

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL PLAN FOR HISPANIC/LATINO MINISTRY: A TIMELESS VISION IN A FRACTURED WORLD

I. INTRODUCTION: A TIMELESS VISION MAY BE SHAKEN BUT ULTIMATELY IT CANNOT BE DEFEATED

A timeless vision may be shaken but ultimately it cannot be defeated. The General Conference of 1992 reclaimed the Creator’s vision by asserting that the mission of the church is to be “discerning, unrestricted, and all-inclusive: wise and visionary in formulation, global in focus, and including all persons in God’s world.” The same year—more than three decades ago, The United Methodist Church faithfully birthed one of the six ethnic national plans as part of God’s scandalous and enigmatic actions to reaffirm the inclusion of people from diverse cultural identities, family traditions, socio-economic status, sexual identity and political affiliations.

The Lord of the History first envisioned a garden of equity and mercy for the whole creation. God’s promise of a world full of life has been eclipsed by a pervasive sense of individualism that ignores, incarcerates the disenfranchised, decriminalizes family separations, and trivializes human sexuality. A profound disenchantment invades the consciousness of society and church as one by one— notwithstanding their faith, race or sexuality—have been challenged to gather the shattered pieces of what was perceived to be a coherent story of meaning and purpose.

The horizon that was once thought to be within a short reach seems vanished yet the discovery of what was always there has emerged. Namely, the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan’s vision of Accompaniment and Service is created together with boundless courage with the underserved, underprivileged, and underrepresented for as long as it is needed.

Our vision continues to defy monolithic paradigms of life and ministry, particularly in the historical age that defines the 21st century. “Forget the former things: do not dwell in the past” has been exactly what the ethnic plans have been listening and pursuing as the changing demographics continue to demand new models of leadership (Isaiah 43:18). “See, what I am doing is a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43:19) persists a Creator whose vision longs for relevant leaders for the transformation of the world at such a time like this.

We are a robust strand of more than 25-year worth of narratives ranging from a racial, economic, political and religious spectrum. The DNA of the Plan is a collage of diverse stories comprised of fragility and resilience; setbacks and breakthroughs; and certainty and ambiguity. The collage of stories that incarnate the Plan has been sketched in the busy streets and churches of Honduras, in the strained yet liberating classrooms of community centers of Los Angeles, CA, in the hallways of universities in Oklahoma, and seminaries in North Carolina, in the unyielding resistance of DACA-mented students, and in a rooted and ready Latina who became the first Guatemalan-American legislator in the state of Illinois.

The following stories are not only a confirmation that God is “making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland” but also a roadmap to continue that discerning, unrestricted, and all-inclusive vision as we move on to the third decade of the 21st century.

II. PRELIMINARY STEPS OF THE ETHNIC PLAN'S COLLABORATION

Previous General Conference Efforts

For many years together, the six Ethnic Plans have consistently met, planned, collaborated, supported and worked to propose initiatives, principles and strategies. The Ethnic Plans have consistently shared its best practices within this partnership and genuine relationships have been built across racial and cultural lines.

Historically, the Ethnic Plans have stood ready and strong to resource annual conferences and local congregations to reconcile and rebuild torn relationships during turbulent times while proven effective in building new relationships, reaching those on the margins of society and connecting those who are seeking a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

The work of the Plans has been to strengthen ethnic and multicultural churches to grow with vitality and life-giving love. As we continue the great mission to invite, nurture and encourage all persons to become disciples of Jesus Christ, we believe in the end, we will be known by our love.

Joint Efforts in Annual Conferences

The six Ethnic Plans are positioned to demonstrate the potential of their unique partnership and unity of purpose in a time when the United Methodist as it becomes a global church in a multi-faceted, fast paced, non-traditional, multi-cultural multi-ethnic world.

There are four areas the Plans can demonstrate the power of solidarity and synergy of partnership. The common ground in the programming and initiatives on which to expand and find commonality and sharing of resources.

1. Training and Leadership Development of Laity
2. Engaging Young Adult Leadership
3. New Church Starts and Church Revitalization in communities with changing demographics and gentrification.
4. Promoting Social Justice through Community/Church Action.

First Gathering with Episcopal representatives & Connectional Table

On October 10, 2018, the six Ethnic Plans gathered to discuss the future of racial ethnic work in the United Methodist church. As a result, the Plans are committed to embody the unity of Christ through engaging, activating, and moving together toward the collaborative response to the changing mission field. The diverse communities represented by the six ethnic plans, are persuaded by God's spirit that our unity rests in their diversity of color, race, language, theological, and cultural perspectives. Therefore, the Plans will honor the distinctiveness of each context and the ethnic communities just as creation nurtures and embraces us all.

