

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH'S STRATEGIC VISION FOR REACHING LATINOS/HISPANICS



JULY 2009

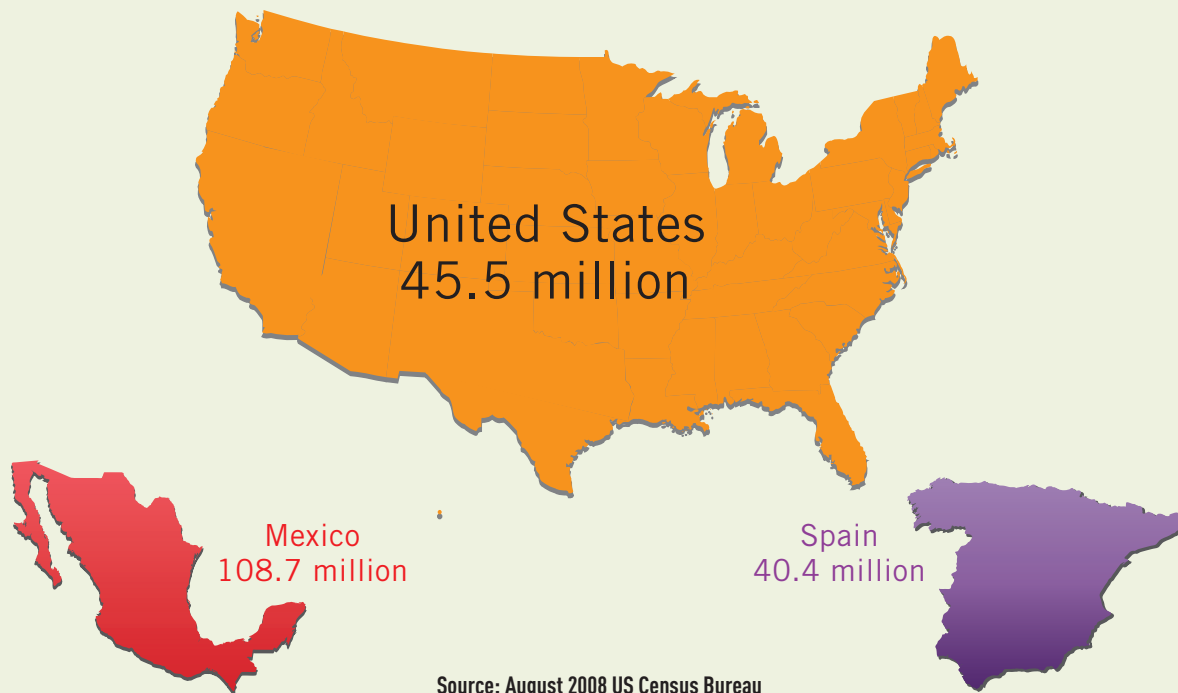
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Introduction

In the midst of various challenges resulting in the Episcopal Church's membership decline, our church also faces the unprecedented opportunity to embrace the changing times with excitement, zeal, and hope. The dramatic increase in the numbers of Latinos/Hispanics in communities throughout the country should be seen as an evangelistic opportunity and hope for the church.

The United States is the Second Largest Latino Country in the World



As the report by the 20/20 task force put it in 2001, "Such radically changing demographics should encourage the church to be courageous, resourceful, passionate, and enthusiastic in its response to these new circumstances." This strategic document is a call for the Church to face its present and future in a spirit of discernment and mission as it responds to the growth of Latino/Hispanic communities in all regions of our country.

