

Hispanic/Latino Strategic Planning Team
Memphis Conference

Monday, March 25th 2019

El Redentor UMC

Memphis, TN

Attendees: Goyo de la Cruz, Luz Campos, Ronald Rivas, Morgan Stafford, Laura Ibarra-Hernández, Enrique Hernández

As we gathered to continue with the conversation based on the missional guiding priorities we focused our attention in three areas.

- 1) To state clear goals.
- 2) To discern strategies to reach those goals.
- 3) To achieve clarity and simplicity in what we seek to do.

In our guiding missional priorities there are five areas and to include all of them would be a little too much, therefore we have concentrated our conversation in the areas of **New leadership recruitment** and **Laity development** this is also for the emphasis we have heard from the HNP about the need for new youth leaders, that echoes our very own. In the Hispanic ministries in the Memphis AC we are conscious about the importance of developing new disciples of Jesus Christ from within our children and youth ministries. Being conscious also that not everyone is called to full time ministry and believing in the priesthood of all believers we would like to train disciples that can serve in both capacities as laity and ordained ministers.

As a background scenario, we have that in the three churches that conform the Hispanic ministry in the Memphis Conference the average attendance is almost 500 people weekly. One of the strongest ministries that has been in place since the beginning is the ministry with Children and Youth.

CHURCH & Attendees	CHILDREN 0-10 YEARS	YOUTH 11-18 YEARS	PERCENTAGE
Maranatha (300)	60	40	33%
El Redentor (150)	30	20	33%
La Puerta (41)	10	10	49%

In addition to this we also believe that among the adults there is the potential for new leaders, this people may or may not be bilingual but God is calling them also into ministry. We need to provide opportunities for them also whether they have the right documents or not and we need to be very clear with them about this matter and let them know at what capacity they can serve in the UMC.

The **first goal is to produce disciples of Jesus Christ** among our children, youth and adults.

The way to do this is by exploring what curriculum is available for Sunday school, Wednesday night programs, small groups, Vacation Bible School, etc. with an emphasis on a leadership vision.

We also need to reinforce that process by providing bilingual worship services maintaining our worship style, culture and world view (traditions) as Hispanic people.

As we produce disciples with an emphasis in leadership and pray to God to call some of them into ministry, they will become the new leaders, teachers, trainers and pastors.

We need financial resources for the curriculum and other materials we would use in this endeavor.

Therefore the **second goal** is to produce **new servant leaders** to serve our churches and communities. We need leaders in the Jesus' type of leadership that love God and neighbor in practical ways.

As we faithfully produce disciples of Jesus Christ the Lord will call some of them into leadership roles.

In order to achieve this we can use the Modules from the HNP, but setting them in a pace that would facilitate the youth and the adults. For example Module One could be done in a year by meeting once a month and giving time for the participants to do their homework. As for the place of meeting the train could be rotated in all three churches in Memphis, by taking turns it does not become a burden for only one church. The churches have expressed that a number of 20 people trained would be the goal for the first year.

For leadership trainings like conferences, camps and retreats we could also invite pastors and trainers from other Conferences that have experience in areas like discipleship, spiritual gifts and leadership. There could be two of these activities a year; one in the spring and other in the fall. The participants in them would be the 20 people already mentioned but open for people that would like to explore about leadership.

In the practical area there could be two opportunities every year. The first is called "Mission possible" and it is a 3 day program in the summer in which there are groups working in serving the needy in the community by mowing grass, painting walls or fixing little things, etc. Every morning there are devotionals and in the evenings worship services with a specific subject on leadership in the community.

The second is the opportunity to go to a mission trip in the country or abroad. This could be a joint effort with the TN AC. In this mission trip there is practical work, spiritual formation, evangelism and worship experiences with the youth in the receiving field.

Other resources available for the formation of new leaders, in our connectional agencies, is the Path One Lay missionary program. There is a grant also available for this. I would suggest that we apply for it separately from the TN AC, in that way each conference could develop new lay missionaries that would be trained in planting churches.

We would also need resources for the Modules training programs and all other training and serving opportunities.

Since the grant we are working with the HNP is a matching grant and requires equal participation from our part, we would like to request \$12,500.00 to match it and being able to develop both goals.

As part of our conversation we also talked about priorities numbers 3 and 5; in the intentional diversity area we would like to be able to participate in the different comities in the conference therefore we would like to submit some names to the nominating committee.

In the area of assessing and evaluating the Hispanic ministries in both conferences we thought that due to the fact that as Hispanic leaders we know and understand the problematic of ministering to an immigrant community like ours, we are the best qualified to evaluate the advance in this ministry. With this in mind we would like to ask to be evaluated by the Hispanic leadership from the TN AC and vice versa.

Respectfully in Christ,

Rev. Goyo de la Cruz

Rev. Enrique Hernández-Vigil

NASHVILLE EPISCOPAL AREA

DIALOGUE REFLECTIONS

In light of the conversations that took place on March 8 and 9, 2019, the Nashville Episcopal Area continue the process of consultation in order to design a holistic strategy for Hispanic/Latino Ministry for short- and long-term purposes.

MISSIONAL GUIDING PRIORITIES

Cabinet members, conference staff, Hispanic and non-Hispanic clergy and some young laity voices discerned the need to have an Episcopal Area committee to continuously come together to envision and collaborate on five missional guiding priorities that will then be contextualized and implemented by each of the two local conference teams: Memphis and Tennessee Annual Conferences.



GUIDING MISSIONAL PRIORITY 1: CLERGY ACCOMPANIMENT

The group confirmed that the fundamental point for a relevant ministry strategy is to walk with the current and new clergy leaders in two main areas:

- Incarnate United Methodist Theology & Doctrine
- Practice Connectional System

GUIDING MISSIONAL PRIORITY 2: LAITY DEVELOPMENT

For the gathered team, the heart of a vibrant Christian community is relationships that are multigenerational, cross-cultural, vulnerable and honest. Therefore, it is imperative to create and implement processes that cultivate this understanding.

- Empower New People
- Cross Cultural Factor
- Priority New Generations
- Place at the Table
- Based on True Relationships

GUIDING MISSIONAL PRIORITY 3: INTENTIONAL DIVERSITY

Together the group affirmed the urgent need to be intentional on including persons of diverse walks of life in all the levels of the Nashville Episcopal Area's structure in order to reflect God's creation present in its context.

- Staff at Annual Conference
- Conference Hispanic Ministry

GUIDING MISSIONAL PRIORITY 4: NEW LEADERSHIP RECRUITMENT

In order to accomplish the holistic strategy, it was recognized that in order to be faithful to the divine call to *make disciples for the transformation of the world*, it is essential to discover, equip, connect and send a new generation capable of building the church of the 21st century.

- Well Trained
- UMC Ethos
- Bilingual
- Dependable
- Lay and Clergy

GUIDING MISSIONAL PRIORITY 5: CONFERENCE LEADERSHIP

Based on more than twenty years of experience, it was highlighted to continuously review and improve the ministry models and efforts utilized by the different levels of the Nashville Episcopal area to plant and develop relevant service to the surrounding diverse communities.

- Assess the Conference Hispanic/Latino

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Together with the discernment of strategic missional priorities, the group identified a set of theological and practical values to drive the work.

