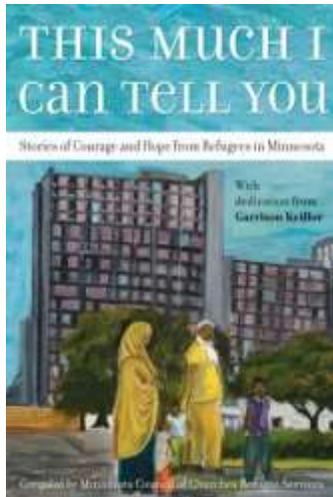## *This Much I Can Tell You*
-Discussion Guide-

- What was something that surprised you while you read *This Much I Can Tell You*?

- Which person's story did you find the most remarkable or personally impacting? Why?

- In Maka's story, she tells about her decision to leave her children behind with a woman she barely knew. Do you think she made the right choice? How would you feel if you fled to safety and left your children behind? (pg. 87)

- Lah Paw, Sharmake, and Semantics described the "normal" activities that happened in refugee camps, such as weddings, children's games, and a camp newspaper. Did this surprise you? What "normal" activities from your life would you hope to preserve in a refugee camp setting, if you were living there?

- What are some of the challenges that refugees face as they begin their lives in the United States? What are some assets they bring that could aid in their transition?

- What are some of the observations made by the refugee storytellers about American culture? Do you agree or disagree with them?

- How do you think the relationships between parents and children are affected when children grow up in a culture vastly different from their parents' upbringing?

- One goal of this book was to give the refugee storytellers an opportunity to share their stories in order to reclaim dignity and experience healing. Do you think that telling the stories of their past could bring about healing? Does storytelling always bring healing to the storyteller?

- When you think of the term "American" what images does it conjure up? How do refugee/immigrant communities fit into your definition of what it means to be an American? Did reading this book cause you to change how you view new Americans?

- What are some ways you can offer hospitality, or extend welcome, to refugees in Minnesota?

What did you think of *This Much I Can Tell You*? Consider taking our brief survey to let us know your reaction to the book. Your participation in the survey will help us meet requirements for the grant we received from the Minnesota Historical Society.

Thank you!

http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeestories/reader-survey/

Want to get involved with welcoming refugees to Minnesota? Want to learn more about refugee resettlement? Visit us online for resources and information on how to get involved with MCC Refugee Services:

Website: www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mcc.refugeeservices

<u>Additional Questions for Church Groups:</u>

1.   Consider some of the Biblical stories that involve a refugee journey. How are these stories similar or different from modern day refugee journeys, such as those told in *This Much I Can Tell You*?

    a. Genesis 46:1-7 – Jacob moves his family to Egypt to escape famine and reunite with Joseph
    b. Exodus 12:37-39 – The Israelites are driven out of Egypt
    c. Book of Ruth – Naomi's family fled to Moab to escape famine
    d. Matthew 2:13-15 – To protect baby Jesus from King Herod, Mary and Joseph took their child and fled to Egypt

2.   What is the Biblical, or Christian, response to "the stranger" in our midst? How might refugees in Minnesota fit into this philosophy?

    a. Leviticus 19:33-34 and 24:22
    b. Jeremiah 7:5-7
    c. Matthew 25:31-46
    d. Luke 4:16-21
    e. Romans 12:13
    f. Hebrews 13:1-2

3.   Do faith communities such as yours have a responsibility toward new Minnesotans? What can your church do to welcome refugees to Minnesota?

    a. Visit www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices to learn how to get involved in the Twin Cities

    b. Consider holding a "Refugee Sunday" at your church. Refugee Sunday is an opportunity for churches to devote a Sunday to honoring refugees—remembering them in prayer, celebrating those refugees who have been a part of a congregation's life, and educating ourselves about current refugee situations. Resources and materials for Refugee Sunday, including discussion materials about hospitality, can be found on our website: http://www.mnchurches.org/refugeeservices/get-involved/church-and-group-opportunities/refugee-sunday