STRATEGIC VISION COMMITTEE

Recognizing the promise for transformation that can occur with the encounter between The Episcopal Church and Latinos/Hispanics, a coalition of Latino/Hispanic leaders has prepared this strategy for effective evangelistic and pastoral ministries for a changing time. Through the leadership of the Office of Latino/Hispanic Ministries, our committee was comprised of church planters, Latino/a marketing experts, and both clergy and laity from various areas of the U.S. We began this two-year process by using the skills and concepts of professional marketers, and under their guidance, we employed traditional marketing planning methodology to develop a strategy for growing the Church within Latino/Hispanic communities.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

Based upon two years of evaluation regarding the Episcopal Church's forty-plus years of ministry in Latino/Hispanic communities, we have learned the following key points:

1. Latino/Hispanic ministries have tended to be equated with immigrant ministry. Because of the great migration of persons from Latin America and the Caribbean that have changed the demographic landscape across the country, the preponderance of past and existing Latino/Hispanic ministries has focused on ministry among immigrants. The unintended consequence of this focus has resulted in the neglect of long-term Latinos/Hispanics.
2. Over forty years history of ministry with Latino/Hispanic communities provides us with an awareness of what works and what does not work. This period of ministry, often a result of trial and error, has resulted in an awareness of the ingredients necessary for effective ministry in Latino/Hispanic

communities. Among these ingredients is the need for a more expansive scope for this area of ministry.

3. The Latino/Hispanic community is complex and multileveled. With over forty years of on-the-ground experience, we recognize that there is not "a Latino/Hispanic community," but many different and particular communities, each with its own historical, regional, and cultural identity. With such an appreciation of the multifaceted and multidimensional nature of the Latino/Hispanic realities in our society, we recognize the need for different approaches of evangelistic, pastoral, liturgical, and social ministries to reach these different populations that consist of different demographic, socioeconomic, and cultural characteristics. In short, Latino/Hispanic ministry has now come of age, recognizing that "one size" does not fit all.

SHIFTING TOWARD NEW CONCEPTS OF LATINO/HISPANIC MINISTRIES

Based upon what we have learned and our evaluation of past efforts of Latino/Hispanic ministry, we have determined that there is a need to shift the dominant concept of this form of ministry, from an immigrant-focused ministry to one that takes into account sixty-percent of the Latino/Hispanic population—second, third, and later generations. This is a necessary shifting of the focus, since immigrant communities and parishes themselves must deal with the cultural shifts that occur in subsequent generations.

OUR DOCUMENT'S FOCUS

We hope to repeat the success which we have learned from professional Latino/Hispanic marketers, who have proven success in reaching the Latino/Hispanic demographic. As our marketing experts advised us to do, we have put human faces to the groups we hope to

reach. It is our hope that this document will help serve the greater good by remaining strategically focused in scope.

While we explicitly understand that there is a need for a comprehensive document that presents a fully developed “how-to” manual that addresses this varied population, this marketing plan is not that type of document. This marketing plan takes a specific segment of the Latino/Hispanic population and develops a tailored evangelistic and pastoral approach

based on relevant demographic data and surveys by such prestigious research institutions as the Pew Research Center.

There are many different approaches the Church can take as it ministers to the needs of varied Latino/Hispanic communities. What we offer here is one way; it is by no means the only way. After a series of consultations and thorough research, we are confident the following marketing plan represents a faithful and effective witness of The Episcopal Church in the midst of Latino/Hispanic communities.

Situation Review: Learnings from Past Plans

The committee started out by looking at what the Episcopal Church has done in the past. We reviewed previous plans and initiatives related to Latino/Hispanic ministry and diversity constituencies such as *Doubling by 2020* (The 20/20 task force, 2001).

One of the problems in the past was that Latino/Hispanic ministry development initiatives in the Episcopal Church focused on broad demographics and lacked clear, immediate, actionable, and measurable goals for evaluation of progress and did not allow for ongoing adjustments. Sadly, almost 40 years of documents, resolutions, good will, and immeasurable effort from talented individuals has yet to produce results. Nothing the Church has produced so far has reflected the growth of the Latino/Hispanic community, the changing face of America, and the dispersal of this community into a sizable percentage of the 7,000-plus neighborhoods of the Episcopal Church.

In reviewing the 40-year history of Latino/Hispanic initiatives in the Episcopal Church, our committee recognized the following obstacles:

- There are no mechanisms in place for sharing best practices across congregations.
- There is no “how-to” guide for those parishes who recognize the need to serve this community.
- There is a lack of tools and resources for Latino/Hispanic ministry to be presented and implemented in a culturally sensitive, engaging manner.
- In spite of several documents and studies regarding the need for seminaries to provide training for Latino/Hispanic clergy, the current situation in U.S. Episcopal seminaries is less than adequate. They have no strategic plan to address this deficit.
- There is no program for the creation of leadership and lay leadership; one that recognizes how our leadership is currently created and where glass ceilings need to be lifted to foster true change.

