# 2ND ANNUAL SUMMIT ON BORDER MINISTRIES

Challenges for the Church

# MISSION OF THE CHURCH

Q. What is the mission of the Church?

A. The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

The Catechism

Book of Common Prayer, page 855

# GLOBAL PHENOMENON

**ROOTS OF CAUSES FOR MIGRATION ARE DEEP IN HISTORY**

* 1. • Climate
     + Wars
     + Poverty
     + Violence
     + Criminalization of migration
     + Dehumanization of migrants
     + Corruption in governmental structures

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* 1. • El Salvador
     + 5 people disappear daily
     + Extortion and kidnappings
     + > 100 murders per day
* México
  + > 100 murders per day
  + Families go to México City looking for family members
* Caravans provide protection for people migrating north

# CHALLENGES IN THE SOUTH

* Families migrating from southern México to northern México –
  + seeking family members
  + Seeking employment
  + Fleeing violence
* Migrants seen as taking away from local resources – food, jobs, etc.
* Episcopal Church average Sunday attendance – from 100 in 2000 to 15 today
* Presence of gangs and cartels in schools
* 34% of population living in multi-dimensional poverty
* Migrants deported from the USA arrive without papers, no family network,

# CHALLENGES

**FOR CUSTOMS & BORDER PATROL**

* Dichotomy of Rescue and Law Enforcement
* Chaos and the criminal element;
  + can't immediately discern who is a criminal and who needs rescue
  + opportunity for the cartels, smuggling, criminal element
  + Impact of social media – used to orchestrate movements and also used to facilitate smugglers
* System
  + not equipped to handle families & children
  + designed to be turnkey, but not now
  + Antiquated and broke immigration system

*“Elected officials choose to argue rather than act”*

# MINISTRIES

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2

Immigration Process

* Status adjustment
* Family reunification
* Document Replacement
* Sanctuary
* Know your rights counseling

1. Social Services
2. • Basic necessities
   * Medical care
   * Team Brownsville feeding >900 daily
   * Team Austin teaching children
   * Medical pilgrimages
   * DNA to connect families with deceased loved ones

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*“The possibility of survival improves for whomever receives these services”*

## MINISTRIES

***"The hands that help are more sacred than the lips that pray”***

1. Rescue & Shelter
2. • Shelters on the Mexican side
   * Bus Stations – food, clothes, etc.
   * Water jugs in the desert
   * Finding Missing Persons
3. Spiritual
4. • Chaplains in Detention Centers
   * Spiritual first-Aid
   * Presence
   * Visiting people on the Bridge
   * Weddings in the shelters

# RESPONSES

1

* United Nations 19 September 2016: *The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM)*
* Amicus briefs in law suits
* The Church can what the government can’t.
* Collaboration across the Anglican Church

2 • Community Awareness

* Stay informed of regulatory changes
* Communicate political leaders
* Support leaders who are doing something
* Provide resources for churches having the difficult conversations
* Tell the stories – Hope & Healing Exhibit
* "Civic Academies“ for clergy

# SCRIPTURAL REFLECTIONS

* 1 Corinthians 12:12-26 -- The body of Christ, v.26: when one part is injured the entire body suffers
* Luke 13:10-17 -- Jesus Heals a Crippled Woman on the Sabbath
* Luke 18:1-8 -- The persistent widow
* Genesis 3:23-24 – Exile of Adam and a cherubim guard the entrance to Eden
* Genesis 13 -- Abraham and Lot separate the land
* Genesis 37 – Joseph is sold as a slave by his brothers
* John 14:26 – The Holy Spirit is the Advocate - the one who stands and walks alongside

# BORDERS IN THE BIBLE

How many borders did this family cross?

Refugees: La Sagrada Familia, by Kelly Latimore – A modern Holy Family Icon: The Holy Family depicted as migrants walking in the desert at night in the moonlight. The parents are wearing jeans and t-shirts. The father carries a backpack. The mother carries full plastic bags in each hand. The baby is a toddler wrapped in a shawl so mother can carry him hands free.

How many borders did Jesus cross?

* Emigrates to Egypt to escape genocide
* Moves between Jewish, Roman and Samaritan cultures
* Boundary between human and divine -
* Boundary between life and death

# CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH MATTHEW 25: 35

**THE CHURCH CANNOT GIVE UP ITS PROPHETIC CALL**

* Promote and create a consciousness to attend to migrants in a more humanitarian way
* Create a culture of hospitality and solidarity
* The Church should be a change agent of transformation
* Develop networks and partnerships of support and ministries
  + 2021 meeting in Panama -- creating a unified strategy and a commitment across the Episcopal and Anglican churches in the Americas
  + Develop a website to share information

# CHALLENGE TO THE CHURCH MATTHEW 25: 35

**THE CHURCH CANNOT GIVE UP ITS PROPHETIC CALL**

* Develop pastoral and spiritual model: address psychological and social traumas
* Training of laity and clergy; curriculum in seminaries:
  + Human rights
  + Develop leaders - Formation & Capacity building
  + Navigating society
* Mitigate the time between arrival and documents
* Political presence in government

# THE GREAT GLOBAL MIGRATION

Generational scar

What will you say when your grandchild asks, “where were you when this was happening?

What is the legacy of the children who are traumatized?

* At home
* In detention camps
* Separated from their parents

## “true peace does not exist until there is justice, restoration, forgiveness. Peacemaking doesn’t mean passivity. It is the act of interrupting injustice without mirroring injustice, the act of disarming evil without destroying the evildoer, the act of finding a third way that is neither fight nor flight but the careful, arduous pursuit of reconciliation and justice. It is about a revolution of love that is big enough to set both the oppressed and the oppressors free.”

— Shane Claiborne, Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals