

I have shared preaching responsibilities with Jean Kim at Nest Mission for the Homeless since 2012. I have learned so much from her non-verbal example, as well as her clearly thought out sermons. If you are ready for a challenge, and want to hit the ground running, Jean Kim's book of MESSAGES (sermons) to congregations and homeless people should motivate you to get out of bed and give you plenty of positive ideas involving yourself in a fulfilling, challenging, and, yes, difficult ministry. I have selected three primary themes which offered me very useful perspectives from which to consider action in homeless ministry. Bearing the stamp of "tried and true," a first-hand authenticity in all of Jean's writing is inescapable. Jean has literally "been there." From her childhood, she suffered homelessness in Korea, life as a refugee twice during the Korean War, ultimately reflecting on her difficulties, finding in them assets from God for incredibly effective work with homeless people. Theme 1: "Salvation must include Wholistic Salvation": Theologically, Jean points to a true biblical framing of Jesus as the author, not only of eternal salvation, but also of "wholistic salvation," which includes salvation "here and now," as a part of eternal life in the future. Jesus did not come as a majestic king, but one born homeless, then a refugee in Egypt, and then in Nazareth, the son of a carpenter, and a carpenter's assistant himself. Jesus shared wholistic salvation with the people he lived and worked with, among the poorest, least advantaged, and most threatened. Salvation and repentance call for our involvement "here and now," covering social, health, spiritual, and economic aspects of life. This focus will challenge us to find real ways to make complete turnarounds ("repentance") on the way to realizing them in heaven. Theme 2: "End homelessness." Well-off Christians and church-goers must challenge themselves, and be challenged to share, personally, with multidimensionally homeless. Jean debunked common objections to involvement in homeless ministry (such as "irresponsibility produces homelessness"), by pointing out the many paths to homelessness, individual tragedies, and intentional and de facto takeovers of their communities by wealthy people, taking ownership of communities and raising costs of living there. Theme 3: The challenging and subversive/counter-subversive nature of Jesus' ministry. Jean made Jesus overturning the moneychangers in the temple very clear, by describing it as a demonstration of God's original intention that the temple would be a house of prayer for all nations. Theme 4: Advocacy for and with racially, economically, and class-discriminated people. Finally, Jean's series of sermons to the homeless population and the volunteers who minister to them, includes gems of encouragement and hope for all who have taken on challenging callings. In her Lenten series to the homeless, on the Last Week of Christ, Jean states: Everyone has many "others; those of other races, other nations, other cultures, other parts of town, other religious beliefs, other political ideologies, and those who are so other that we call them enemies. In America, the poor and homeless are others to many people who discriminate against them. After you read these sermons you will find yourself believing that God wants you to work with Him, not just to help homeless people, but to end homelessness as a priority mission in our country and the world.

Rev. Dr. Luther Stohs, D. Min.  
Monthly Preaching Pastor and Volunteer  
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The 60 Sermons by Pastor Jean Kim will be of great value to all who wish to effectively share their thoughts and encouragement to gatherings of the homeless and needy and for those churches considering a welcoming facility and program to support them, I will focus my review on the thirty-five sermons presented to homeless congregations. I do this because, as a volunteer, I was present and listened carefully and often critically to many of her sermons trying to “hear” them as a “guest” at the NEST Mission Tables on Friday nights. They taught me much in my roles as a volunteer and as a friend to many in my redirected life after retiring from my vocation as a teacher and supervisor of teachers. The sermons would, with some meditations, be very effective for any church sermon focusing on the homeless and needy in our society. Pastor Jean has written a valuable “Preface” to her book that give the goals and guidelines for the sermons. They present an excellent resource for anyone who has the opportunity to preach to such a congregation. The quality of her guidance greatly impressed me, and I could have immediately written a short review that said: “She did it! Her sermons fulfilled her goals.” But then, after I read her 35 sermons very carefully, and took extensive notes I can testify that: “She did it. She did it very, very well.” She is offering an invaluable resource for sermon preparation, for Bible teaching and for everyday sharing with homeless and needy peoples. Pastor Jean knew her audiences. Her short interactions with many and deep involvement with some had a powerful affect on the creation of her sermons. Through her faithfulness and her extensive experiences she was trusted. The sermons are Biblically based with relevant teachings and stories from Scripture. The background and context of the stories added much in bringing the messages down to their reality, very effective in bringing Jesus in the Bible as a model of being a friend to the homeless and finding hope in him and be motivated move away from any destructive behaviors. Carefully crafted words support her goal: “To try to bring each to Jesus and Jesus closer to them so they can meet each other in spirit, be transformed and find their permanent spiritual home in Jesus.” In many ways Pastor Jeans sermons are more teaching than preaching helping the audience to find quality lives, being made whole. The Bible becomes alive through her guidance bringing fresh interpretations and applications, offering different interpretations of scholars and spiritual writers. The audience is often included in a direct way. Carefully worded questions are asked, and answers and opinions are sought. Individuals or the congregation often read Scripture, litanies and other writings by Pastor Jean. Jean challenges the audience quite directly and powerfully, holding them responsible but always guiding them to possible solutions, new paths and always offering support from her, the volunteers and the whole caring community. Her prayers convey her love and deep concern for all.

Larry Nilson

Volunteer in programs for the homeless needy

Retired school teacher

It is a great pleasure to encounter a book full of inspiration. I have been working in homeless ministry for the past 14 years with Jean Kim. Why am I interested in this ministry? My interest stems from my seminary years when I saw the vast need in this demographic for the healing power of Jesus Christ. Even though I had felt the inspiration and calling, it was only after Jean Kim that I began this path. Rev. Kim is my mentor and guide. She has challenged herself and others at every moment. This has led to growth and progress in every aspect of her ministry. For example, 20 years ago, she came up with 77 Ways—a guide for churches as they embark homeless ministry—which she has further developed into 106 Ways. I hope that those who read this book will read it from beginning to end, treating it with the gravitas and consideration that it deserves. I can't review 60 sermons one by one. But every sermon, that is sermons of Advent, Lent, Passion week, Seven words on the cross, and Easter etc., is worthy and appropriate. Especially as she tries to identify the parallels between suffering of Jesus and the suffering of Homelessness. I have heard many Rev. Kim's sermons. I still candidly remember the response from the audience. There was a gamut of responses that ranged from regret, enlightenment, comfort, impression, and strength. Her remarkable sermons meet the audience but also fit and deliver very appropriately to her audience. Her theme is homelessness. She delivers her preaching mostly to people within homeless communities encouraging her audience to actualization. She understands the cohort very well. She creates a peer group in her audience through her sermons. You may think her preaching emphasizes the context more than the text. So you may find her preaching has tension between the social issues, cultural contexts, and a biblical understanding. She always reconciles between these diverse forces through her life experiences with God. Above all, as she seeks out fellowship with God and the devotion to God. She shows her constantly giving to God. This book is especially valuable to those who are marginalized. I also think that this book will help those who have experienced debilitating pain. This is because she herself embraced the wounded people to overcome her own personal pain. She created a remarkable reversal of her own grief through healing and comforting others. Now, she will be 85 years old, like Caleb in the Bible. She shouts it to us, again, "gives me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day".

Rev. Kyung Ho Lee

Pastor of Tacoma First Presbyterian Church, Washington .....