

A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

We are most grateful for your involvement in 2009 as Rural & Migrant Ministry sought to ensure that rural workers and their families were included at the table of justice.

The essence of Rural & Migrant Ministry is the people of the Ministry. We are honored to work with a diverse array of remarkable people from across the State. In this report you will see mention of hundreds of our partners engaged in helping to create an effective organization that has been working for hope, justice and empowerment in rural New York for close to thirty years.

Two simple questions drove Rural & Migrant Ministry in 2009:

1. How can those who are at the table in rural New York welcome those who are missing from the table?
2. How can those missing from the table find a way to be present at the table of rural justice?

Throughout our three programs – Accompaniment, Education and Youth Empowerment – the Board, staff and volunteers of Rural & Migrant Ministry (RMM) sought to ensure that the table of justice included rural workers and their families.

Our year was filled with a number of accomplishments, perhaps none more important than the steps we took to strengthen the infrastructure of RMM, enabling us to move forward with greater effectiveness.

As we look forward to the future we are especially heartened by the emergence of two worker education centers. The Workplace Education Center opened in Sullivan County in 2009, and in 2010 we will open Liturgia: The Rural Worker Education Center in Wayne County.

We hope that you will partner with us as we work to ensure that our table is a just table; and that all feel invited, welcomed and appreciated.

Here is our Annual Report. It gives a glimpse of RMM. For an in depth analysis, please visit our web site: www.ruralmigrantministry.org

In Peace,

The Rev. Jim Palm, President
The Rev. Richard Witt, Executive Director



Rini Templeton

2009 BOARD OF RURAL & MIGRANT MINISTRY INC.

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Richard Witt, Executive Director
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Accounting: Sedore & Company
Graphic Design: Linda Gluck

RURAL & MIGRANT MINISTRY WORKS TO BUILD A JUST COMMUNITY THROUGH THREE MAJOR INITIATIVES

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT

We pledge to honor those that came before us and serve those who will come after us, by volunteering at Rural & Migrant Ministry's Overnight Camp.

At the 2009 Overnight Leadership Camp, this pledge was made by the oldest campers. We believe it reflects a profound connection that participants in our Youth Empowerment Program feel for each other and the importance of our programs in their lives.



A counselor at the Overnight Leadership Camp sings at the daily Vespers.

For over twenty years Rural & Migrant Ministry (RMM), has been committed to youth empowerment: to helping rural and migrant children overcome barriers and create opportunities for themselves and their communities.

The children that we serve live in the midst of rural poverty. While rural poverty is heightened by many of the same factors as urban poverty such as racism and language barriers; it is also exacerbated by isolation and a lack of resources such as transportation and local funding programs.

The history of Rural & Migrant Ministry began in responding to these barriers as we created a Head Start Center in 1985. Today we offer an innovative array of youth empowerment programs that span upstate New York. Through our programs we offer a cutting edge approach to out-of-school education that truly makes a difference. We are pleased that over 90% of the graduates of our



Youth Arts Group members learning improv as a tool for social justice presentations

Youth Arts Group have gone onto college. (All, but three, the first in their family to attend college) Matt Heyd, program officer for Trinity Grants Program, calls our program one of the nation's leading youth empowerment programs.

Programs include: Summer Camps, The Youth Arts Group, Leadership Institutes, Internships, the Leadership Academy and the Pedro Cruz Scholarship Fund

ACCOMPANIMENT

The main purpose of Rural & Migrant Ministry's Accompaniment Program is to strengthen a rural network across New York that empowers farmworkers and other rural workers to more effectively change an agricultural system that has historically oppressed them.



A demonstrator for farmworker rights in Albany.

Accompaniment depends upon individuals, organizations, and congregations standing with farmworkers, and other rural workers, in their struggle to organize for equality, dignity, and just working and living conditions. A key component of RMM's Accompaniment Program has been our leadership in the Justice for

Farmworkers Campaign (JFW). JFW is a broad coalition of labor unions, faith communities and student organizations committed to ensuring that the voice of farmworkers in New York is heard in the public policy process. Of specific concern is a legislative campaign that would remove those sections of New York's labor laws that exclude farmworkers from equal rights.



Kerry Kennedy, founder of the Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Center for Human Rights, speaking at Farmworkers Albany Day 2009.

The Major goals of this project:

- To strengthen the efforts of rural poor and migrant farmworkers in New York to change the

unjust policies and structures that impact their lives;

- To create opportunities (bridges) for people of faith and others to mutually support these efforts as allies

- In turn, to develop a network and creative new strategies and structures that can withstand the increasing and powerful, negative reaction of agri-business as well as the anti-immigrant waves sweeping the country



Bearing witness at Farmworker Albany Day in May.

