

IT'S TIME FOR JUSTICE

Migrant Workers in Canada

"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you;
for this is the law and the prophets." (Matthew 7:12 NRSV)

Migrant workers contribute significantly to life in Canada. As recently as 2014, there were 567,077 migrant workers in Canada; 12 per cent of Canada's agricultural workforce is migrant farm workers. Given the temporary status of their employment, as well as the practice of closed work permits (where the permit is legally bound to one particular employer) migrant workers are more vulnerable to



exploitation and abuse. In theory, migrant workers have similar rights as other Canadian employees but they may not access them out of fear of losing their job and employment status. Lack of information, lack of knowledge of support services, isolation and language barriers also hinder migrant workers from accessing their rights. Improvements to the Temporary Foreign Workers Program that regulate migrant workers are necessary to help them avoid a precarious existence and the experience of human rights abuses.

The Church Responds

The Moderator wrote to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration encouraging the Government of Canada to:

- 1) provide fairer treatment for workers under the Temporary Foreign Workers Program,
- 2) ensure consistency in the quality of the treatment of migrant workers within all provinces and territories,
- 3) develop pathways to permanent residence for migrant workers, and
- 4) re-consider signing and ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers.

Prayer

Loving God, help us to consider and treat all other people as we would like to be treated ourselves. We pray for workers who are far from their homes and families that their hopes and dreams might be fulfilled as we would pray for our own families. Amen.

