

JUSTICE FOR FARMWORKERS



C/O Rural & Migrant Ministry, POB 4757, Poughkeepsie, NY 12602

MEDIA ADVISORY

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STATEWIDE VIGILS CALL FOR FARMWORKER HUMAN RIGHTS

Services in ten communities to bear witness to injustice of exclusions from NY labor law

WHAT: Prayer, testimony and song

WHO: People of faith and other farmworker allies across New York state

WHEN: Thursday Oct. 15 through Thursday, Oct. 29

WHERE:

Albany area	Thursday, Oct. 15, 5:30-6:30 p.m. (Outside NY Farm Bureau headquarters, 159 Wolf Rd., Colonie)
Middletown	Friday, Oct 16 th , 6 p.m. (United Presbyterian Church, 50 East Main St., former Webb Horton Church)
Millbrook	Friday, Oct. 16, 6 p.m. (Grace Episcopal Church, 3328 Franklin Ave)
New York City	Saturday, Oct. 17, 7 p.m. (Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 316 E 88 th St.)
Syracuse	Sunday, Oct. 18, 3 p.m. (Plymouth Congregational Church, 232 Onondaga St.)
Monticello	Sunday, Oct. 18, 6 p.m. (St. John's Episcopal Church, 15 St John St.)
White Plains	Monday, Oct 19, 6 p.m. (St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, 82 Prospect St.)
Ithaca	Monday, Oct. 19, 5 p.m. (First Baptist Church, Dewitt Park)
Rochester	Wednesday, Oct. 21, 7 p.m. (St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, 15 St Mary's Place)
Long Island	Thursday, Oct. 29, 7:30-8 p.m. (St. James Roman Catholic Church, Setauket)

WHY: People of faith will come together in at least ten locations across the state to pray for Justice for Farmworkers. In uncertain political times, and with farmworker equal rights legislation poised for passage into law, it is important for clergy and laity to join with students, labor, and other supporters, to bear witness. The gatherings will include a mixture of liturgy, song, and testimony.

Injustice for farmworkers was enshrined into law over 70 years ago. President Franklin Roosevelt proposed wage and hour protections for both industrial and agricultural workers, but southern segregationists objected to putting farmworkers, who were mostly African American, on an equal footing with white workers. As a result, farmworkers fell victim to racial bias and political expediency and were left out of the New Deal and subsequent labor and employment protections. New York has perpetuated this exclusion of farmworkers in its own laws.

The **Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act** (FFLPA, S.2247 A.1867) would remove the legal exclusions that deny farmworkers basic rights such as the right to overtime pay, to a day of rest per week, and to form a union. It was passed by the Assembly for the fifth time in June. Governor Paterson has stated he would sign the bill, and even included it on a special session agenda during the June Senate stalemate. The FFLPA is sponsored by a bipartisan group of twenty-eight senators from upstate, NYC and Long Island.

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The **Justice for Farmworkers Campaign** brings together a remarkable coalition of faith communities, students and labor to stand with farmworkers in an effort to gain equality under New York State labor law. www.justiceforfarmworkers.org