

**A Set of Lesson Plans for At This Point**  
**By: Rev. Jill Patterson Tolbert**  
**For the Fall 2019 Issue**  
**“Displacement and Trauma”**

**Lesson 1**

**Concept**

The purpose of the study is to explore the issue of global migration through a Christian poetic lens. This lesson will invite participants to imagine how Christians are called to hospitality and welcoming the stranger and are challenged to remain hopeful even as we lament in the midst of the global refugee crisis. Participants will begin thinking about ways to respond personally to the crisis, both as it affects them close to home and as it affects neighbors far and near.

**Timeframe**

The lesson is written for a 60-minute class period. However, depending on class size and participation, it may be too much material. Plan carefully for your time, prioritizing the topics that are most relevant for your context, and adjust as needed.

**Goals**

The goals of this session are to:

1. introduce the topic of displacement and trauma as it relates to the global refugee crisis,
2. encourage participants to engage their own understandings and mis/conceptions of hospitality and im/migration, and
3. begin considering ways in which we might respond and live into our call of hospitality as Christians who follow the One who was born into a family forced to flee its homeland for fear of persecution.

**Objectives**

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the overall theme of the lesson.
2. Identify at least three specific ways displacement due to im/migration has been in the news recently.
3. List at least three ways justice and kindness can be shown to refugees regardless of country of origin / entry OR current policy or political affiliation.
4. Identify at least three ways individuals can respond positively to address the crisis in their own country.

**Preparation**

1. Participants should have read Emilie Townes' lead article, *“Displacement and Trauma,”* from her plenary session at the Migration and Border Crossings conference held in Decatur, Georgia in February of 2019.

2. Arrange the room in a way that is conducive to both large group discussion and small group sharing, ideally with tables for three to five people that are easily accessible and arranged to face a common space in one area of the room.
3. Write the following statement on the board: “As we gather, recall either a time when you were honored with hospitality or when you honored guest/s with hospitality. How did it make you feel? Why were you so honored, or why did you choose to do the honoring?”

### Materials

1. Bibles
2. White / Chalk board or a sheet of poster board and pens / chalk
3. paper and pen/cil/s at each table

### Sequence

#### *Opening*

(See question on board) As participants gather, have them share together the many ways hospitality has been present in their life After a brief period of time for sharing, ask the groups to summarize their conversations. **Have someone summarize the collective list on a white/chalkboard or on a sheet of poster board for reference throughout the study as needed.**

#### *Explore*

Assign the following verse/s for small group consideration. Instruct each group to read the assigned verse/s together, expanding the reading for context as necessary. Discuss the role of the “stranger, alien, immigrant” in each passage. Consider what each passage is saying to us regarding the understanding of im/migration at the time of its writing.

1. Genesis 12: 1-5
2. Exodus 12: 29-39 and 22:21
3. Deuteronomy 26: 1-11
4. Matthew 25:31-46
5. Hebrews 11: 8-16

#### *Encounter*

1. Ask participants to share their initial reactions to the scripture passages as well as the lead article. Make a list of questions or wonderings that might have arisen for them as a result of these two readings in tandem.
2. Micah’s call to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God encourages us to “step forward, perfectly and imperfectly to respond in deep faithfulness when our brothers and sisters need us.” (Townes) Invite participants to consider the roles of justice and kindness as we wrestle with issues of im/migration, sharing any personal experiences that might be relevant.
3. Return to the initial question about hospitality. How is your experience of hospitality like or different from the role Christian hospitality plays in current im/migration policies? What would Christian hospitality look like:
  - a. On /near the U.S Mexico border for those seeking asylum?

- b. For the “Dreamers” in the United States?
- c. for Great Britain as it continues to wrestle with the effects of Brexit?
- d. in other European countries (France, Italy, Germany) where refugees from the Middle East and Africa flee to escape drought, poverty, and violence?