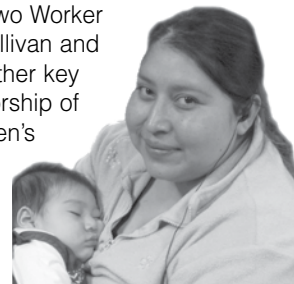
EDUCATION

Education is a key component of RMM's commitment to strengthen the leadership of rural and migrant people and to raise the consciousness and support of their allies. The prime purpose of Rural & Migrant Ministry's Educational Program is to **nurture leaders for rural social transformation in New York**. RMM primarily carries this program out through two Worker Education Centers (Sullivan and Wayne Counties). Another key program is our sponsorship of the annual Rural Women's Conference. We also offer presentations, publications, delegations, internships & fellowships, retreats and institutes. Each education program utilizes three foci:

- **Theological Development.** Providing a vehicle for people to explore and develop their own faith tradition (no matter from which faith tradition)
- **Political Development.** Enabling participants to develop a deeper awareness of the political realm within New York and in turn heighten their participation in democracy
- **Relationship Building.** Working with people as they seek to overcome the "ism's" that divide them and thereby inhibit their ability to join together in working for social transformation.

We also remain committed to three levels of education:

1. General education and consciousness raising
2. Exploration of the issues through experiential education
3. Direct involvement through action, analysis and reflection



Simultaneous translation equipment and childcare allow many mothers to bring their children to the Rural Women's Conference.



Dr. Roja Singh, an advocate for the Dalit people of India (untouchables) and for all human rights, speaks at the Rural Women's Conference, 2009.



Kim & Reggie Harris performing at the 2009 Farmworkers Albany Day service in Westminster Presbyterian Church.

UNIQUE COVENANT

Historically the backbone of the Ministry has been our Covenant with several bodies of faith. These Covenanting Denominations have long supported the organization through resources, space and volunteers. In turn they have seen RMM as a facilitator of their ministry in rural New York.

Current Covenanting Denominations include: American Baptists of New York State through the leadership of the Mid-Hudson and Capital Area Baptist Associations, the Episcopal Dioceses of New York and Rochester, New York Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), The New York Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC), The New York Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, The New York Synod of the Reformed Church of America through the leadership of the Mid-Hudson and Orange Classes, The Presbyteries of Albany and the Hudson River, the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Albany and Rochester.



The tremendous crowd gathered on Farmworker Albany Day - farmworkers, members of communities of faith, labor unions, NY State legislators, and social justice advocates.

MISSION STATEMENT

Rural & Migrant Ministry works for the creation of a just, rural New York State through:

- Nurturing leadership
- Standing with the disenfranchised, especially farmworkers and rural workers
- Changing unjust systems and structures

VISION STATEMENT

Rural & Migrant Ministry Inc. acts to overcome the prejudices and poverty that degrade and debilitate all members of our society by building communities that celebrate diversity, achieve true mutuality and offer dignity and opportunity to all. Rural & Migrant Ministry is an interfaith organization whose members believe that inspiration comes from participation in the creation of a just world.

To this end Rural & Migrant Ministry is committed to:

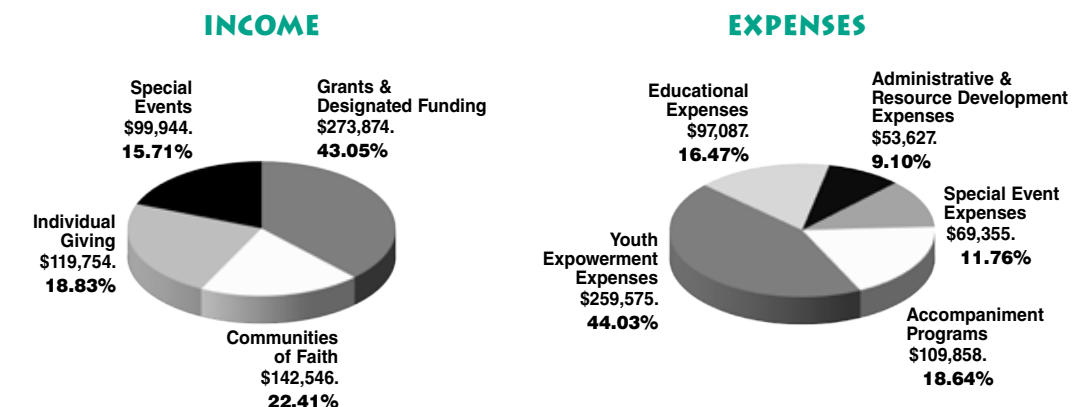
- Honoring and supporting efforts of those who are disenfranchised, especially migrant farmworkers and the rural poor, as they seek greater self-determination;
- Transforming ourselves to use our privileges and actions, not as pillars of oppression, but as forces for justice;
- Nurturing the development of leaders from various communities;
- Building a ministry that brings people of diverse socio-economic, religious, cultural and racial backgrounds together and promotes the exchange of resources, ideas and hopes;
- Addressing the root causes of poverty and prejudice that are maintained in public and private policies through advocacy and the development of alternative policies and structures;
- Being equitable and just and honoring diversity within the structures, policies, programs, activities and mores of the organization.



(L to R) The Rev. Jim Palm and Louise Palm, honorees at the annual Justice for Farmworkers Dinner 2009 (at Riverside Cathedral, NYC) and long-time board members and volunteers for RMM; Nurses who have volunteered at the Summer Overnight Leadership Camp for several years; A cantalope picker.

FINANCES

UNAUDITED SUMMARY OF 2009 INCOME AND EXPENSES BY CATEGORY



TOTAL INCOME \$636,118.00

TOTAL EXPENSES \$589,502.00

OUR APPARENT SURPLUS REFLECTS DESIGNATED FUNDS GIVEN IN 200 ???

