mary Ruth Crook,
Fall Fresh on Me

Musical Benediction

"Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service"

Words: Albert F. Bayly

Music: *The Sacred Harp*, arr. James H. Wood, 1958

Tune: BEACH SPRING

The Worshiping Church (Hope Publishing Company) #426

*When the ear heard, it commended me,
and when the eye saw, it approved;
because I delivered the poor who cried,
and the orphan who had no helper.
The blessing of the wretched came upon me,
and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.
I put on righteousness, and it clothed me;
my justice was like a robe and a turban.
I was eyes to the blind,
and feet to the lame.
I was a father to the needy,
and I championed the cause of the stranger.
—Job 29:11-16*

10 Common Myths about Immigrants

from the Christian Reformed Church

1. *Immigrants don't pay taxes.*

Immigrants pay many taxes: income, property, sales and FICA at the federal and state level. Undocumented immigrants pay these taxes as well, including income tax, as evidenced by the Social Security Administration's "suspense file" (taxes that cannot be matched to workers' names and social security numbers), which grew by \$20 billion between 1990 and 1998.

2. *Immigrants take American jobs.*

The largest wave of immigration since the early 1900s coincided with our lowest national unemployment rate and fastest economic growth. Immigrant entrepreneurs create many jobs for both US and foreign workers. Immigrant-owned companies generate millions of jobs and billions of dollars in sales.

3. *Immigrants come to take welfare.*

Immigrants generally come to work and/or reunite with family members. Immigrant participation in the US labor force is consistently higher than that of native-born people, and immigrant workers make up a larger share of the US labor force (12.4 percent) than their share of the US population (11.5 percent). Moreover, the ratio between immigrant use of public benefits and the amount of taxes

they pay is favorable to the US. In one estimate, immigrants earn about \$240 billion in public benefits. In another cut of the data, immigrant tax payments total \$20 to \$30 billion more annually than the amount of government services they use.

4. *Immigrants send all their money back home.*

In addition to the consumer spending of immigrant households, immigrants and their businesses contribute \$162 billion in tax revenue to US federal, state and local governments. While it is true that immigrants remit billions of dollars a year to their home countries, this is one of the most targeted and effective forms of direct foreign investment.

5. *Immigrants drain the US economy.*

Foreign-born workers fill gaps left by native-born workers in both the high- and low-skill ends of the spectrum. The net benefit of immigration to the US is nearly \$10 billion annually. Additionally, 70 percent of immigrants arrive at prime working age, meaning they have received no US-funded education, but they still contribute to our workforce and—according to estimates—will contribute \$500 billion toward our social security system over the next 20 years.

6. *Immigrants don't want to learn English or become Americans.*

Within 10 years of arrival, more than 75 percent of immigrants speak English well; moreover, demand for English classes at the adult level far exceeds supply. Over 33 percent of immigrants are naturalized citizens; this figure is on the rise as more legal permanent residents become eligible for naturalization.



art by Jesse Manning

7. *Today's immigrants are different from those of 100 years ago.*

Approximately 11.5 percent of the current US population is foreign-born; in the early 20th century the figure was around 15 percent. Like today, immigrants 100 years ago often initially settled in mono-ethnic neighborhoods, spoke their native languages and built up newspapers and businesses that catered to their fellow émigrés. They also experienced the same types of discrimination that today's immigrants face and integrated into American culture at a similar rate. If we view history objectively, we remember that every new wave of immigrants has been met with suspicion and doubt and that yet, ultimately, every past wave of immigrants has been saluted.

8. *Most immigrants come illegally.*

Around 75 percent of immigrants today have legal permanent (immigrant) visas; of the 25 percent who are undocumented, around 40 percent overstayed legal temporary (non-immigrant) visas.

9. *Weak border enforcement has increased illegal immigration.*

From 1986 to 1998, the Border Patrol's budget increased six-fold and the number of agents stationed on the southwest US border doubled to 8,500. The Border Patrol also toughened its enforcement strategy, heavily fortifying urban entry points and pushing migrants into dangerous desert areas to deter crossings. However, the undocumented immigrant population doubled in that time frame, despite the legalization of nearly 3 million immigrants after the enactment of the Immigrant Reform and Control Act in 1986. Insufficient legal avenues for immigrants to enter the US, compared with the number of jobs in need of workers, have significantly contributed to the current conundrum.

10. *The war on terror can be won through immigrant restrictions.*

No security expert since September 11, 2001, has said that restrictive immigration measures would have prevented the terrorist attacks on that day. The key is effective use of good

intelligence. Most of the 9/11 hijackers were in the US on legal tourist visas. Since 9/11, the myriad of measures targeting immigrants in the name of national security has netted zero terrorism prosecutions. In fact, these measures could actually make the US less safe, as communities of immigrants who believe they are targeted for deportation are afraid to come forward with information when they are witness to or victims of crime and injustice.

