

# TEXTS AND CONTEXTS: THE BIBLE AND MIGRATION

Eden United Church of Christ

Fall 2023

Thursdays 7:30 pm

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## **Course Description**

The Bible depicts a variety of migratory experiences: individual and collective, voluntary and involuntary—we'll unpack that a bit later. The motif of migration begins in the Hebrew Bible with the exile from the Garden of Eden and continues to travel throughout the Torah in the experiences of Abraham, Joseph, Moses and the Hebrews, and endures throughout the entirety of the canon, culminating in realized and imagined return migrations. Indeed, one could say that migration is one of the central motifs of the Hebrew Bible, as it is with the human experience writ large. Most would opine that, along with climate change, migration is one of the most pressing humanitarian issues in the 21st century. This course will examine migration in the Bible and the social and historical contexts both behind and in front of our texts, with the objective to understand ourselves and those around us and before us a little bit better.

## **Learning Outcomes**

1. Participants will experience the Bible as non-static texts of many movements.
2. Participants will become familiar with ancient and modern movements of peoples.
3. Participants will become familiar with aspects of identity formation and ethnicity.
4. Participants will hone their critical thinking to become interpreters of texts within contexts and engage in faith-based and secular discourses raised by migration.
5. Participants will have the opportunity for praxis via the EUCC Accompaniment Network.

## **Assessment Strategies**

1. Course attendance and participation
2. Reflective Family Migration Narrative
3. EUCC Accompaniment Summit
4. Texts & Contexts Presentation

## **Suggested Readings**

- Karen González, *Beyond Welcome: Centering Immigrants in Our Christian Response to Immigration* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2022)
- Javier Zamora, *Solito: A Memoir* (New York: Hogarth, 2022)
- M. Daniel Carrol R., *The Bible and Borders: Hearing God's Word on Immigration* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2020)
- Karen González, *The God Who Sees: Immigrants, the Bible, and the Journey to Belong* (Harrisonburg, Virginia: Herald Press, 2019)
- Mae M. Ngai, *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America, Updated Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014)

- M. Daniel Carrol R., *Christians at the Border: Immigration, the Church, and the Bible*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2013)
- Ched Myers and Matthew Colwell, *Our God is Undocumented: Biblical Faith and Immigrant Justice* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012)
- Jean Pierre-Ruiz, *Readings from the Edges: The Bible and People on the Move* (New York: Orbis Books, 2011)
- Aviva Chomsky, *Undocumented: How Immigration Became Illegal* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2011)
- Sonia Nazario, *Enrique's Journey: The Story of a Young Boy's Dangerous Odyssey to Reunite with His Mother* (New York: Random House, 2007)
- Bob Ekblad, *Reading the Bible with the Damned* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2005)

### **Course Schedule\***

<b>WEEK</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>THEME</b>	<b>READINGS</b>
Week/Semana 1	09/07	Intro/Genesis	Gen 11–12, 20, 41, 46–47, 50
Week/Semana 2	09/14	A Movement of Jah People	Handout; Ex 1–6, 12–17:7
Week/Semana 3	09/21	<b>NO CLASS</b>	Family Migration Narrative
Week/Semana 4	09/28	Remembering Our Rivers	Family Migration Narrative
Week/Semana 5	10/05	Kings, Palaces, & Labor	1 Sam 21–23; 27; 2 Sam 5, 12; 1 Kgs 9
Week/Semana 6	10/12	Rise of Empires	Handout; 2 Kgs 16; Isa 7, 10
Week/Semana 7	10/19	Fall of Kingdoms: Displaced Populations & Exile	2 Kgs 15-17, 24–25; Jer 24, 52; Ezek 3:1–15; Amos 9
Week/Semana 8	10/26	Economics of Deportation	Handout; 2 Kgs 17; Ps 137; Jer 29
Week/Semana 9	11/02	<b>NO CLASS</b>	Ruth
Week/Semana 10	11/09	Return: Colonial Settlers, Refugees, or Asylees?	Isa 45; Ezra 1–2, 8–10; Neh 4, 13; Ruth
Accompaniment Summit	11/12	Eden Area Interfaith Accompaniment Network	“Beyond Welcome: Co-creating Spaces of Belonging”
Week/Semana 11	11/16	Law, Prophets, & Writings	Handout; Isa 56; Ruth
Week/Semana 12	11/23	<b>NO CLASS</b>	Thanksgiving Stories
Week/Semana 13	11/30	Gospel	Mt 2; Lk 4:14–30; Lk 10:25–37; Col 3:1–17
Week/Semana 14	12/07	Migrants & US	Texts & Contexts Presentations
Week/Semana 15	12/14	Combined Class	Potluck

\* *Subject to change. All classes will meet in hybrid format in the Fireside Room & Zoom.*