

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

Isaiah 41:10

Come, We’ve Work to Do

Happy New Year! Lunar New Year’s Day, also known as Korean New Year or Seollal, marks the first day of the Korean lunar calendar. This year, the year of the dog, the holiday will be celebrated in mid-February. Businesses and offices are closed, and subway trains and streets are less crowded. While many Koreans travel to visit family and friends, members of the Filipino community gather to celebrate the Anniversary of KASAMMAKO (The Unity of Filipino Migrant Workers Association in Korea).

Last year, the anniversary program opened with a song of praise. As we lifted our voices together, Filipino migrant workers presented items that represented the joys and struggles of living and working in Korea. A pair of gloves, a roll of ribbon, cloth, and towels were all symbolic of the labor, sweat, and tears poured out each day in the factories in Korea.

Over the past 40 years, many Filipinos have journeyed to other countries for employment as a result of the shortage of employment opportunities in the Philippines. Many are professionals – nurses, teachers, CPAs, engineers, IT technicians, and those in hotel and restaurant management. However, most are not permitted to work in their field. Like the majority of immigrant workers, they are relegated to “4D” labor: dangerous, dirty, demeaning, and difficult jobs. They end up working as domestic helpers or in factories, victims of labor, civil, and human rights violations.

Filipino Migrant organizations such as KASAMMAKO fight for the rights of migrant workers and assist them in filing complaints, confronting issues, combating workplace abuse, and legal issues. Today, many people stand in solidarity with migrant workers and their advocates in the fight for justice. We must all roll up our sleeves and fight harder, speak louder, and cry out to the Lord more earnestly. *“In our dreams, God whispers promise and hope. In the waking hours, God calls us, “Come, we’ve work to do.”* – from the 19th Anniversary of KASAMMAKO

Kahala Cannon served with the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK). Her appointment was made possible by your gifts to Disciples Mission Fund, Our Church’s Wider Mission, and your special gifts.



KAHALA
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