We also took a look at the work being done in Latino/Hispanic planning by other mainline Christian churches. We reviewed *Encuentro and Mission: A Renewed Pastoral Framework for Hispanic Ministry* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002); *National Plan for Latino/Hispanic Ministry* (United Methodist Church, 2004); *Strategy for Ministry with the Hispanic-Latino Constituencies in the Presbyterian Church* (The Presbyterian Church USA, 2002); and *ELCA Latino Ministry Strategy* (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1997).

While other denominations are having varying degrees of success with their programs, they too fall short in terms of measuring success and benchmarks of impact. It also seems that all denominations are struggling with the issue of leadership and the creation of lay leadership. Most of their plans focus on this shortfall but lack “how-to” details or an examination of subgroups within Latino/Hispanic target groups.

Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) Analysis: Interviews with Latino/Hispanic Episcopal Congregations

Our methodology initially called for interviewing 100 Episcopal Churches in Latino/Hispanic communities that exhibit the following characteristics:

Emerging communities (churches with a recent influx of immigrants)

Stagnant communities (older churches that are not growing but have Hispanic populations in the community)

“We’re Here” communities (churches with high Hispanic population densities in the surrounding community representing two or more generations)

Not surprisingly, in the first two types of communities (i.e., Emerging and Stagnant) there are congregations that have viable Latino/Hispanic worship and other forms of programs and outreach in the community. Ironically, Episcopal Churches in the “We’re Here” category do not have any perceptible

outreach programs to the Latino/Hispanic community. Thirty of the churches located in these high Latino/Hispanic density areas refused to be interviewed for this survey. Their reluctance to participate in the survey, in addition to their lack of existing programs, seems to indicate that they do not perceive the Latino/Hispanic population in their area as a potential congregant segment.

Because of the refusal of the churches in the “We’re Here” category to be interviewed, the bulk of our findings are based on the 70 responses received from those churches located in the Emerging and Stagnant areas.

Of the 70 telephone surveys conducted, a classic interview instrument was utilized,

namely, the Strength/Weakness/Opportunities/Threats (SWOT) analysis. This SWOT survey aims at (1) ferreting out the internal strengths and weaknesses inherent in congregations located in these two types of communities; and (2) articulating the perceptions of the priests and worship leaders regarding the external opportunities and perceived threats facing these congregational leaders working in these Latino/Hispanic communities.

The willingness of these congregational leaders of these churches to spend time speaking with us was invaluable as we sought to find what is driving or thwarting their success.

It is worth noting that those churches surveyed varied in size in terms of congregational size and worship service attendance (from 40 Latino/Hispanic congregants up to 800), the perceptions and responses were quite similar. Their perceptions of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) were virtually the same, aside from issues of financial and diocesan support.

Some key findings within the emerging and stagnant groups are extremely encouraging.

Here are some of their responses:

STRENGTHS

- Meaningful sermons
- Familiar liturgy
- Engaging music with strong integration, participation, and volunteer choir
- Lay ministry opportunities
- Focus on spiritual formation
- Christian education for children
- Social service programs
- Hospitality
- Special celebrations: Virgen de Guadalupe, Quinceañeras, and Día de los Muertos

WEAKNESSES

- Sense of disconnection between churches and their diocese
- Lack of Episcopal congregational resources in Spanish
- Lack of theological formation for laity
- Difficulties and obstacles in ordination process
- Clergy-driven ministry
- Unrealistic expectation that congregations be financially self-sustaining
- Lack of stewardship training
- Growth impeded by small groups of families who are unwelcoming
- Exclusion based on nationality

OPPORTUNITIES

- Programs for children and youth
- Spreading awareness about its work with Latinos/Hispanics
- Other denominations' reluctance to minister to Latinos/Hispanics

THREATS

- Congregational conflicts due to classism and immigration status
- Lack of Spanish-speaking priests
- Recent theological positions of the Episcopal Church that are hard for conservative Latinos/Hispanics
- Chronic transience due to jobs and current immigration law



KEY FINDINGS

Based on the data collected from the SWOT analysis, the most successful churches are those with Latino/Hispanic clergy, those that offer services in Spanish, those that have their own building or installation, and those that have a dominant Latino/Hispanic congregation – even if it operates as a mission or parallel to the dominant Anglo congregation. This finding is corroborated in the Pew Religion Study.

