

“para que en el nombre de Jesus ... toda lengua confiese que Jesucristo
es el Senor para gloria de Dios Padre.”
Filipenses 2:10-11

A Strategy for Outreach with Latino Persons in North Carolina

Presented by the Latino Ministry Strategy Team
Outreach Committee,
North Carolina Synod,
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
March 24, 2001

Latino Strategy in the NC Synod

“...that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, ...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:10-11

I. Guiding Principles

- A. History/Background
Jesus is the criteria to build our ministry. We are here to share the good news of Jesus Christ as the Savior of us all. We recognize that as our Liberator, Jesus is the author and perfects our faith and has given us the Great Commission.
- B. A holistic approach to ministry; cannot separate spiritual, legal, English as a second language, economic, and health needs of Latinos, e.g. Sagrada Familia in Chicago. See addendum A.
- C. Partnerships with other groups, e.g. other denominations, and community organizations.
- D. Respect for Latino culture and traditions
 - Spanish as language of worship
 - quincineras/ 15 year olds parties
- E. The NC Synod will be enriched by Latinos presence and ministry

II. History of the Migration of Latinos to North Carolina

- A. Migrant workers
Mecklenburg/Charlotte
Why? Mild climate, relatively low cost of living, strong employment growth poles and a host of other social and cultural amenities. (Johnson-Webb and Johnson, 1996).
- B. Current population and trends for North Carolina 1996 estimated to grow at 283%
2000 results 393% to 378,8963
- C. Latino Diversity
Mexican 43%, Puerto Rican 20%, Other 17%, Central A. 7%, South A. 6%, Cuban 6%, and Dominican 1 %. (ditto)
- D. Common Cultural Values of Latinos
e.g. commitment to family, strong work ethic, and Spirituality
- E. Religious experience of Latinos
“as people who are fully grounded in our tradition and our present situation, and who are fully convinced that the gospel, properly understood, preached and lived, is still the only hope for the healing our bones--for the healing of the nations.”
Justo L. Gonzalez, *Teologia en Conjunto* 1997.

III. Latino Strategy Team

In June of 1999, the Outreach Team formed a task force which met to discuss Hispanic/Latino Ministries. Also, in June 1999, at the Synod Assembly, the task force held a meeting with interested Synodical delegates. In October 1999, we met with Rev. Ruben Duran, ELCA. Members of the Task Force included Rev Duran, Pastor Phil Tonnesen, Assistant to the Bishop NC Synod: Pastor Frank Boschen, Division of Outreach ELCA; Pastor Jeff Garner, Steve Dykes, and Victor Guzman, Christ Lutheran, Charlotte; Pastor Jim Bartos, Holy Trinity, Charlotte; Pastor Chris Christian. Holy Trinity, Gastonia; and Pastor Christina Johnson, First Lutheran, Greensboro.

At the North Carolina Synod Council meeting on December 4, 1999, members were officially appointed to serve on this Strategy Team committee. The Synod Council also voted to allocate \$5,000 to develop the strategy.

IV Major Latino Population Centers in North Carolina

A. Latino in Metro Areas

“along the 1-85 corridor in the counties comprising the Research triangle (Wake, Durham, Orange and Chatham), the Piedmont Triad (Guilford and Forsyth), and the Charlotte (Mecklenburg, Cabarrus and Gaston), particularly in the Central Avenue and South Blvd. areas.” (Johnson-Webb and Johnson, 1996).

B. Latinos in Rural Areas

Increasing Hispanic presence or concentration in Cumberland and Onslow Counties--where the military complexes are located.

V. Real people

A. Needs Assessment of Current Ministries

In January of 1999, we called through Governor Hunt’s Office of Hispanic and Latino Affairs list of “Agencies of non-profits providing services to the Latino Community.” This list also included non-Lutheran congregations. Telephone calls were made agencies/churches in the top 10 Latino populated counties to survey what and if services were available.

We also researched the potential for ministry. The discussion included the Charlotte (including two/three site visits) and Greensboro areas. Telephone calls were made to Lutheran churches in the top 10 Latino populated counties to survey if/what services congregational ministries offered.

B. Assets of Latinos Commitment to the Great Commission

In a new country, open to trying new things

VI. NC Synod ministers among Latinos

A. New ministry/Mission Development

- Greater Charlotte
- 62,500+ Latinos (The Spanish Center)
- Holistic approach in keeping with guiding principles
- Future possibilities: Wake and Cumberland counties

B. Equip existing congregations to reach out

- Abiding Savior, Fairview, partnership with St.George Episcopal Church in Asheville
- Christ Lutheran, Winston-Salem, partnerships with Our Lady of Mercy Roman Catholic Church
- Strengthen emerging Latino Leadership
- Network of leadership and of leadership resources
- Exploring of Lutheran Bases Mission in congressional within local Lutheran organizations.

C. Latino Leadership Development

- Identify Leaders
- Making connections with other training offered through the ELCA, e.g. Anti-Racist, Multi-Cultural Committee
- TEEM, Theological Education for Emerging Ministries current enrollment 212+
- Lay training
- Development of future leaders

- D.** Resources (for ministry)
Charlotte/Mecklenburg Outreach Initiative
- Percept study for Metro Charlotte to identify outreach areas
 - Pool financial resources
 - Synod \$5,000 in 2000
\$10,000 in 2001 (budgeted)
 - Other grants, e.g. Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation
 - Division of Outreach of ELCA

- E.** Cross Cultural Education
- Increase Lutheran congregations sensitivities to Latinos
 - Educate Lutheran congregations to Latinos, Latino culture
 - Offer Training forums
 - Synod Assembly, May/June 2001
 - Synod staff in Latino Culture, September 2001
 - Synod Council Retreat
 - Article for Spanish-language papers, *Que es Luterano?*
 - Directory of Services available in the community (brochure)

VII. Implementation/Structure/Organizing for Ministry

- A.** Development Team - recommendations to Synod
- B.** implementation Team. - Latino Strategy
- C.** Flow the Latino ministry fits into current Synod structure e.g. Outreach Committee. Share news of our work with other committees, e.g. Social Ministry.
- D.** Accountability