### *Respond*

1. Townes asserts that “lament mark(s) the beginning of the healing process that allows us to begin to see what we must do to be faithful.” She sees it as a “gateway to hope.” Encourage participants to pay attention to any topics regarding refugees or im/migration in the news over the course of these sessions, and pray over them with “an unrestrained lament of faith to the God of faith” for divine help, confessing “that which we have done and that which we have not done.”
2. Townes writes: “(We deny that) we are often afraid of what we do not know or understand, and hesitate to take on educating ourselves because it just might mean that we will have to open up our hearts, minds, souls, bodies communities, religious homes to a full-blown spring cleaning of the spirit. In other words—we will have to change.” What does she mean by this? How do you think Townes might encourage YOU to change?
3. Return to the list of questions / wonderings. Highlight any that have to do with *displacement or trauma* specifically. Invite participants to consider ways they might further educate themselves in light of these questions / wonderings, and challenge them to investigate those in the coming week.

### *Closing*

End with prayer, using the following words, or relevant words of your own choosing:

“Gracious and merciful God, thank you for the many opportunities that we have to learn about and care for all of your beloved children. When we feel fortunate to live in a country where poverty and violence aren’t a problem, push us to open our eyes and see the poverty and violence around us, and then forgive our ignorance. Open our eyes to the ways that we have neglected to show hospitality, open our minds to the ways we have failed to do justice and, and open our hearts to the ways we have ignored the call to love kindness. Open everything about us that is closed to what you might be saying to us, asking of us. Give us strength and courage with each new day, to hear and to act in each encounter that we have with others, indeed with each breath we take. In your son’s name we pray, Amen.”

## Lesson Two

### **Concept**

The purpose of the study is to consider more deeply the ideological and physical tragedy on our borders, and examine border policies in the United States and in parts of Europe in light of current nationalistic trends. The lesson will continue to explore both hope and lament as necessary elements as we strive to respond compassionately to the stranger in our midst. Participants will continue thinking about ways to respond in their own lives to the border / refugee crisis close to home and to neighbors both far and near.

### **Timeframe**

The lesson is written for a 60-minute class period. However, depending on class size and participation it may be too much material. Plan carefully for your time, prioritizing the topics that are most relevant for your context, and adjust as needed.

### **Goal**

The goals of this session are to:

1. Continue to explore the topic of displacement and trauma as members of the global community, working together to make things better;
2. Encourage participants to explore their own understanding of ambiguity as it relates to the global refugee crisis;
3. Continue to consider ways we might respond and live into our call of hospitality as Christians who follow the One who was born into a refugee family.

### **Objectives**

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the overall purpose of the lesson.
2. Identify at least three ways in which the story of Ruth and Naomi might be similar to that of an immigrant today.
3. Describe the shift from dancing in fear (Townes' response) to dancing in hope (Morrison quote).
4. List at least three ways in which ambiguity plays a significant role in im/migration policy-making and enforcement of those policies.
5. List at least three concrete ways in which your particular congregation might help raise awareness surrounding the justice issues at work in the global and / or national im/migration crisis.

### **Preparation**

1. Participants should have read Emilie Townes' lead article, M. Jan Holton's response to it, and ideally Towne's response to her three responders.
2. Arrange the room in a way that is conducive to both large group discussion and small group sharing, ideally with tables for four to six people that are easily accessible and arranged to face a common space in one area of the room

3. Write the following quote on the board: **“There is a certain kind of peace that is not merely the absence of war. It is larger than that. The peace I am thinking of is not at the mercy of history’s rule, nor is it a passive surrender to the status quo. The peace I am thinking of is the *dance of an open mind when it engages another equally open one—* an activity that occurs most naturally, most often in the reading/writing world we live in.”** (Toni Morrison, *The Dancing Mind*, 1996, *italics added*)

## Material

1. Bible/s
2. White / Chalk board or a sheet of poster board and pens / chalk
3. Paper and pen/cil/s at each table
4. Audio (available on SoundCloud) of and lyrics (at the end of this lesson) to *Wonderful Everyday: Arthur*, by Chance the Rapper & The Social Experiment.

