



Guidelines for Non-Latinos working with Latinos/Hispanics

The Commission on Latino Ministries of
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TRAINING FOR NON-LATINOS FOR LATINO MINISTRY

Introduction

The Commission on Latino Ministries and the Office of Latino Ministries and Plan of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church has put together this document in an effort to provide support, *“acompañamiento”* (*companionship*), guidance, an accountability for Latinos and non-Latinos working with Latino communities. This is also a guideline for those working in the appointment of Latinos to non-Latino congregations, and to Latino new church starts which might be hosted in a non-Latino setting. Thus, we request the commitment of the Cabinet and their encouragement to the use of this document.

Resolution #9726 of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference resolved that part of the Conference's Plan in working with Latino Ministries would be to have “training opportunities to sensitize non-Hispanic persons, both lay and ordained, to the opportunities and needs of Hispanic Ministry, with special focus on persons responsible for making decisions within the Conference and its Districts.”

This resolution states that the resources to be used are “Assisting Local Churches for Hispanic Ministry Development,” and “Sensitizing Non-Hispanic Churches to Hispanic Ministry.” Other resources that are also helpful, and which we have chosen, but are not limited to use, are, “partners in the Mighty Works of God,” and “Pentecost Journey;” both coming from the General Board of Discipleship.

Thus, it is in keeping faithful with Resolution #9726, with God and with one another that we took initiative in writing the present document. The outline of this document was written at the Commission's Annual Retreat in January 10-11, 2003. It was done in community.

Demographic Profile

According to the United States Census Bureau, Latinos make 12.5% of the total population of the United States. In Pennsylvania, Latinos are 3.2% of the population, which amounts to approximately 394,088. Out these 394,088 Latinos in all of Pennsylvania, 321, 866 or 81.67% live within the boundaries of the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. "From 1980 to 2000, the Hispanic population more than doubled. The average age for all Hispanics in the United States is 36.8." (Race and Hispanic Origin. U.S. Census Bureau, Demographic Trends in the 20th Century).

Our present reality demonstrates that in Philadelphia alone, where more than 125,000 Latinos live, there are only two Latino United Methodist churches. Although there are dozens more Latino churches, I estimate that all of the churches put together are able to reach only an approximate 10-15% of the total Latino population, which is about 12,000 to 19,000 people.

Even though we have situated our present Latino churches in key growing communities, the need is still greater than the supply. In Berks county alone, where about 37,000 Latinos reside, we have one United Methodist Latino congregation, which is situated in the city of Reading. Statistics show that in Lebanon county, there are about 32,000 Latinos, with only one United Methodist Latino congregation. Furthermore, in Lancaster county, which I think is where we have done better, there are approximately 27,000 Latinos, with three United Methodist Latino congregations: El Redentor, St. Paul's, and Columbia Area Latino Ministry.

Other Latino Ministries:

1. Allentown: La Trinidad (Lehigh County 32,000 Latinos).
2. West Chester: El Buen Samaritano (Chester County 17,000 Latinos)
3. West Grove: Cristo Rey (Chester County 17,000 Latinos)

Indeed, the need is great. The Commission on Latino Ministries, has put together this outline for non-Hispanic churches who are interested in starting Latino Ministries, for those who are already working with Latino people, and for the future. We believe that working with Latinos in our Conference needs to be intentional and purposeful.

Our Struggle

We understand and affirm the words of Isidro Lucas when he says that "The Hispanics in the United States are not problems to be solved, nor statistics to be counted, nor objects to be neatly categorized. We are the mystery of the ancient past of the peoples who have inhabited these lands for thousands of years, freely moving back and forth across the vast regions without the interference of humanly-made borders. . . We are the mystery of the Latin American *mestizo* who is today undergoing a new *mestisaje* with Anglo-America." (The Browning of America: The Hispanic Revolution in the American Church. Chicago: Fides/Claretian, 1981).

We believe in the open itinerant process, where appointments are made without regard to race, ethnic origin, gender, color, disability, marital status, or age, . . ." (§ 430 the Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church) Yet, as Latinos we have experienced the racism and prejudice in those local congregations to where we have been appointed. Whether it is because of our ethnicity, color, language, or culture we have not always been received well. We believe that through this document, we will alleviate the struggles of our people, and accompany those in the struggle to continue on. Therefore, it is in light of our experiences and in light of what is to come that we rightly write this document.

GUIDELINES FOR STARTING LATINO MINISTRIES

(Note: These Guidelines Do Not Apply If Host is Community or Organization)

STEPS

1. Determine the 'health' of the host congregation (i.e. mission, motive, hidden agenda- if any).

2. Introductory Training- "Pentecost Journey"
Pentecost Journey
A Planning Guide for Hispanic Ministries by Jennie Treviño-Teddle

Designed to help congregations fulfill Christ's mandate to make disciples, with a particular focus on helping local churches understand issues related to developing ministry with Hispanics. The guiding principle is the vision of Pentecost in which the uniqueness of the Hispanic cultures is affirmed as ministry is developed. This planning guide: (1) examines our understanding of the Hispanic population, (2) Looks at cultural diversity within the Hispanic population, (3) explores ministry options and issues in developing a ministry with Hispanics, (4) helps participants look at themselves and their community and discern God's vision for the church. Divided into 5 sessions of 2 1/2 - 3 hours each, "Pentecost Journey" is designed for congregational leaders who want to start a ministry with Hispanics, and conference leaders responsible for ministry with Hispanics, church growth and development, and/or new congregations. A 93-min. video is included for use with Sessions 1-3. (1999)

3. Interest Level Inquiry from:*(when applicable)*
 - a. Leadership
 - b. Congregation
 - c. Community
 - d. Organization

4. Latino Pastors/Leaders Training *(should not be lone rangers)*
 - Healing the Wounds of Racism
 - Works of Conference (reports, administration, resources, etc.)
 - Works of local Host church (if applicable)

5. Partner Congregation's In-Depth Training- "Partners in Ministry"
 - *Healing the Wounds of Racism*
 - *Partners in the Mighty Works of God* A Manual for Non-Hispanic Churches in Ministry with Hispanics by Jo Harris, Russ Harris

Partners in the Mighty Works of God helps ministry teams walk through a process for developing and strengthening ministries with Hispanics. It includes 7 chapters: Chapter 1 explains the vision and nature of the National Plan for Hispanic Ministry. Chapters 2-4 guide the ministry team through the transformational process, see-

judge (discern)-act, for developing ministry. Chapters 5-6 discuss the issues of leadership, shared space, finances, and resistance. It delves into issues of community assessment, racism and its impact on Hispanics, stewardship of shared space and leadership, among other topics. Primary audience: congregational ministry teams (clergy and laity) with responsibility for ministries with Hispanics. Secondary audience: district and conference leaders working with ministries with Hispanics. (2000

- 6. Take a Congregational Vote**
- 7. Written Covenant Between Partner Church and Latino Ministry to include issues such as:**
 - a. use of facilities/space*
 - b. time of worship/events*
 - c. finances*
 - d. conflict resolution*
 - e. sacrificial compromises.*
 - f. communication: who's in the loop?*
 - g. representation in larger body: who makes the decisions?*
 - h. boundaries.*

FOLLOW-THROUGH GUIDELINES

1. Monthly meetings between host/Latino ministry to prevent/work out/solve issues (i.e. liaison team)
2. The Latino Ministry will maintain its own identity (teams, committees, relationship to Conference/Jurisdiction, etc., and Commission)
3. There should be flexibility to change/adjust covenant as needs change.
4. There will be an ongoing monitoring by the Superintendent and the Commission on Latino Ministries of the progress of the ministry.

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