

Reflections on the Election

by Mark Adams, PCUSA Mission Co-worker serving with Frontera de Cristo

¡Jesucristo PRESENTE!

On November 5th, as on every Tuesday since December 12, 2000, a small group gathered for the “Healing Our Borders” Prayer Vigil, to remember our sisters and brothers who died while crossing the US/Mexico border in the hopes of a better life: to pray for their families, to pray for our governments to create policies that support the most vulnerable among us instead of exacerbating their vulnerability, and to pray for ourselves and commit to working for a more just, peace-filled, and loving world.



Our colleague David reminded us that regardless of who won the election, our call as followers of Jesus remained the same: to honor each human being, recognizing them as being created in the image of God and beloved by God; to welcome the stranger; to love the foreigner and treat them as a native born, to love them as yourself.

Before the vigil that afternoon, I had been the guest speaker in an ethics class of Austin Theological Seminary, and I based my reflections on three questions that I have been confronted with since coming to the border:

- Do I/you/we support illegal immigration?
- Is our border policy of using mountains and deserts as lethal deterrents to migration a moral policy?
- Is it legal to be Christian? (i.e., to follow God’s command to love the foreigner, treat them as a native born, welcome the stranger, etc)

One student posed the question of how the election would impact the border and immigration. My response was: very bad or horrible.

If VP Harris had won, she would have continued the prevention through deterrence strategy that was begun

during the Clinton administration and has continued under each successive administration, Democrat and Republican alike. This bipartisan policy has been the main factor in people dying while seeking opportunity, refuge, and/or family reunification in our country. We know that the policy has led to the death of thousands, the separation of families, and the growth in the power of organized crime... The policy is morally repugnant and it is anti-gospel.



President-elect Trump will continue that policy and has also promised the mass deportation of 22 million people (there are only an estimated 11.7 million undocumented in the US). In addition, a main plank of his campaign was to stoke fear and hatred toward immigrants, spreading lies about a population that provides for the economic and cultural vitality of our nation, scapegoating them and pitting them against other vulnerable populations. Using dehumanizing language targeting vulnerable populations and provoking fear in them is morally repugnant and anti-gospel.

May God grant us courage to live the gospel: to love in the face of hate, to hope in the face of fear, to practice hospitality in a culture of xenophobia, and to work for the day when our lives, our communities, and our nations reflect more fully God’s love of all creation and the Divine peaceable kin-dom. ☐





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