## Sequence

### Opening

1. As participants gather, have *Wonderful Everyday: Arthur*, by Chance the Rapper & The Social Experiment playing in the background while participants are encouraged to reflect on the words of the song. (Perhaps some of the participants will recognize the song as a play on the theme song from the PBS cartoon character Arthur. From spin.com: “Chance the Rapper has been performing a reworked version of the theme song to PBS’ Arthur for a couple of months now, warming the hearts of anyone who grew up watching the adventures of that 8-year-old animated aardvark.”)
2. Begin the formal time together by reflecting on the song. Invite participants to share the images that it stirred in them and / or their thoughts on the song.
3. Consider using these words as your opening prayer, or pray your own opening prayer.  
*Open up our eyes and our ears. Encourage us to get together and make things better by working together for that wonderful day—when can work and play and get along with each other. Amen.*

### Explore

1. Read the entire book of Ruth (it’s not that long!), either aloud popcorn-style, or with one of four participants reading each of the four chapters.
2. Spend time in small groups discussing one or more of the following questions:
  1. Had it not been for Naomi’s deep love for her daughter-in-law or Ruth’s stubbornness to remain with Naomi, what trauma might they have experienced as women without husbands or fathers? How might their situation be different today? How might their situation be similar?
  2. In her article *Illegal Immigration and the Book of Ruth*, (<https://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-life-and-religion/235265/illegal-immigration-book-of-ruth>) Margot Schlanger writes:

*“Ruth’s kindness is vital to Naomi’s survival. Without Ruth, Naomi would have been friendless and helpless on the journey,*

*and perhaps even at its end. Even with Ruth's help, the two arrived in Bethlehem poor and hungry, dependent on others for food... Ruth went to the field of Boaz, close kin to Elimelech, and gleaned the leftover barley behind the reapers who were harvesting the bulk of the yield. Boaz was so taken by Ruth's kindness and care for Naomi that he made sure she was able to gather more than enough"*

How might this biblical story of justice (Boaz) and kindness (Ruth) inform enforcement of our laws and policies surrounding issues of im/migration today?

3. Schlanger continues: "Ruth the Moabite went first from gentile to Jew, and then from widow to wife, stranger to citizen, gleaner to matriarch, childless to the (great) grandmother of a king. It's the ultimate immigration story."

Indeed, Ruth went on to be the great (times a few) grandmother of Jesus. In light of this knowledge, does this story change the way you view im-migration today?

#### *Encounter*

1. Holton writes: "(It's) the instinct of human creatures to either shrink away for brace or a fight when we tumble into feelings of fear. For some, the fear never passes. This, indeed, helps explain why the very things that should make us feel empathy and compassion instead serve to galvanize hatred and resenting. We hold tight to what is ours and deny any opportunity to migrants seeking a safe place of belonging." Invite participants to consider the overlay between this statement and the lyrics to *Wonderful Everyday: Arthur* that was played as they gathered.
2. Invite participants to explain the meaning of *ambiguous* in their own words. Ask what feelings might arise at the thought of the word. Comfort? Fear? Peace? Uncertainty? Confusion? Compare the collected definitions with that of Merriam-Webster's online dictionary:
  - a. doubtful or uncertain especially from obscurity or indistinctness
  - b. capable of being understood in two or more possible senses or ways
3. Holton writes: "Ambiguity makes room for mystery and the sacred in our midst. Left unaddressed the inability to tolerate ambiguity stifles our awareness of God in our life –and in the lives of others; it closes our ability to recognize experiences of God's grace or to cultivate a spiritual disposition of joy." Invite participants to consider how this notion of ambiguity might inform current policy and public opinion regarding im/migration.

#### *Respond*

In response to Holton, Townes' writes: "Trauma and fear are natural dance partners . . . in a conundrum such as this and my call for lament, though biblically grounded, is also forged out of nearly 500 years of various forms of chattel slavery in the U.S....When we have a history of learned inhumanity such as this, those lessons are both consciously and unconsciously brought to bear in the kind of inhumane treatment folks arriving from our

southern borders receive.” How is this dance similar from the dance to which Toni Morrison calls us with our beginning quote? How is it different? How do we live in such a way that honors our own dance while at the same time values the dance that others may need in their particular season of life?

### *Closing*

End by replaying the song *Wonderful Everyday: Arthur* by Chance the Rapper and friends. Allow this song, or one similar such as *Angelita* by David LaMotte to serve as your closing prayer, or close using a prayer of your own, similar to this: “God, as we leave this place today, continue to prick our hearts regarding our neighbor. Encourage us to dance together with open minds and open hearts. Help us to remember that we are all your beloved children, and help us act accordingly in our own day to day lives. Amen.”