Recommendations

First, this mutual effort and comprehensive process must be compatible with the purposes of our respective ethnic plans. Secondly, those unique purposes must reflect a multitiered and multicultural partnership for program design. Our obedience to the divine mandate is the only force behind our

confidence, which will be sustained by working on partnership program development together. Third, we have yet to explore specific ways in which we will implement new collaborations.

- Mission Focus: Reaching those in need through innovative methods in true partnerships, especially with young adults.
- Revenue Focus: Ensuring a sound future through World Service and renewed financial development.
- Infrastructure Building with Autonomy: Ensuring a sound base on which to build and expand with meaningful performance measurements and organizing our people resources.

III. HISPANIC/LATINO QUADRENNIAL ACOMPLISHMENTS

A. Leadership Development

Annual Conference and Church Strategy Development

“During the past several years, the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference has had the privilege of being in partnership with the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan. We have received multi-year funding for our work, taken advantage of consultation and conversation with the Plan leaders. As we continue to develop our work, I remain confident in the ability of those involved with the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan to provide us with the strategic resourcing we need to continue to advance our work in the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference.”

Rev. Lowell Greathouse
Mission and Ministry Coordinator/DCM
Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference

During the 2017-20 quadrennium the Plan in partnership with the four programmatic agencies accompanied all the annual conferences in the U.S and across the globe in strategically aligning the resources available in the connection for the identification, recruitment and training of a new generation of principled leaders to impact their ever-changing local communities as well as continuing the recruitment and support of current first-generation leaders involved in racial ethnic ministry. This accompaniment was carried out by providing technical and financial assistance, identifying and commissioning Racial Ethnic Missionaries, and developing and deploying consultants and facilitators with the skills, tools and experience to respond to the needs of annual conferences in their own contexts.

Empowering First Generation Hispanic and Latino leaders

“The partnership and resources of the Hispanic/Latino Plan has been instrumental in the process of empowering the first-generation Hispanic Leaders in the Wisconsin Conference. It is through these resources that we have been able to provide trainings and equip our laity and clergy to become leaders and agents of change in their growing Hispanic/Latino communities. We celebrate that in this quadrennial, eight new Hispanic/Latino congregations have been planted in new places, reaching out new disciples for Jesus Christ”.

Rev. Jorge Mayorga
Director of Congregational Development

Wisconsin Annual Conference

The Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan (HLMP) has strategically identified, recruited and trained new leaders for ministry among members of first generation of Hispanic immigrants to address the needs of their ever-changing local communities. The national office has carried out this objective by continuing and re-focusing the Lay Missioner program for the formation of first generation Hispanic/Latino immigrant leaders.

In addition, diverse materials were contextualized in order to make available new paths of ministry. The Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan worked the curriculums and processes to adapt them to the unique contexts of each annual conferences and their surrounding communities in order to address their challenges and realities. Teams of intergenerational and intercultural consultants were formed to enrich the facilitation processes which offered diverse perspectives and experiences according to the needs of their particular contexts.

Leadership Formation Achievements

- 26 annual conferences accompanied in 5 jurisdictions
- 14 GBGM Racial/Ethnic missionaries commissioned
- Licensing School and Course of Study Spanish and Portuguese
- \$1.2M granted dollars matched by \$1.4M from partners
- 120 workshops on leadership development including English, Spanish and Portuguese
- A series of multicultural and multi-lingual new resources developed for several ministry tracks
- Accompaniment was provided to the Honduras Mission by contextualizing resources
- 20 consultants were trained and deployed to assist the implementation of racial/ethnic plans

B. Church Growth

Ministry Team Training for New Places of Worship and Communal Services

“I have worked with my wife developing a very peculiar ministry based on an intensive pastoral support to the Brazilian Community... our work consists in daily visitations, social support for families who came from Brazil, without financial conditions for basic needs like food, housing, immigration issues, and cultural adaptation.”

Rev. Juarez Goncalves
Director of Brazilian & Hispanic Ministry
New England Annual Conference

Following the first recommendation of the 2015 National Consultation of Hispanic/Latino Ministry that urged the United Methodist Church to raise up and support young Hispanic/Latino Leaders as “Bridge Builders” and partners in ministry for the church and world. The Plan impacted local churches and the communities they serve by fostering the creation of a process for the ongoing formation of new principled leaders in 24 annual conferences.

