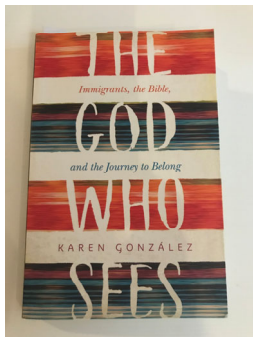


The God Who Sees: Immigrants, the Bible, and the Journey to Belong

by Karen Gonzalez, (Herald Press, 2019)

Review by Karen Cotton



Karen Gonzalez was brought from Guatemala to the United States by her parents when she was a child. She worked hard to get an education, including seminary, in her new country. Now she works at an organization that assists other refugees who are struggling.

This book tells the story of Gonzalez' immigration journey, but also of her faith journey. In addition, she points out laws and requirements I was unaware of that make an already difficult life experience even more so.

Bible characters whose stories Gonzalez refers to in *The God Who Sees* are: Naomi and Ruth, Abraham, Hagar, Joseph, The Syrophenician Woman, and the Holy Family. Each of them has their immigration journey told in the words of scripture. Scripture does provide clear guidance on how people of faith are to respond to immigrants and strangers. Reading *The God Who Sees* reminded me of that fact.

Gonzalez does a beautiful job of weaving her own story, Biblical immigration stories, and relevant U.S. immigration issues into a story I believe we in the Christian faith community need to hear and consider. In addition to discussion questions for each chapter at the end of the book, there's also a section titled "Ideas for Action and Reflection."

After sharing about this book at a recent meeting of the Immigration Team of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ, I was asked to write a little summary of it and share a picture of the book cover so that churches in the conference would have the opportunity to learn about this resource for teaching and learning about welcoming immigrants into our lives, our churches, and our communities. I highly recommend it for either personal or group study.