### **"Wonderful Everyday: Arthur"**

(Chance the Rapper, feat. Wyclef Jean, Francis & The Lights, Jesse Ware, Elle Varner, Eryn Allen Kane & The O'My's, Peter Cottontale & Donnie Trumpet)

(<https://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/chancetherapper/wonderfuleverydayarthur.html>)

It could be (It could be, it could be everyday)  
Everyday (It could be wonderful)  
Everyday, it could be (It could be)  
It could be wonderful (It could be wonderful)  
Wonderful (It could be)  
Everyday (Everyday)  
It could be wonderful  
It could be wonderful everyday (Everyday)  
Everyday, it could be, everyday (It could be wonderful, wonderful)  
Hey, it could be everyday (It could be everyday)  
It could be (Everyday it could be wonderful)  
(It could be wonderful everyday)  
(Everyday could be so wonderful, it could be)

Everyday when you're walking down the street (Wonderful)  
Everybody that you meet  
Has an original point of view (Everyday, everyday it could be wonderful)  
And I say hey! (Everyday)  
Heyyy! (Everyday, everyday, it could be wonderful)  
(Everyday, everyday it could be wonderful, wonderful)  
It could be so wonderful  
Everyday it could be, it could be  
It could be wonderful, wonderful  
Heyyy! (Everyday, everyday, everyday)  
(It could be wonderful)  
It could be (It could be wonderful)

It could be wonderful (Everyday, it could be wonderful)  
It could be wonderful, everyday (It could be wonderful)  
(It could be so wonderful)  
(It could be, everyday)

It's a simple message  
And it comes from the heart  
Believe in yourself  
For that's the place to start

And I said Hey!  
What a wonderful kind of day  
We can learn to work and play  
Get along with each other

Listen to your heart  
Listen to the beat  
Listen to the rhythm  
The rhythm of the street  
Open up your eyes  
Open up your ears  
Get together and make things better  
By working together

I'm gonna get by when the going get rough  
I'm gonna love life 'til I'm done growing up  
And when I go down  
I'mma go down swinging  
My eyes still smiling  
And my heart still singing

## Lesson Three

### **Concept**

The purpose of the study is to consider the topic of displacement and trauma through the stories of immigrants and refugees. The lesson will present participants with various narratives of actual immigrant stories and the individual trauma their displacement brought. Participants will continue thinking about how to respond in their own ways to the complex issue of immigration as it affects U.S. and global citizens.

### **Timeframe**

The lesson is written for a 60-minute class period. However, depending on class size and participation it may be too much material. Plan carefully for your time, prioritizing the topics that are most relevant for your context, and adjust as needed.

### **Goal**

The goals of this session are to:

1. to enable participants to hear a story and see the face of an immigrant or a refugee, not just see a statistic or a policy;
2. to encourage participants to recall ways they have felt a need to run, or felt fear from displacement;
3. to continue considering our call to Christian hospitality;
4. to wonder how God desires for us to show hospitality as United States and / or global citizens.

### **Objectives**

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the overall purpose of the lesson.
2. List at least three current statistics related to immigration or the refugee crisis.
3. Identify at least three ways in which current culture ignores the faces of refugees by talking more about policy than people.
4. Describe the shift from or difference between immigrants in Jesus' time and immigrants in the United States today.
5. List at least three ways in which their particular congregation might help raise awareness about the border crisis.

### **Preparation**

1. Participants should have read Emilie Townes' lead article, Mark Adams' response to it, and ideally Towne's subsequent response to her responders.
2. Arrange the room in a way that is conducive to both large group discussion and small group sharing, ideally with tables for four to six people that are easily accessible and arranged to face a common space in one area of the room
3. Write the following statement on the board: **"When Haitians tell a story, they say "Krik?" and the eager listeners answer "Kraak!" In Edwidge Danticat's second novel Krik? Kraak!"**

she tells nine stories about the displacement and trauma in Haiti. In so doing, she “demonstrates the healing power of storytelling,” (according to the San Francisco Chronicle, <https://edwidedanticat.com/books/krik-krak>) **Think of a time when stories may have been healing for you or someone you love. What is it about story that brings healing or comfort?**

### Material

1. Bible/s
2. White / Chalk board or a sheet of poster board and pens / chalk
3. paper and pen/cil/s at each table
4. Internet access via smartphones, iPads / tablets, or laptop computers.
5. Beginnings of a list of relevant immigration statistics resulting from an initial Google search.
6. *Follow Me* (by Moxie Raia and Wyclef Jean), lyrics and song

