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Chapel Reflection, 10/29/09

I've been reading this Psalm 126, verse 6 over and over again, "Those who go out weeping bearing the seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves." I could stand here and say, "well isn't this great? God is going to give these people joy when God brings them home." But really, I can't help but think about all the forced evictions, the people being attacked in their homes, the people scared to lose their homes, the people in inadequate housing, people whose homes have been destroyed by floods or earthquakes or wars and not been repaired. The people who Gods still needs to bring home. And I can't help but be political.

If housing is a human right, there is no way I can sit here thinking, "God will bring them home, shouting with joy" and not think anything about the human tragedy inadequate housing. The UN Special Rapporteur is in the United States for the first time, and there are plenty of people appalled at the thought that our nation's sovereignty is weakening by it's conceding to a UN report on the state of our housing. But I am appalled at the state of our housing. In town hall meetings in cities across the US, people are testifying to inadequate housing conditions, some, weeping. But these people have seeds – they have agency. They are sowing their seeds – they are acting. Picture the Homeless has seeds and they are sowing. Poverty Scholars have seeds that they are sowing. People in public housing, the shelter system, or with no housing have seeds that they are sowing. Those who stand in solidarity have seeds that they are sowing. They have agency and they are acting, and those who go out weeping bearing that seed for sowing shall come home with shouts of joy at harvest time.

But when is harvest time?

Dear God, when can we harvest?

There is this tension between how things are, and how things ought to be. We see these beautiful families without homes and they have seeds that they are sowing, but harvest time is right NOW. Did you see the farmer's market this morning? Shouldn't we be reaping the harvest by now? Now is harvest time and winter is coming fast. And housing is pretty crucial in the winter.

I can't help but want to curse from this pulpit because no matter the seeds we sow, it is harvest time right NOW. We can't wait for the UN to send our government the report. We can't wait for God to bring everyone home with shouts of joy in some eternal harvest. We can't wait, and we can't rest. We believe in the human right to housing, and we cannot rest until it comes.