Researching the Latino/Hispanic Population

Often the Latino/Hispanic population is viewed as a homogenous group, when, in fact, Latinos/Hispanics are actually not a single race but a mixture of many races and ethnicities and different levels of acculturation to U.S. culture.

The first question that should come to mind is “What is a Latino/Hispanic? What do we mean by that?” Our intent is to present a well-supported understanding of where we are, where we are going, and where we would like to be in relation to Latino/Hispanic ministry in our church. Our point of departure will be this: Latinos/Hispanics are actually not a race but a mixture of nationalities, ethnicities and levels of integrations (acculturation) to the U.S. mainstream culture.

DIFFERENCES

- There are various Latino/Hispanic subgroups, relating to what country of origin one identifies with, for example: Mexican-American or Cuban-American.
- Latinos/Hispanics have varying degrees of acculturation. This is a function of where someone was born (U.S. or foreign born), the length of time they have lived in the U.S. or what generation they are, ties to

their “mother country,” and the density of the Latino/Hispanic population in their community. Latinos/Hispanics may not “progress” in a linear path from

- (1) Isolation, being a new arrival to
- (2) Adaptation, surviving in new culture while keeping old traditions to
- (3) Biculturalism, being comfortable in both worlds and languages to
- (4) Acculturation, taking on the new culture and de-emphasizing the old culture.

Population densities, proximity to family and friends, and education all play very important roles in determining Latino/Hispanic cultural identity.

- Not all Latinos/Hispanics speak, read, and write Spanish. Many of the same factors that determine the level of acculturation effect language: the country of birth, time in the U.S., population density within the community, and the language spoken at home and work.
- Documentation status differs. While there is currently a perception in the U.S. that most Latinos/Hispanics are undocumented immigrants, this is very false. The majority legal residents, citizens or U.S. born.

SIMILARITIES

- There is usually an emphasis on religion and spirituality among Latino/Hispanic groups.
- There is a shared language among Latino/Hispanic groups, but there are variances.
- There is a shared concept of time (loose schedule) and personal space (not afraid of getting close).
- There is a shared social/political dynamic regarding group structure and internal organization (i.e., role of leader, type of

leadership, internal organization, and group roles).

- There is a general reliance on extended family and immediate social groups before attempting to affiliate with institutions.
- There is an emphasis on the value of interdependent family relationships rather than on independence.
- Most Latinos/Hispanics have respect for elders, professionals, and titles.
- Other cultural markers, such as certain foods, music, dance, and sports are generally similar among Latino/Hispanic groups.

As stated above, cultural identity and language usage are highly influenced by the generation a person represents: foreign born (first generation), U.S. born (second generation), or third generation or more.

PUBLISHED RESEARCH

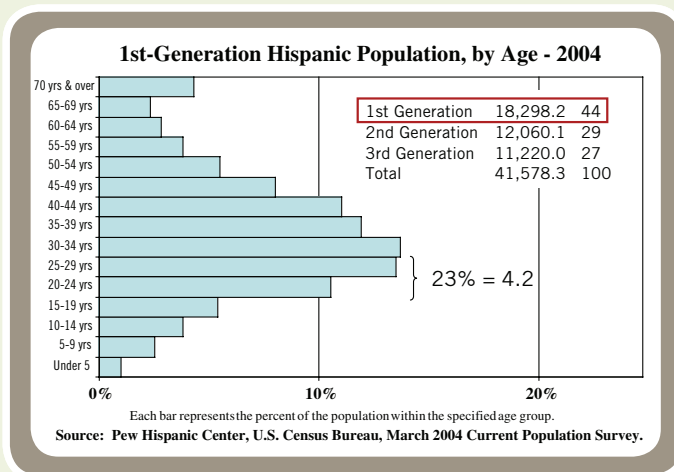
As part of our committee’s background research, we conducted a demographic review of Latino/Hispanic population trends and dispersal of Latinos/Hispanics in the U.S., reviewing key industry research related to Latinos/Hispanics and worship, such as *Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion 2007* (The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and The Pew Hispanic Center, 2007); *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey* (The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2008); and “Hispanic Churches in American Public Life: Summary of Findings” by Gaston Espinosa, Virgilio Elizondo, and Jesse Miranda in *Interim Reports* (Institute for Latino Studies, University of Notre Dame, March 2003).