### Sequence

#### Opening

1. As participants gather, if possible, have *Follow Me*, by Moxie Raia and Wyclef Jean playing in the background. (<https://youtu.be/T2sCG5IA8M4>) If possible have a video loop of immigrant scenes playing simultaneously, such as the Make Room Loop found here: <https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/make-room-loop> (Note: A small membership fee is required to download, so you may choose to download images of your own choosing through which to scroll...) Encourage participants to reflect on the various images on-screen as they listen to the song.
2. Begin the formal time together either by
  - a. reflecting on the lyrics to the song, or
  - b. sharing their reflections on the scrolling images.
3. Consider using the words from one of the following hymns (from *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*, Westminster John Knox Press, 2013) as your opening prayer, or pray your own opening prayer.
  - a. In an Age of Twisted Value (p.345)
  - b. Jesus Entered Egypt (p. 154)
  - c. Live Into Hope (p.772)
  - d. Open My Eyes that I May See (p. 451)
  - e. We are One in the Spirit (p. 300)

#### Explore

1. Encourage participants to conduct a quick google search for statistics on immigration, either nationally or globally, focusing on current (within the last year if possible) statistics only. As you add to the list with their findings, encourage participants to share their initial reactions to the various facts, and to reflect on these statistics.
2. Read Luke 10: 25-37, The Parable of the Good Samaritan. Who is our neighbor today, and how are we called to tend him or her?

3. Invite participants to consider the gathered facts and statistics and the Parable of the Good Samaritan in light of Adams' quote, "Our (the United States) policy has not been much of a deterrent, but it has been lethal." Ask: **What does this parable, in conjunction with these statistics, say about immigration? Does Adams' statement resonate with your own experience with and understanding of current policies regarding im/migration?**

#### *Encounter*

1. Return to the initial question about stories and invite participants to briefly share their experiences with healing stories.
2. Adams shares two stories from his time in Agua Prieta. The story of Jesus and the story of Guillermina. Both stories tell of displacement, loss, and trauma. Invite participants to consider how these stories are alike. How might they be different?
3. Adams continued to share stories from CAME (Exodus Migrant Attention Center) a shelter run by the Sagrada Familia Catholic Church. Joel had left Honduras after his father and uncles were killed, fearful that he would be killed if he stayed. Yoribeth, also fleeing Honduras, was seeking safety for herself and her 13-year old daughter. Imagine what you would do if you were in similar situations? Where would you go? Who would you trust?
4. Spend time in small groups discussing one or more of the following questions:
  - a. Recall a time in your life when you fled from something scary or dangerous. How did it feel? Where did you go? How long until you felt relief?
  - b. Recall a time in your life when you felt out of place as if you didn't belong in the place you were. How did that feel? Did you have a choice about being there? Did you eventually feel welcomed or did you simply leave?
  - c. In her response to Adams, Townes' tells her own story of confusion about "state lines" as she was traveling with her family at the young age of seven. What does this say about our sense of borders? How do you think these "lines" we draw make God feel? Is there an alternative, and if so, what is it?

#### *Respond*

Adams closes with the following:

*"The border has been a place of rejection and welcome for displaced persons. Viewed through the lenses of empire, borders are places to fear and to secure. Through gospel lenses, though, borders are places of opportunity and hope; not just places to welcome strangers, but rather places to discover our neighbors and encounter our siblings."*

Invite participants to consider the shift from displacement and trauma to welcome and hospitality. What might that look like on the U.S. Mexico border? What happens when you layer Moxie Raia's lyrics "Follow me I am on your side, but we don't have much time..." onto the quote. Are we on the side of the displaced and rejected? Do we lead refugees and displaced persons to a place of welcome?

## *Closing*

End by either replaying the song *Follow Me*, or consider playing *Just one Candle* by David LaMotte. Allow a song to serve as your closing prayer, or close using a prayer of your own, similar to this: "Lord, as we leave this place today, continue to nurture us, but encourage us to explore and grow as we face the difficult issues that surround us today. Help us to remember that all of life is a gift from you to us, and that all people are your people. Help us remember that, and to act accordingly in our own day to day lives. Amen."