—From the excellent 95-page curriculum resource *Church Between Borders: A Guide to Welcoming the Stranger*, produced by the Office of Social Justice and the Office of Race Relations of the Christian Reformed Church. Used with permission. For more information about the resource, go to www2.crcna.org/pages/osj/churchbetweenborders.



art by Jesse Manning

Interesting Questions

Hospitality is one of those warm and fuzzy terms that we like, and that we think we understand. Too often, we don't. The word itself means to invite and to welcome the stranger.

This sounds wonderful, as US-American as apple pie (who could possibly be against hospitality?) until we remember that hospitality is not restricted to personal hospitality but also works at the level of the state—which raises interesting questions about refugees, about the Palestinians and the Israeli settlers, about immigrants and unassimilated ethnic groups, about so called “foreign languages” and the English-only movement in the US.

In short, the term *hospitality* is a difficult one. Surprisingly, the word carries its opposite within itself. The English word *hospitality* derives from the Latin *hospes*, which originally meant a stranger, and came to take on the meaning of the enemy or “hostile” stranger; and it is linked to having power.

“Hospitality,” the welcome extended to the guest, is a function of the power of the host to remain master of the premises. A “host” is one who takes on or receives strangers, one who gives to the stranger even while remaining in control.

—Gary Percesepe, “From Hostility to Hospitality,” from *Sacred Seasons, “Practicing Hospitality,”* Hunger Emphasis 2004

Welcoming and Remembering

A Meditation from Hebrews 13:1-3

by Deborah E. Harris

Let mutual love continue.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison as though you yourselves were in prison with them.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you yourselves were in prison with them. And remember those who are being tortured.

Let mutual love continue, and do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you yourselves were in prison with them. And remember those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.

—Deborah Harris is a poet and lyricist living in Waco, TX. She is the main copy editor for Seeds of Hope publications and serves on the Seeds Council of Stewards.



art by Sally Lynn Askins

Hunger around the World

compiled by Kristin Waites, updated by Karoline DaVee

The vast majority of hungry people (98 percent) live in developing countries, where almost 13.5 percent of the population is undernourished. Around three-quarters of these undernourished people live in low-income rural areas, principally in higher-risk farming areas. —World Food Programme (WFP)

Approximately 870 million people in the world do not eat enough to be healthy. That means that one in every 8 people on Earth go to bed hungry each night. However, there is hopeful news: the number of people living with chronic hunger has declined by 209 million people over the past 20 years. —United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Hunger is number one on the list of the world's top 10 health risks. It kills more people every year than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined. —Joint UN Program on HIV / AIDS (UNAIDS)

Nearly half of all deaths in children under the age of 5 are linked to poor nutrition. Some studies estimate this to include 3.1 million children. —WFP, UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME)

The first thousand days of a child's life, from pregnancy through age 2, are the critical window in which to tackle under-nutrition. A proper diet in this period can protect children from the mental and physical stunting that can result from malnutrition. —IGME

It costs just US\$0.25 per day to provide a child with all of the vitamins and nutrients he or she needs to grow up healthy. —WFP

If women in rural areas had the same access to land, technology, financial services, education and markets as men, the number of hungry people could be reduced by 100 to 150 million. —FAO

Countries in the Asia-Pacific region (the part of the world in or near the Western Pacific Ocean) have some 563 million food-insecure people, which equals about two thirds of the total number. —WFP

One out of six children in developing countries is underweight. —WFP

About 161 million children under the age of 5 suffer from stunting and are not reaching their potential. About 80 percent of these children live in just 20 countries. —WFP, UNICEF

Across the developing world, 66 million primary school-age children are hungry when they attend classes, with 23 million in Africa alone. US\$3.2 billion would feed all of the hungry school-age children in the world for one year. —WFP

There is enough food to provide everyone in the world with at least 2,720 kilocalories (kcal) per

continued on page 21



art by Sharon R. Rollins

Facts about Immigrants in the US

compiled by Karoline DaVee

According to estimates from the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS), the US immigrant population stood at more than 41.3 million, or 13 percent, of the total US population of 316.1 million. Between 2012 and 2013, the foreign-born population increased by about 523,000, or 1.3 percent. — MPI (Migration Policy Institute)

US immigrants and their US-born children now number approximately 80 million persons, or one-quarter of the overall US population. —MPI

Residents becoming naturalized citizens in 2013 had spent a median of seven years in Legal Permanent Resident (LPR) status. Immigrants from Africa have the shortest median wait time, five years, while those from North America had the longest wait time, 10 years. —CNN News

