

## **When the Deserts Become Borders**

by the Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs)

*Last Tuesday, December 9th, Frontera de Cristo, Exodus Migrant Shelter (CAME), the Young Adult Volunteers (from the YAV Program) and the Migrant Resource Center, held a binational posada on both sides of the border. We gathered together in community and ministry, remembering the birth of Jesus and the beginnings of his life: **migrating, seeking refuge (inn) and desiring a safe place—a reality that our migrant brothers live and walk with hope every day.***

“The Lord went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they might travel by day and by night.” -- *Exodus 13:21-22*

### **“When the Deserts Become Borders”**

God walks with His people.

But now the desert is no longer made of sand it is made of walls, of papers that decide who is worth something and who is not, of laws written in fear.

The same God who walked with His people in the Exodus still walks today with the migrants who cross rivers, mountains, and barbed wire in search of a piece of life.

He walks with the mothers who do not know if their child is still alive.

He walks with the volunteer who opens a door each night, knowing they cannot change the world but can still offer a cup of water.

He walks with those who are rejected for speaking differently or for the color of their skin.

And yet the world, our world has become cruelly blind.

Borders filled with soldiers instead of hands.

Policies harden, communities empty, hopes collapse.

And amid all the political noise, the cry of the poor is barely heard.

But there, in the dust and the fear, God still passes by.

Not in palaces, not in speeches, but in the face of the weary migrant.

In the child who sleeps on the cold floor of a detention center, not knowing what is happening.

In the body that keeps walking even though it hurts.

He remains that pillar of fire that continues to shine, even when the night seems endless.

To walk in hope today is not a pretty slogan; it is an act of resistance.

It is to tell the world: We will not give up.

We still believe that love has the final word,

That faith cannot be enclosed within walls,

And that a true community of faith does not watch from afar: It walks, it gets dirty, it gets involved, and it stays.

***Symbol: "God walks alongside His people."***

This symbol is not just a poster; it is a prayer turned into a path, a testimony of faith that challenges indifference.

Each footprint with a flag represents someone who has crossed deserts, walls, and borders —those who walk without guarantees, yet carry hope like a candle flame, small but strong enough to resist the winds of fear and abandonment.

The cactus beneath the sun reminds us that life also blooms in the desert, that the heat of suffering does not extinguish faith but instead makes it stronger, more real. It is in the places where no one wants to stay that God also dwells, quietly accompanying those who search for refuge.

The branches with green leaves symbolize the life that springs up along the way the signs of hope, welcome, and love that appear where there once was nothing. Even among the stones of rejection, faith continues to grow in hearts that refuse to stop serving.

The houses speak of the dream of a home for all; the cross reveals a God who was also a migrant; and the words "Faith," "Love," "Hope," "Community," and "Hospitality" are not decorations, but values lived with body and soul. They are the language of those who believe that faith is not preached with words but with concrete acts of compassion.

The path that crosses the poster mirrors our own choices:

When governments build walls, faith opens doors;

When society turns its face away, the community kneels to serve;

When the world grows numb to pain, a single candle reminds us that there is still light.

"Walking together from a community of faith" is not a slogan for those who have everything, it is a call for those who still believe another world is possible, one where borders do not divide but embrace.

Because on this path, God keeps walking... in tired footsteps, in helping hands, and in every heart that refuses to surrender to the darkness.

And while the world keeps turning, we keep walking.

With tired feet, with stubborn faith, with hope as our only luggage.

Because even when the powerful raise walls and tear up roots,

Even when names are erased and faces are silenced,

God still crosses the deserts with His people.

He does not walk the halls of power; He walks among the bodies that carry their cross.

He is in the child who sleeps on the cold floor of a detention center, not knowing what is happening,

In the mother who keeps searching,

In the young man who still believes that life might exist on the other side.

And we if we dare to say we believe in Him cannot remain still.

We are called to be that pillar of light in the night of the world,

To cry out when silence becomes complicity,  
To hold onto hope when everything seems lost.  
Because a community that does not walk with the poor  
Does not walk with God.  
And even when the road hurts, even when strength fails,  
We will keep walking...  
In hope, and in faith.