In formulating which groups to focus on, we examined the following charts with an emphasis on young adults and 20-somethings, who would be in a position to make their own decisions

about worship and life. An overwhelming 74% of foreign-born Latinos/Hispanics are Roman Catholic; we are seeking those who are young enough to be influenced by the way of life now present around them in the U.S. and who may be seeking to break from the religious traditions of their native countries.

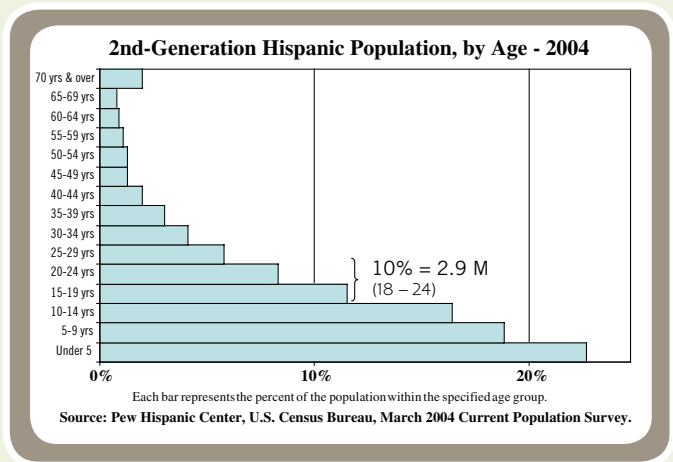
FIRST-GENERATION LATINOS/HISPANICS

This chart below illustrates that, contrary to popular belief, the Latino/Hispanic population that is foreign born is aging much like the Anglo population, and in general, “foreign born” no longer represents the majority of Latinos/Hispanics. However, we believe the sizable 20-something group, which represents 4.2 million individuals, is a very viable target audience.



SECOND-GENERATION LATINOS/HISPANICS

Another group to focus on among U.S.-born or second-generation Latino/Hispanics is the sizable age group of 18-24, roughly 2.9 million individuals. This is an important group and reflects the demographic trend for the nation as a whole: overwhelming ethnic diversity with a large percentage of Latinos/Hispanics.



LATINO/HISPANIC DISPERSAL IN THE U.S.

WHERE LATINOS/HISPANICS LIVE

In determining where we would find these young adults, the committee looked at the trend of Latino/Hispanic dispersal. These reports introduce a new paradigm of which cities/ church communities should be classified as potential “Latino/Hispanic parishes” for the Episcopal Church. In fact, the following information illustrates a population shift among Latinos/Hispanics away from traditional areas. As of this millennium, Latinos/Hispanics are now living in areas where they are no longer the majority, and trends suggest this will continue.

57% live in areas where they are a minority.

43% live in areas where they are a majority.

(Data taken from the Pew Hispanic Center, Dispersal and Concentration: Patterns of Latino Residential Settlement, by Roberto Suro, Dec. 2004. See Appendix, Chart 1.)

WHAT LANGUAGE DO LATINOS/HISPANICS SPEAK?

It is also critical to take into account that many of these new neighbors may prefer Spanish or be bilingual.

English Only:

75% Living where they are a minority
25% Living where they are a majority

Bilingual:

55% Living where they are a minority

45% Living where they are a majority

Spanish Only:

47% Living where they are a minority
53% Living where they are a majority

(Data taken from the Pew Hispanic Center, Dispersal and Concentration: Patterns of Latino Residential Settlement, by Roberto Suro, Dec. 2004. See Appendix, Chart 3.)

