

Wind of the Spirit



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF OUR WORK
ACROSS THE STATE

JUNE 2018

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DR. KING'S LEGACY LIVES ON

The poor people's campaign was a 1968 effort to gain economic justice for poor people in the United States.

The Campaign was Dr. Martin Luther's King Jr.'s last effort before his assassination. Dr. King's legacy is still alive today and carried throughout the nation with the Poor People's campaign.

This year, New Jersey organized in the efforts to challenge the systemic racism, poverty, the war economy and the nation's moral revival.

Wind of the Spirit became part of the organizing committee and members such as the



organization's co founder Diana Mejia alongside multiple members of the organization took on the streets in Trenton to participate in 6 weeks of non-violent direct action.

On multiple attempts, groups of about 10 people tried to enter the state house, a public facility and provide their view on the State's bills concerning the welfare of those living in poverty, each time their efforts were denied and those trying to enter were arrested. Although, the arrests were brief and the participants were fined as "public nuisance" court dates were issued.

Groups of multiple faiths came together and testimonies were shared.

Although this was the first year New Jersey hosted their

very own campaign action, it



IN LOVING MEMORY: CLAUDIA GOMEZ GONZALEZ

WIND OF THE SPIRIT PARTNERS WITH THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MORRISTOWN TO HOST VIGIL

The atmosphere at the US/Mexico border has long been one of controversy, danger and life threatening. With the political climate rising in the United States, Immigration is an everyday topic in the nation.

Due to extreme poverty, corrupt governments and violence in Latin America, many have fled the country to seek asylum [which is a legal and humane request] from the United States. With harsh laws and a stance from the United States, tension has increased at the border and has been followed by inhumane actions from the United States and horrific casualties.

Claudia Gomez Gonzalez was a 20year old recent accounting graduate from Guatemala.

Unable to find a job in Guatemala, she sought up North the opportunity to work and continue her studies. What she was met with instead was deadly. With a shot to the head by customs and border protection agent, the unarmed Gomez Gonzalez lost not only her dreams but also her life.

To honor her memory, a vigil was held with members of the community on Sunday June 3rd. Her aunt, a member of the Morristown community was there to speak about Claudia's life.



Prayer was held, her name was yelled out loud multiple times to uphold her life and mourn the loss.

Elders of the Guatemalan community shared words of wisdom about life as an indigenous woman and about resistance.

To close off the vigil and as it started to rain, Pastor Charles led us in a song about finding peace in the rain.

In loving memory of Claudia Patricia Gomez Gonzalez, may you rest in Power.



SAY HER NAME!

NEW JERSEY LICENSES FOR ALL!



On June 16th, 2018 a movement taking place at the green located on 10 N Park Pl, Morristown depicted a beautiful image of individuals both immigrants and allies gathering as a collective unit to fight against the ignorance of prohibiting undocumented immigrants the basic opportunity to possess a drivers license due to the state of their legal status. However, by denying immigrants in the state of NJ this necessary right it ultimately contradicts the ideology that America claims to thrive on as well as a stand behind such as “America being a land of opportunity for all. On the contrary, it cannot be a land with such values when it restricts a family from furthering their future in every aspect of life like having access to obtain jobs/careers in other locations across the state of NJ, their ability to travel locally in the state and the lack of

transportation to continue daily activities (pick up kids, go to the supermarket for groceries, make it to a medical appointment(s), and travel to and from work on their own without depending on the assistance of others. Ultimately this refusal is a violation of one’s humanity as a result of a basic need to drive. Thus continuing to be stepped on by those in power who have the platform to enact change within the immigrant community.

Furthermore, the overarching focus of the march was to explain the purpose of the let’s drive campaign to the local community so they could be properly informed in hopes that people would understand that this approach to driving already exist. Likewise the purpose is to broaden and expand the access to get a driver’s license without their status playing a role, therefore making it clear that if an individual who is undocumented resides in the state then

they will not be excluded or marginalized from the privilege to obtain a license because they simply do not have one. Consequently this gives a person a chance to be properly “trained, tested, and licensed” in order to be on the road.

In continuation this march represented a public protest on the injustice that all people without licenses have to face through using speakers and poets to bring the issue at hand alive with their creative art forms. Hence the main speaker Brian, an employee of Wind of the Spirit who has been working on the frontline of the campaign since before 2015 speaks on the important benefits in which came out of implementing the “lets drive” model into legislation. Then he described how 12 other states adopted this idea such as California even the district of Columba and doing so with tremendous success. Now these benefits previously mentioned do include less accidents on the road due to the drivers being adequately trained, traffic accidents decreasing or becoming less frequent, finally it would build a foundation of trust between the cops

“IN UNITY THERE IS STRENGTH”

and the residents of the community. Therefore creating a safe and comfortable environment where drivers are more inclined to speak with the police about incidents on the road like traffic accidents which will lead less fleeing from the crime but hopefully more reporting the crime, driving without fear, and this legislation would be supporting all immigrants families who are investing in their local community. Afterwards, he [Brian] proceeded to identify that it's time for the state to step up by setting a new precedence in NJ that will create an equal/fair opportunity for everyone in the community while still drawing attention to the fact that NJ is lacking to follow suit of states that currently are gladly embracing this positive change.