“Unaccompanied alien children” (UAC: a term used by US Customs and Border Protection) are referred to the Office of Refugee Resettlement, part of the Department of Health and Human Services, for care while their immigration cases are adjudicated. The top countries of origin for UAC in 2014 were: Honduras (34 percent), Guatemala (32 percent), El Salvador (29 percent), and Mexico (2 percent) —CNN News

A total of 69,909 persons were admitted to the United States as refugees during 2013. The leading countries of nationality for refugees were Iraq, Burma, and Bhutan. —Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Approximately 2.7 million undocumented immigrants were legalized under the 1986

Immigration Reform and Control Act. —CNN News

The total number of refugees authorized for admission in 2013 was 70,000. The largest regional allocation was to the Near East/ South East region, which accounted for 46 percent of the authorized admissions number to continue accommodating refugee arrivals from Iraq, Iran, and Bhutan. —DHS

The top US states where legal permanent residents settle are: California (19.4 percent), New York (13.5 percent), Florida (10.4 percent), Texas (9.4 percent), New Jersey (5.4 percent)—CNN News ■

Hunger around the World,

continued from page 21

person, per day. The principal problem is that many people in the world do not have sufficient land to grow, or income to purchase, enough food. —FAO

As of 2008, the World Bank has estimated that there were an estimated 1,345 million poor people in developing countries who live on \$1.25 a day or less. — World Hunger Education Service (WHES)

Under-nutrition among pregnant women in developing countries leads to one out of six infants being born with low birth weight. This is not only a risk factor for neonatal deaths, but can also cause learning disabilities, mental retardation, poor health, blindness and premature death. — WHES

By causing poor health, low levels of energy, and even mental impairment, hunger can lead to even greater poverty by reducing people’s ability to work and learn, thus leading to even greater hunger. —WHES

One out of three people in developing countries is affected by vitamin and mineral deficiencies. —World Health Organization (WHO)

A child dies from hunger-related causes every 13 seconds. That’s as many as 7,000 children younger than 5 killed every day. —30 Hour Famine ■

A Citizenship Quiz

by Karoline DaVee

Think you could easily pass the United States Citizenship Test? Take this quiz to find out! To find out how well you did, check the correct answers at the bottom after you've finished the quiz!

1. Who was President during World War I?

- A. Woodrow Wilson
- B. Herbert Hoover
- C. Gerald Ford
- D. Calvin Coolidge

2. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?

- A. Fought terrorists
- B. Founded the NAACP
- C. Fought for civil rights
- D. Fought for governmental aid for schools

3. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?

- A. The holocaust
- B. Communism
- C. Nuclear Weapons
- D. Nazism

4. What do the stripes on the American flag represent?

- A. The founding fathers
- B. The 13 original colonies
- C. The number of states at that time
- D. The number of amendments in the constitution

5. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?

- A. The West Coast
- B. The Alaska Territory
- C. The Louisiana Territory
- D. The Northwest Territory

6. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States?

- A. Sandra Day O'Connor
- B. Ruth Bader Ginsberg
- C. John Roberts
- D. Antonin Scalia

7. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the constitution. What are those three words?

- A. E Plucar Enem
- B. United We Stand
- C. I Pledge Allegiance
- D. We the People

8. Which of the following states does not border Canada?

- A. Maine
- B. New Hampshire
- C. Vermont
- D. Oregon

9. Which two rivers are the longest rivers in the U.S.?

- A. Missouri River and Ohio River
- B. Missouri River and Mississippi River
- C. Ohio River and Colorado River
- D. Mississippi River and Colorado River

10. What is the "rule of law"?

- A. Procedure to make laws
- B. The idea that everyone must follow the law
- C. Procedure to execute laws
- D. The jurisdiction of law enforcement agencies



Correct answers: 1. A, 2. C, 3. B, 4. B, 5. C, 6. C, 7. D, 8. D, 9. B, 10. B

An Immigration Word Search

by Karoline DaVee

V N A T I V E O I O C G L Q I
D J B B Q M Y V E A L O P P A
P Z Y N B L G V S L N Q Z O Y
I U U C M A T P S H J B J J X
N I U D M N R R I E M O H Z N
O U W H F O E B O R D E R S E
I S W B O I F F M P Q M N A I
T R A Z R T U F V C S Z U N G
A B T M E A G Q I O P S T S H
R H V O I N E K S U Z U A U B
G Y E D G R E W A N O Y A P O
I V Q E N E D R O T I S I V R
M U V E Z T N O U R O Y F H S
M S E R F N Y J J Y D Y V A O
I R C F Q I H C I T I Z E N W