### Follow Me

(by Moxie Raia and Wyclef Jean)

Follow me I am on your side  
But we don't have much time  
Momma said there's a war outside  
Only the strong survive

I might be in this bed for the last time  
All I really want is some peace of mind  
Seems like the blind still lead in the blind  
Rumours of war on the borderline  
When we ask a question, no one knows  
Tell me, what the hell are we fighting for?  
Best friends turned to foes, test the time  
Lovers turned to strangers overnight

Follow me I am on your side  
But we don't have much time  
Momma said there's a war outside  
Only the strong survive

Wo-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh (x3)  
Lovers turned to strangers overnight

Sipping on this drink for the last time  
All I really wanted is a peace of mind  
War is gonna be, is gonna be  
But at least I got you and you got me  
*Wo-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh-oh (x3)*  
*But at least I got you and you got me*

Tell me that it's part of the plan  
Why am I sinking like quicksand?

You tell me that it's part of the jam  
(Why is no one dancing with the band?)

Follow me I am on your side  
But we don't have much time  
Momma said there's a war outside  
Only the strong survive  
Follow me I am on your side  
I am on your side  
But we don't have much time  
Momma said there's a war outside  
Only the strong survive

## Lesson Four

### **Concept**

The purpose of the study is to encourage participants, as Christians called to hospitality and welcome, to renew their commitment to consider the challenges facing us at the U.S. & European borders through the lens of Christianity. Participants will be asked to reflect on their learning and exploration over the past three weeks and will be encouraged to continue wrestling with the call to justice and kindness regarding im/migration in their day-to-day lives as this study comes to a close.

### **Timeframe**

The lesson is written for a 60-minute class period. However, depending on class size and participation, it may be too much material. Plan carefully for your time, prioritizing the topics that are most relevant for your context, and adjust as needed.

### **Goal**

The goals of this session are to:

1. Allow participants to reflect on more nuanced complications of the immigration crisis
2. Sharpen our biblical lens as it relates to hospitality to the stranger
3. Encourage participants to see the Lord's Supper as the great gathering place at which we are to wait and live until he returns.

### **Objectives**

Participants will be able to:

1. Explain the overall purpose of the lesson.
2. Summarize the ways the PCUSA's Brief Statement of Faith addresses the topic of refugees and im/migrants.
3. Identify four ways in which the issue of immigration is further complicated in this day and age.
4. Give at least two ways in which biblical immigration and immigration today are similar and different.
5. Summarize how the Communion Table / Lord's Supper is the vessel through which we can experience hope in the interim as we await the "new heaven and new earth" that is promised to us all.
6. List at least three ways in which you or your church might continue to live into the call of radical hospitality in light of this study.

### **Preparation**

1. Participants should have read Emilie Townes' lead article, M. Daniel Carroll's response to it, and ideally Towne's subsequent response to her responders.
2. Arrange the room in a way that is conducive to both large group discussion and small group sharing, ideally with tables for four to six people that are easily accessible and arranged to face a common space in one area of the room.

3. Distribute copies of Emma Lazarus' sonnet, found on the base of the Statue of Liberty at Ellis Island, copied below:

**The New Colossus**

**Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!**

**Materials**

1. Bibles
2. Copies of the Book of Confession, or a copy of The PCUSA's Brief Statement of Faith.
3. White / Chalk board or a sheet of poster board and pens / chalk
4. paper and pen/cil/s at each table
5. Copies of Emma Lazarus' poem, above.
6. Cut up bites of fresh or dried pineapple for distribution at the end of the lesson.

**Sequence**

*Opening*

1. As participants gather, encourage them to join in conversation with others, sharing what Lazarus' sonnet means to them.
2. As an opening prayer, play or sing "Here in This Place," Hymn 401 in the PCUSA's *Glory to God* hymnal.
3. As the lesson begins, share the video "Not All Are Welcome" found on The Work of the People (<https://www.theworkofthepeople.com/not-all-are-welcome> Note: A small membership fee may be required to download.)