Pastor, David Silva then continued the rally by sharing a testimony on "how America begin" which started with the powerful contributions of immigrants within the last 50 years as they used their "blood, sweat, and tears" to build and create a nation that. Yet these contributions due to the grit of immigrants is what made businesses in agriculture, landscaping, restaurants, and construction thrive which ultimately has kept the country running for so long. However immigrants understood that maintaining a thriving nation included establishing and building relations with the community by networking with business and churches so they would have local support.

Essentially Pastor Silva's speech carried so much power because through his words he showed the tremendous urgency that the administration and government needs to take by putting plans into action, which will ensure an adjustment status to millions of immigrants in the state. Therefore he ended his speech by asking officials to support the passing of the bill that will ensure safety on the roads.

After Pastor Silva speakers like Luna Aguilar, one of the youth volunteers shared her own personal testimony of what it was like growing up not having access to a driver's license. She expressed the burden this created for her entire family as it made it very challenging to have dependable transportation. Her story is a devastating reminder that there are serious consequences for those driving without licenses, which are consequences that are discriminatory, unfair, wrong, immoral, and painful. Her courage was a tapestry of her strength to say no to the oppression society wants to impose on immigrants thus sending a clear message to those in office and outside that she and her community will not remain silent nor accept the injustice they experience.

Afterwards another Madelyne Montes-Reyes shared a poem that conveyed an image that was the truth for many immigrants traveling to the states on foot. The journey to the states through her poem involved embarking on a long, grueling and demanding walk that would take a toll on their physical bodies, yet all for the hope of seeking the American dream of a better life.

Another member of WotS, Mr. David Cruz had his speech ready before he went up to speak. As he began speaking, someone from outside the crowd mentioned something to distract and interrupt his speech. Mr. Cruz, with professionalism pointed out that the people must work together and to rise above all that stand against us. He mentioned, "because of comments like that, we must do better".

Finally the participants in the march continued the protest with a procession of people marching around the green a few times around while chanting phrase like "Yes we can" interchanging between the languages Spanish and English. This powerful chant was lead and directed by another WotS member Ms. Renata who shouted words of encouragement as she took charge of the procession.

Nonetheless it was a great moment that made the community recognize that one group's injustice is an injustice for all groups around the world, therefore people should be fighting against injustice together rather than individually. Finally as the event was happening there were two tables that provided information about the WotS organization and the Green party of New Jersey, each side gave chance for people to sign up and volunteer with either party if they would have liked.

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In summation the event brought in a lot of support from a diverse group of allies who contributed in bringing further awareness to the community, the allies included Black Lives Matter of Morristown, Saint Margret’s church, Lets drive America, United Methodist Church of Morristown Bilingual ministry, Make the road New Jersey, Newark Democratic Socialist of America, and NJ11 for change. This begs the question what will those in power do in order to change the prevalent injustice that immigrants endure living in the United States?



SPREADING THE WORD ON FINANCIAL AID



Members, such as Cynthia, Ann, Gloria and Alex joined Madelyne and Renata and attended Board meetings to request access to classrooms or assemblies in Indiana. For 2017 the Renata and Madelyne met was held in a classroom at Eastside High School in Newark as their first High School visit.

Our youth group was able to lead their very own breakout session regarding the importance of youth involvement. The group was in Boston for a development program before the start of the new year. The trip to Indiana this year followed the same format

begin to strategize on how to pass information along to High School students.

The Immigrant Justice committee of



Through a presentation and Q&A, students receive information on the bill, how to apply and the requirements. Although change is a wonderful opportunity, many students will not qualify due to the requirements of:

- WotS youth group was the only youth group to ever attend the National Conference
- Submitting an affidavit with their College University stating their submission of status change when qualified
- Diploma of NJ high school or equivalent diploma

licants must be enrolled in college and male applicants must agree to military service if needed

Following the visit to the Newark High School on Tuesday, June 14th members presented at

WotS is providing assistance to all



GET INVOLVED, JOIN A COMMITTEE!

- EVENTS/FUNDRAISING
 - LGBTQ
- IMMIGRANT JUSTICE
(DOVER AND MORRISTOWN)
 - SAINT MARGARET'S
- WORKING MIGRANT (ALLIES)
 - NEWSLETTER
- TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS (TPS)



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