Abraham Journeyed to a New Country

BUNESSAN 5.5.5.4 D ("Morning Has Broken")

Abraham Journeyed to a New Country

with him, journeying too.____ Slaves down in Egypt fled Pharaoh's

coming! They had to flee.____ Some left young Jesus, they crossed the

home or gave them some bread?____ Who reached a hand to welcome the

strangers, "aliens" too.____ May we reach out and offer a

Ar - my; Ruth left the home and people she knew.

For - der; So was our Lord a young re - fugee.

pressed them; All trusted God and started again.

strangers Who saw their fear and gave hope in stead?

welcomed As we have all been welcomed by you.

Biblical references: Genesis 12, Ruth 1; Matthew 2:13-16, 10:40; 25:31-46; Hebrews 11, 13:2; Leviticus 19:18, 33-34

Tune: Gaelic melody

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Hymn Note for “Abraham Journeyed to a Far Country”

Text: Throughout the Bible, we see stories of immigrants-people called to settle in new lands and begin new lives for a variety of reasons, people who trusted in God's protection along the way. Abraham and Sarah heard God's promise of a new land. Exodus is the story of God's people being led from slavery to the freedom of the Promised Land. Later, Ruth went with Naomi, her mother-in-law, because her love of family led her to take risks and leave the home she knew for a new home. Jesus himself was a refugee in Egypt when his parents had to flee from Herod for his safety. Jesus taught that one of the greatest commandments is to love our neighbors; these neighbors include foreigners (Luke 10:25-37 with references to Leviticus 19:18, 33-34). He also taught that all people will be judged on their compassion for those in need and their welcome of strangers (Matthew 25:31-46). Today, people are immigrants for many of the same reasons that these biblical people were. The Church is called to follow the Bible's teachings by welcoming and supporting immigrants today. Check out the website of the Office on Immigration Issues of the Presbyterian Church (USA): http://oga.pcusa.org/immigration/

Tune: The hymn tune, Bunessan, is a traditional Gaelic melody that was originally associated with the 19th century Christmas carol, "Child in a Manger," by Mary Macdonald. When the Gaelic hymn was translated into English, the melody was named after the small village on the Scottish island of Mull by the translator, Lachlan Macbean. Eleanor Farjeon wrote a new hymn to this tune, "Morning Has Broken," that was published in 1931.

Author: Carolyn Winfrey Gillette is the author of Songs of Grace: New Hymns for God and Neighbor (Discipleship Resources/Upper Room Books, 2009) and Gifts of Love: New Hymns for Today's Worship (Geneva Press, 2000) and the co-pastor of Limestone Presbyterian Church in Wilmington, Delaware. This congregation includes first generation immigrants from Brazil, England, Ghana, India, Scotland and South Africa, and provides space for a Ghanaian Presbyterian Fellowship. A complete list of Carolyn's 160+ hymns can be found at www.carolynshymns.com.