




Stories of Faith in Action

YOUR OFFERING AT WORK

A BROADER AND DEEPER PERSPECTIVE

Pastor, when he leaves, will you come visit me?

That was what Raheel asked Dione Miller while she was visiting him in jail. A Pakistani exiled in Bangkok for religious reasons, Raheel had been arrested just two days ago and had tears in his eyes. A seminary student at Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Miller had just started her year-long Horizon internship in the city when her supervisor announced he was leaving. Until that point, Miller wasn't sure she'd stay either.

Without hesitation she answered him, "Yes, of course."

Working with displaced people like Raheel was a highlight of Miller's ministry while she interned with the International Church of Bangkok that year. In Pakistan, Christians like Raheel face persecution because of their religion. Raheel came to Bangkok in search of safety, but because of Thailand's strict laws, he was considered an illegal immigrant rather than a refugee seeking asylum.

That Christmas, Miller came back to visit Raheel. They spent time talking about Christmas traditions and sing-shouting carols to one another across the hall due to the jail's unusual confines. **"It was this wonderfully strange, very holy moment," she said. "(I realized) why I'm here; that's why I'm meant to be a pastor."**

Today Miller still keeps in touch with Raheel and others she met, many refugees, while participating in the Horizon internship program. Heading into her first call a year later, Miller said she now really appreciates how much she learned from everyone she met in Bangkok. Her biggest takeaway?

"Being able to take a step back and recognize and understand my own faith while respecting and seeking to understand the faith of other people that varies and is different than mine," Miller said. "It seems very obvious and very important to me now, the value of this experience. My perspective had broadened and deepened at the same time."

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