

National Farm Worker Ministry's **HARVEST OF JUSTICE** Ending Gender Based Violence in the Fields

Activity Ideas

- **Host a simple solidarity meal.** To plan your meal utilize the National Farmworker Ministry's (NFWM) website for hosting a house party. Also include the Shopping Guide to help identify: (1) locally available foods for your meal that have been certified by farmworker organizations as compliant with protection agreements; (2) corporations in the supply chain that participate or refuse to participate in the Fair Food Program and the Equitable Food Initiative. You might also want to include locally grown family farm and organically grown foods that represent other parts of the local food reality. During the meal show the National Farm Worker Ministry video, *Maricela's Story: Standing with Farm Workers Against Gender Based Violence* that highlights the current realities of gender based violence and farm worker women's activism. After the meal hold a short interactive discussion to help congregation members process their learning. At the end of the meal consider including a collection for the National Farm Worker Ministry to support ongoing education and action with farm workers. The meal could close with prayers of thanksgiving for the work and the courage of farm workers, especially farm worker women and/or prayers and knowledge of the global realities and responsibilities for ending gender based violence in the fields.
- **Have a Congregational Coffee Hour/Adult Sunday School focused on learning and action.** Include a session on gender based violence for farm workers from the Harvest of Justice season schedule. Open with a prayer of thanks for those who labor in the fields to bring us our food. Show the National Farm Worker Ministry's 10-minute video, *Maricela's Story: Standing with Farm Workers Against Gender Based Violence*, which tells the story of organizing to address gender based violence. Follow the video with a discussion of reactions to the video and brainstorming about action ideas. See the National Farm Worker Ministry Harvest of Justice materials on: (1) consumer actions; (2) legislative changes and accountability; (3) enforcement and expanding of existing protections; and (4) services in support of farm worker women.
- **Host a special event for learning and solidarity with a farm worker women organization.** The Bandana Project provides an opportunity for a group to 'learn by doing' about the experiences of farm worker women's experiences of harassment and violence. The Social Justice Committee or other appropriate congregation committee might download the Bandana Project Toolkit of activities from their website. You will receive up to 25 white bandanas when you register with them and access to online resources for your event. Plan a 45-minute session to learn more about their realities and to decorate bandanas with messages of solidarity for farm worker women. The bandanas could later be displayed to educate the entire congregation. When the Harvest of Justice is over, the decorated bandanas can be sent to the Bandana Project for sharing with farm worker women in the project.

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Activity Ideas 2

- **Invite a farm worker organization representative to speak.** When possible, contact the nearest farm worker organization and invite a representative to speak to your church as the first step in building an ongoing relationship. To aid your search, a Farm Worker Network Map can be found on The National Farm Worker Ministry's resource section on its website. Include with the discussion suggestions of ways in which your congregation might be of assistance to support farm worker women efforts.
- **Give focus to missions.** Take a few moments during the worship service to remind the congregation about your denomination's/organization's support for the National Farm Worker Ministry and to call their attention to the resources which provide basic information about the current realities of gender based violence among farm workers. Supplement the insert material with specifics about local connections to farm workers such as the crops grown in your area and the food chains in your area that purchase products grown by farm workers. Suggest that the Harvest of Justice season include a special collection to be taken to support the National Farm Worker Ministry and farm worker efforts.
- **Table for a 'Harvest' of letters or signatures or calls to your Congressional representatives and corporate executives.** For one or more weeks of Harvest of Justice set up a table during the congregational coffee hour where people are encouraged to write a letter, send an email, sign a petition, post a message on social media or contact their member(s) of Congress in support of farm worker priorities. Have sample messages and general information available at the table. This activity could be combined with a Bandana Project display. Postcards might also be addressed to farm worker organizations and the National Farm Worker Ministry expressing support for their efforts and letting them know that messages of support for the legislation were sent to members of Congress. Letters and postcards could also be sent to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the US Violence Against Women Office to encourage strengthening of enforcement for existing protections. They could also be signed and sent to support the Wendy's boycott for The Coalition of Immokalee Workers.

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Activity Ideas 3

- **Incorporate Harvest of Justice into a youth activity.** Dedicate a Sunday School class or part of your weekly Youth Group to Harvest of Justice. Introduce youth to the National Farm Worker Ministry, and if your denomination is a member or supporting organization of NFWM, share some of the ways it has been involved with farm worker justice over the years. Say a prayer for farm workers and farm worker women. Encourage any youth who are interested to post a flyer about ongoing campaigns on their local coffee hangout's bulletin board. Look for flyers in the resources section of the NFWM website.
- **Organize one or more sessions for the church women's group(s) to discuss gender based violence in the fields.** Link it to their own experience of sexual violence and harassment in the workplace. The session might begin with the reading of selections from the letter sent by farm worker women to the #MeTOO movement. Also watch the National Farm Worker Ministry video, Maricela's Story: Standing with Farm Workers Against Gender Based Violence. It could be followed by handing out the Power and Control Wheel which was developed for understanding domestic violence by activists in Minnesota. The group could reflect on what was seen in the video and how it matches with the realities of farm worker women. The purpose of this part of the discussion is to help further understand the kinds of issues farm worker women face and how those issues are similar to those of other women in situations of harassment and violence in the workplace. An optional activity for this session could be creating white bandanas in solidarity. Another session might also be scheduled in which the group would take time to do a Bible study that could take a new look at the story of Vashti in the book of Esther Chapter one. Talk about the realities of power and control in Vashti's story or look at the story of the Bent Over woman in Luke 13 which tells of the need to break the rules to create healing. See the Resource Center for Bible study materials.
- **Pray for farm worker women.** Any of these activities can include elements of prayer and worship that focus on thanksgiving for the work of farm workers and particularly farm worker women. It can also focus on the responsibilities of the faith community to join in rooting out the "evil spirits" and bringing healing. See the website for suggestions.

**Look for Harvest of Justice resources and other materials
at nfwm.org or by calling (919) 807-8707.**

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