Based on the experienced exponential growth among the Brazilian Community in the United States, in partnership with GBGM, the Plan led a National Consultation on Brazilian Ministry toward building a better understanding of the rich and diverse future of ethnic ministry in the United Methodist Church. In

partnership with Discipleship Ministries, the Plan has been working with consultants in order to equip Hispanic/Latino church planters across the connection. A national team of key leaders was formed to organize and strategize different ways to provide networking opportunities, kindle peer learning, and develop curricula.

Ministry Team Empowering Grants

“The California Pacific Conference has benefited greatly in the past few years from a creative and productive partnership with the Plan for Hispanic/Latino Ministry. The resources, relationships and strategic conversations provided us through this relationship have been central to the development of our “You Are Not Alone/No Estan Solos” Program which provides a network of ministries of solidarity, service and advocacy among our immigrant & refugee sisters and brothers throughout our conference.”

*Rev. David K. Farley
Director of Justice and Compassion Ministries
California-Pacific Annual Conference*

Ministry Team Empowering Grants are utilized by Local Mission Teams and annual conferences for the organic development of their new ministries. The three categories are Youth Development, Training Centers, & Social Justice Centers. With support of Global Ministries and annual conferences, technical and financial resources were deployed to strengthen unfolding ministries. The Plan has accompanied diverse projects across the United States through empowering grants that have been vital for the growth and formation of young adults discerning to be in the life of the church and society.

Church Growth Achievements

- 24 of matching grants in the development of new places of worship of \$429K matched by \$1.0M from partners
- 4,500 unaccompanied immigrant children were incorporated to the life of local churches
- 130 existing local churches in 26 annual conferences went thru a process of assessment-action-assessment to transition their current ministry to become multicultural/multigenerational
- In order to better equip the growing of Brazilian Ministry in the US of the UNMC, a national consultation toward the future has been organized

C. Ministry With The Poor

Global Migration and Other Social Concerns

“No Estan Solos (You Are Not Alone) -- program for unaccompanied migrant children -- was first initiated as a response to the influx of unaccompanied migrant children from the northern triangle, who are migrating into the United States and are fleeing from gang violence, extortion, abuse, and poverty. When I first heard of this program, I knew that I had to be involved! As a daughter of immigrants and as a person living in an immigrant community, I saw the importance of this work. It was through this experience that I witnessed the interrelatedness between immigration law/policy, criminal law/policy, and social work. That is why I am an aspiring social worker and lawyer who aims to address the issues of crimmigration (criminal law and immigration) with the empathy and skill of a social worker.”

Rosie Rios

Lay Member & Head of the Delegation 2016 General Conference
California-Pacific Annual Conference

As the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan continues to work on migration issues, the learning has significantly increased making possible the development of more strategic partnerships and contextual workshops that connect directly with domestic stakeholders as well as those around the globe.

Many migrants and potential migrants today are Methodists; some are welcomed in new places, bringing new vigor to old congregations, while others face discrimination and exploitation. Migration today is inextricably linked to the issues of Christian community, evangelism, new church development, the nurturing of church leadership, and more importantly in our role in the connection as immigrant plan.

Ministry with the Poor Achievements

- In partnership with UMCOR grants were provided to the UMC taskforce on immigration to solidify the spirit of collaboration and service
- To better understand the realities of the Central America Triangle, the Plan has established and expanded relationships with partners in the region
- In a time of racial profiling and violation of basic human rights several resources have been produced as a mean to accompany and support the newcomers to US

IV. 2021-2024 GOALS AND STRUCTURES

A. The Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan Goals

1. Leadership Development

The ethnic plans have learned to reconstruct the formation of our leadership in a radically new way that requires not only the creation of new curricula but adopting structural changes. These new paradigms must include contextual and contemporary understandings in identifying, recruiting, equipping and deploying leadership within the denomination. Our learning has helped cultivate a holistic program of leadership development that includes accompanying annual conferences by developing strategies to address the nurture of new congregations and work on immigration and other critical social concerns. These are not three different stages, or three disparate concerns, but the very context and the clear purpose of the leadership development efforts.

Empowering First Generation H/L Leaders

The Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan will strategically identify, recruit and train new leaders for ministry among members of first generation of Hispanic immigrants to address the needs of their ever-changing local communities.

- Lay Missioner
- Certified Lay Minister
- Dialogues Resources
- Candidacy Certification Accompaniment
- Licensing and Ordination

Conference Teams for Strategic Development

The Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan will provide a process of *acompañamiento* (accompaniment) to annual conferences and the global church to strategically develop diverse teams at conference level. The objective of these teams is to lead the process of aligning resources available in the connection for the identification, recruitment and empowering of a new generation of principled leaders to impact their communities. This process is facilitated by the Plan by providing technical and financial assistance, and through the deployment of consultants and facilitators.