BORDERS
CITIZEN
COUNTRY
FOREIGN
FREEDOM

HOME
IMMIGRATION
INTERNATIONAL
PASSPORT
NATIVE

NEIGHBORS
REFUGEE
VISA
VISITOR

Benediction

*Return our minds and hearts
to gratitude, O Lord!*

We live comfortable lives,
enjoy many freedoms,
share abundant resources;
and struggle daily not to lead
self-centered and protected lives;

Teach us again the truth about ourselves:

that we were born
for more than self-entertainment,
for active, and not passive, care;
Teach us, who so often
remain spectators in life,
to cast aside our carelessness
and fear of service;

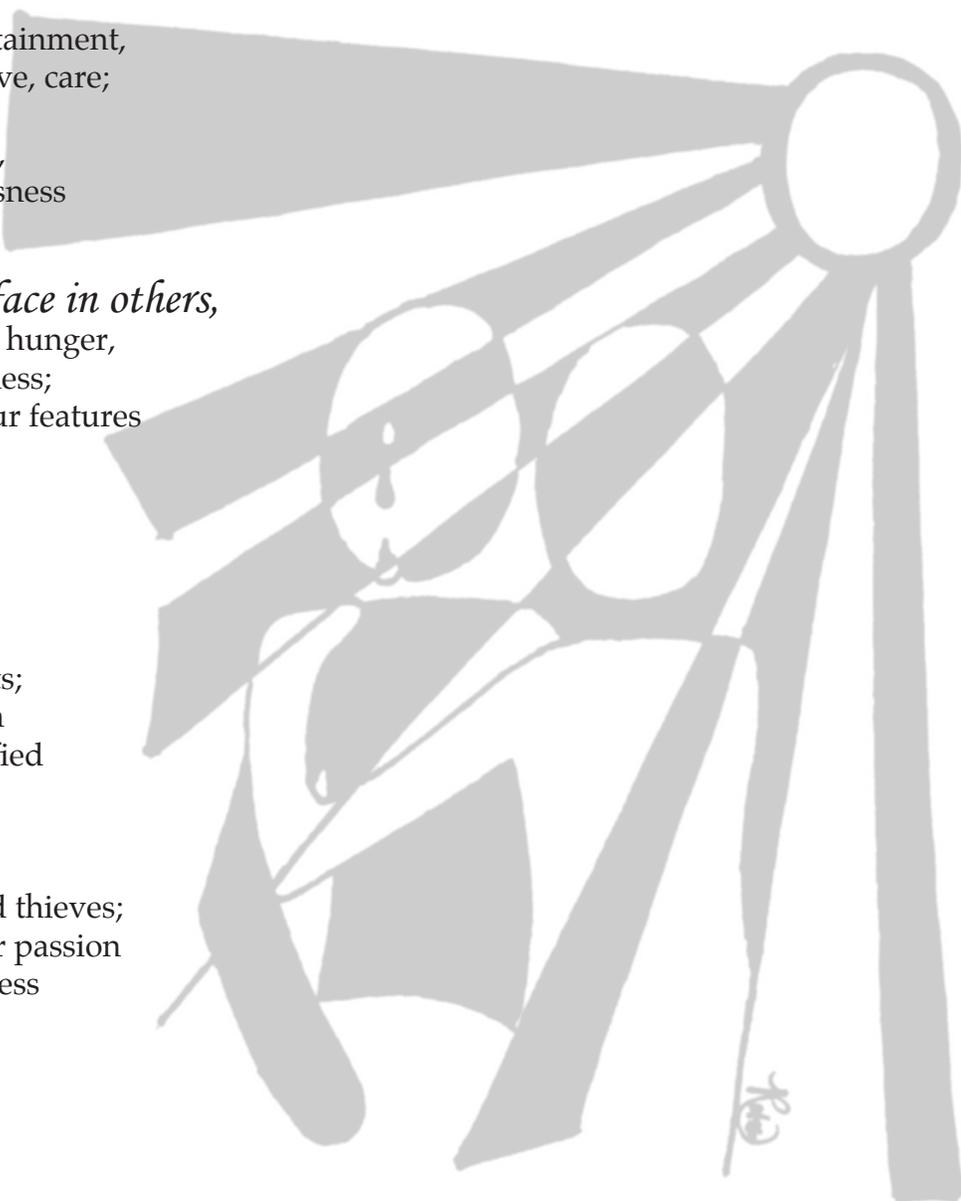
Remind us of Your face in others,

when we see the eyes of hunger,
abandon, and hopelessness;
help us to recognize Your features
in the friendless stare
of a neighbor;

Open our hearts

to Your silent presence
in the want of those
who tread the city streets;
And teach us once again
that You were not crucified
in a clean cathedral
between two candles,
but on a garbage dump
between two abandoned thieves;
That we may share Your passion
for changing wretchedness
into treasured living.

—Daniel G. Bagby



art by Rebecca S. Ward