

To Frontera de Cristo  
From the Shades Valley Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama, Delegation  
In gratitude for the staff and ministry partners who shared their lives and ministry with us  
February 15-21, 2020

*We* have been to the Border  
the edge of the world  
as we know it  
and live to tell about it.

*We* have stepped across that Border to the other side.  
Strangers, who speak a different language,  
we were welcomed,  
fed, nourished,  
embraced, brought near.

*We* have seen  
We have heard  
We have touched  
smelled  
tasted.

*We* have walked the desert trail  
in a dry and weary land  
where no comfort is  
a land filled with thorns  
danger at every turn  
at the end  
a wall, wordless  
shouting  
you are not welcome here  
you are not worthy  
go back to where you came from.

*A* trail's end  
up against the wall  
we are pushed to the edge  
of who we think  
we are  
and what we think  
we know  
the edge of what  
we think  
we have power  
to do.

*H*aving stepped back across that Border  
to the accustomed, sweet taste of home raw  
we carry with us  
the dust on our shoes, yes  
and the fragrance of  
coffee, tortillas, cilantro  
lilt of street music,  
hymn singing, welcome in a foreign tongue  
memory of children playing, laughing  
parents weeping, trembling,  
need and gift spoken in touch  
gospel truth breathed in and out  
sacrament of the daily.

*B*ack at home,  
in the ease of our  
familiar  
we seek out  
strangers  
to welcome, look for  
cracks  
in our view of the way  
things are  
perhaps even dare  
to stick our finger in the hole  
in the fence  
of what is  
wiggle it around to widen and creep through  
enter another's world  
each in our own way, learning to  
dare  
to say  
No  
and Yes.