- Conference Teams
- Annual Conference Accompaniment

Ethnic Plans Collaborative Initiatives:

The work of the Ethnic Plans will continue to invest energy and resources to strengthen ethnic and multicultural churches to grow with vitality and life-giving love by strategically reaching those in need through innovative methods in true partnerships, especially with youth and young adults.

2. Church Growth

New Places for Worship and Communal Service

Based on the challenges and opportunities of the ethnic communities in the 21st century, New Faith Communities must be understood as places of freedom to share and build community that will transform people and society from the perspective of God's Reign. The goal is to develop and equip leadership who will promote full congregational development by sharing faith, challenging each other, and seeking ways to be involved in whatever forms of ministry and advocacy for justice the Lord requires in their communities.

- Community Centers
- New Faith Communities
- Emerging Generations

3. Walking With The Poor

Global Migration & Other Social Concerns

Global conditions regarding migration continue to be staggering. An unprecedented number of people are being forced to migrate to escape war, poverty, the impact of climate change and persecution. The location in the world that have witnessed the heaviest dislocations in just the last several years has been in Central America moving both northward to the US and south again. The Plan alongside with the general agencies and other partners have aimed to understand, monitor, and strategize considering the unfolding situations that affect migrants across the globe.

- Latin American Network
- Voices and Dreams Program
- UMC Immigration Task Force
- Abundant Health Partnership

B. Structures and Resources

1. General Agencies Partnership

The United Methodist Church's mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, a mission that calls all of us to go into a world of needs and challenges, in which the ethnic

communities are now a priority. However, based on the experiences and assessments of previous quadrennia, the Plan is persuaded that God is calling the whole church to become fully engaged with all people to fulfill our United Methodist Church's mission.

In obedience to the supreme mandate to be one and confident that, by God's grace, the general agencies will continue partnering with the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan to face the complexity of challenges and opportunities provided by a world that more than ever prioritizes inequality, individualism, and violence instead of the principles of God's kingdom.

In ongoing collaboration with the Ethnic Ministerial Plans, each general agency is expected to continue collaborating in the implementation of their proposed programmatic goals and objectives for the 2021-2024 quadrennium, as described in this quadrennial proposal.

1. To provide processes of accompaniment to assist annual conferences on developing and assessing their strategic plans for ethnic ministries. This accompaniment will be based on guidelines developed under the direction of the respective Board or committees from each of the ethnic Plans by establishing holistic partnerships which includes financial and technical resources.
2. To design, create, contextualize, test, iterate, and implement programs, initiatives and resources that applies different methodologies to identify and respond to each particular ethnic community.
3. To design and produce contextualized written resources and workshops to address the systemic and structural issues related to ethnic communities such as immigration, health care, education, unemployment, housing and poverty, mass incarceration, retribution, and other social issues.
4. To support the licensing school for the development of missional placements by partnering with theological schools and general agencies to strengthen the Course of Study program.
5. To continue looking for alternative models of theological education for pastoral leaders with undergraduate United Methodist colleges, seminaries, and/or training centers to facilitate the pastors' transition for ordination.
6. To identify placement opportunities for missionaries that support the ethnic plans' stated strategies, priorities, and goals; and to recruit, train, commission, deploy, and accompany missionaries.
7. To promote and administer the National Challenge Fund for Hispanic Ministries.

2. Executive Director Office

To support and coordinate the implementation of the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan, the executive committee recommends the continuation of an office led by a director and staff, who will be guided and supervised by the executive committee. Several factors make the director and staff of the Plan important and necessary for its effective implementation.

- The director and staff will strive to work with all the general agencies and annual conferences of the church to facilitate interagency work.

- Only the national office may provide relevant resources, data, models of ministry, process of leadership development, pedagogical methodologies, and the regular communication and exchange of success stories demanded by annual conferences.
- Having done an extensive assessment of Hispanic/Latino ministry, the HLMP recognizes the need for ongoing assessment and research of the denomination’s work among Hispanics/Latinos.
- In order to fulfill the work of the HLMP, a national office shall be continued with at least one full-time, unencumbered executive staff person, with additional staff as needed and financially possible, administratively placed within Global Ministries under the direction of the National Committee of the HLMP. The executive shall be selected by the National Committee of the HLMP in consultation with Global Ministries.