*Explore*

In order to have sufficient time for discussion and sharing, it is recommended that you choose only one of the following explorations:

1. Distribute copies of the *Brief Statement of Faith* from the Book of Confessions of the PCUSA. Divide participants into 3 (or more, depending on class size) groups, assigning one section (Jesus, God, Holy Spirit) to each of the three groups. Invite them to read (silently or aloud) their section, then ask themselves: **"In what ways do these words challenge us today as we wrap up our study of the refugee / im-migrant crisis?"**

- Invite each group to choose one or two quotes from their section and share the challenge they found within them.
2. Invite the group to consider responses to the biblical notion of diaspora or “scattering,” as it relates to “the nature of God and the identity and mission of God’s people.” Choose one or more of the following passages to read for a glimpse at the historical context of im/migration in Biblical times. How are these similar to situations today? How might they be different?
    - a. Jeremiah 29: 1, 4-14
    - b. 2 Kings 25: 22-26
    - c. Jeremiah 42
    - d. Esther 2
  3. Share and discuss Joel Baden’s “Acts of Faith” piece in the February 10, 2017 issue of the Washington Post entitled *Franklin Graham said immigration is ‘not a Bible issue.’ Here’s what the Bible says.* for a biblical understanding of immigration. Find it here: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2017/02/10/franklin-graham-said-immigration-is-not-a-bible-issue-heres-what-the-bible-says/>

#### *Encounter*

Carroll lifts up four ways the immigration situation is further complicated. Invite participants to gather in groups of 2 or 3 and choose one of the complications below to discuss in greater depth. **Does the discussion help you find a way out, or do you simply find the hole getting deeper still?**

1. It is a global crisis, not simply a U.S. / Mexico crisis. The scope must be broadened.
2. “(A)bout 40% of the undocumented come in a proper manner through authorized ports of entry . . . on student visas, tourist visas, short-term work visas, and religious visas and then stay when that permission expires.” How do we “maintain our moral outrage at the circumstances at the border, while extending our sensibilities to the other myriad immigrant matters beyond the entry of those desperate individuals.”
3. The humanitarian crisis is a true policy crisis. How do we offer individual hospitality while at the same time work towards real policy change?
4. “Prejudice, and all that accompanies it, sadly, is a generic human trait,” Carroll writes. How do we address the root, historic causes of prejudice that are deeply-seated into our sinful nature? How might we work towards shaping a “different kind of people?”

#### *Respond*

1. How do Carroll’s closing words, below, give you hope? What thoughts are still lingering in your heart or mind? How might you continue to attend to these topics in your daily Christian walk going forward?

*“The eucharist also points to our hope of one day things being made right.” At the table, “we are reminded that the cross defines who we are and how we are to live, carrying our own crosses of self-sacrifice for the*

*sake of others in the name of Jesus. We are to be at and live from that Table until he returns. There we all are identified as strangers in a strange land, with obligations to the strangers among us and with whom we live.”*

2. Invite participants to commit to participating in further adult education / awareness opportunities related to issues of social justice and / or Christian discipleship by:
  - a. Planning or facilitating **another class or book study** on related topics or another justice issue of interest.
  - b. Researching **organizations to consider supporting** that promote hospitality along the U.S. / Mexico border or in another country of your choosing.
  - c. Planning a **fellowship / education event** where a country from which refugees flee is the focus. Prepare food from that country and arrange for a speaker to come share knowledge of that country. Consider focusing on a country with which your congregation or denomination already has a relationship.
  - d. Plan a **holiday shopping night** in which Ten Thousand Villages or other similar fair-trade focused organizations are available for either online or in-person shopping, possibly with a group discount or incentive.
  - e. Arrange for a **guest speaker** from a country with high volumes of asylum-seekers to learn about real-world situations in the country and what you might do to help them in their own country so they are less likely to flee.

### *Closing*

The pineapple has come to be known as the international symbol for hospitality. After offering a prayer, such as the one below, as participants leave the room, invite them to take a piece of the sweet fruit and ponder how they might extend the sweetness that is Christian hospitality to all those they meet, regardless of the differences between them.

*We give you thanks, Eternal God, for the ways you created us all in your image. Thank you for the gift of your son Jesus, born of refugees in a lowly stable. Thank you for the Table to which we are all invited, and at which there is room and food for all. Continue to open our whole selves up to your call to radical hospitality--in our homes, in our communities, in our schools, and in our nation. Bind us together in Christian love as we leave this place. Help us to be your hands and feet in the world, joined together in Christ's ministry of love, peace, and justice. Amen.*