3. Committee Members Organization

The Plan recommends that the Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan continues to be the entity responsible for overseeing and guiding the implementation of the HLMP and be composed of 15 members that reflect the broader constituency with regard to gender, age, lay versus clergy status, Hispanics/Latinos and non-Hispanics who meet the following criteria:

INSTITUTIONAL REPRESENTATIVES	SOURCE OF FUNDS	MEMBERS
Council of Bishops	Episcopal Fund	2
MARCHA: Hispanic Caucus	HLMP	1
Brazilian Ministries	HLMP	1
One elected board member from: GBOD, GBHEM, GBCS, GBGM & UMCOM	General Agency	5
Methodist Church of Puerto Rico	HLMP	1
Young Adult	HLMP	1
Youth	HLMP	1
Members at Large	HLMP	3
Total		15

In addition to committee members, at least one staff person from each of the program agencies who has responsibility for Hispanic/Latino ministries including one representative from The United Methodist Publishing House, General Commission on Religion and Race, and the General Commission on the Status and Role of Women— these latter two who will serve as monitors (expenses will be covered by their agencies).

All members of this Committee must maintain regular, vital and organic communication between the national office and the constituencies they represent.

4. National Committee Functions and Responsibilities

The Executive Committee recommends that this body be charged:

- a. To set policy and direction for the development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the HLMP which include direct supervision of the Plan’s office.

- b. To lead the church in the development of guidelines for grants and programs for Hispanic/Latino ministries with the general agencies, seminaries, annual conferences, training centers, and others responsible for implementing components of the Plan.
- c. To coordinate responses to the Plan of all the general agencies and annual conferences and facilitate interagency collaboration.
- d. To undertake program initiatives in response to identified needs in collaboration with the general programmatic agencies, seminaries, training centers, and annual conferences.
- e. To review grant applications and provide final approval of the distribution of funds allocated to the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan.
- f. To revise the existing guidelines, as needed, for the Challenge Fund and to assist in the promotion of the Fund.
- g. To promote and support the necessary ongoing research on issues affecting Hispanic/Latino communities and the mission of The United Methodist Church as a base for the implementation of programs.
- h. To monitor and assist in the evaluation of programs in Hispanic/Latino ministries by the general agencies and annual conferences.
- i. To build a strong relationship with a holistic strategy for Latin America and the rest of the globe.
- j. To have a representative in the UM Immigration Task Force.
- k. To make an oral report, in addition to a written report, to the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church.

C. Financial Request for 2021-2024

To achieve all the above goals with the existing organization, we request the 2020 General Conference approve \$3,143,830.00 for the continuation of the implementation of the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan during the 2021-2024 quadrennium. This amount will be allocated to Global Ministries in consultation with the National Committee on Hispanic/Latino Ministry. The funds allocated to Global Ministries through the HLMP, with the exception of those funds designated for the national office, the coordinator, staff, and the National Committee of the HLMP, shall be used for program initiatives to strengthen and support annual conference and local church ministries according to the priorities and criteria of the Plan.

In order to fulfill the work of the HLMP, a national office shall be continued with at least one full-time, unencumbered executive staff person, with additional staff as needed and financially possible, administratively placed within Global Ministries under the direction of the National Committee of the HLMP. The executive shall be selected by the National Committee of the HLMP in consultation with Global Ministries.

A portion of the program initiatives outlined in the HLMP shall be delivered through the budgets of the various general program agencies of The UMC and their governing bodies. All funds allocated through the HLMP shall be designated as separate line items within the general programs of Global Ministries.

We recommend that these funds be allocated to the general program of Global Ministries according to the responsibilities assigned with final allocation to be determined by the National Committee of the HLMP in consultation with the General Council of Finance and Administration.

V. 2021-24 QUADRENNIAL BUDGET

General Board of Global Ministries	\$3,143,830
Empowering First Generation H/L Leaders	
Conference Teams for Strategic Development	
Ethnic Plans Collaborative Initiatives	
New Places for Worship and Communal Service	
Global Migration and Other Social Concerns	
Program coordinator office	
Administrative fees	
National committee training	
Grand Total	\$3,143,830

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

The relevancy of the church to transform the world depends on vibrant leadership, and to a great extent, the cultivation of laity into faithful disciples depends on committed and principled clergies who are bold enough to see the Christ in the other. It is by this conviction that the executive committee is confident that the goals and recommendations presented in this 2020 General Conference proposal of the Hispanic/Latino Ministry Plan will make the United Methodist Church become the source of the vibrant leadership needed to face a world that is consumed with social-political and religious divisions. **Our timeless vision may be shaken but ultimately it will not be defeated.**