Traditional and New Settlement States, 2000



According to the authors of this study:

“In traditional states the Hispanic population was almost evenly divided in 2000 between communities in which Latinos constituted a majority of the population and those in which they were a minority. In the new settlement states, however, the number of Hispanics in minority-Latino neighborhoods was more than three times larger than the number in heavily Latino communities.”

And another of their studies finds:

“Attendance at houses of worship with a Hispanic orientation is most prevalent among Latinos who live in neighborhoods where most residents are Latinos. **But large numbers of Latinos who live in non-Hispanic neighborhoods also attend ethnic churches, so the phenomenon is not simply a product of residential settlement patterns.** This is particularly important in light of recent demographic trends that have increasingly dispersed the Latino population, so that a little less than half of Hispanic adults now live in neighborhoods where a majority of other residents are Latinos.” [Emphasis added].

The relevance for Episcopalians is the sudden creation of these Latino/Hispanic communities in our midst and in areas without traditional infrastructure – at a time when Latinos/Hispanics are seeking a closer relationship to God, according to another Pew Study on trends among Latinos/Hispanics and religion. Some of the key points to these findings include exploration away from the Roman Catholic denomination (which we confirmed in our own SWOT analysis) and rethinking the correlation between the liturgy as an “external formal event” (the old understanding of religious obligation) and the desire to have a closer relationship with

God in Latino/Hispanic-centered worship. So far, it’s the Evangelicals who appear to be making the biggest in-roads with this segment.

Part of this dispersal is bringing the Latino/Hispanic population into states that were not traditional “Latino/Hispanic States” but rather represent “new settlement states.” Just in the past decade, over 2 million more Latinos/Hispanics have moved into these “new settlement states.” It is worth noting that some of the states to which Latinos/Hispanics are dispersing are in the Southeast, Northwest, and West.

Religion and Latino/Hispanic Research

The following data comes from *Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion* by the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life and the Pew Hispanic Center (Pew Research Center, 2007):

Most Latinos/Hispanics are Roman Catholic as would be expected.

Religious Tradition among Hispanics and Non-Hispanics

Among...	% who are...					
	Catholic	Evangelical	Mainline Protestant	Other Christian	Secular	DK/Refused
All Hispanics	68%	15%	5%	3%	8%	1%
Native born	58	18	8	3	10	1
Foreign born	74	13	3	2	6	1
Non-Hispanics†	20	35	24	3	11	2

†Source: Pew 2006 U.S. Religion Survey.

There is, however, some search for denominational alternatives. By an overwhelming margin, converts say they sought a new religious experience because they wanted to be closer to God.

“Most Latinos/Hispanics are affiliated with the same religious faith they have always practiced, but an

important minority, almost one-in-five Latinos, say they have either changed their affiliation from one religion to another or have ceased identifying with any religion at all” (*Changing Faiths*, p. 41 TK).

This convert group is importantly comprised of both semi-aculturated and acculturated individuals.

Conversion among Latinos by Language Ability and Generation

% who are...	Among Hispanics whose primary language is...			Among Hispanics who are...		
	Spanish	Bilingual	English	1st generation	2nd generation	3rd generation
Converts	14%	20%	26%	15%	23%	22%
Formerly Catholic	10	14	17	11	16	15
Not converts	86	80	75	85	78	78

“The study also shows that many of those who are joining evangelical churches are Catholic converts. The desire for a more direct, personal experience of God emerges as by far the most potent motive for these conversions. Although these converts express some dissatisfaction with the lack of excitement in a typical Catholic Mass, negative views of Catholicism do not appear to be a major reason for their conversion. The practice of religion is not only often renewalist in character, but for most Latinos across all the major religious traditions it is also distinctively ethnic.

Two-thirds of Latino worshippers attend churches with Latino clergy, services in Spanish and heavily Latino congregations. While most predominant among the foreign born and Spanish speakers, Hispanic-oriented worship is also prevalent among native-born and English-speaking Latinos. That strongly suggests that the phenomenon is not simply a product of immigration or language but that it involves a broader and more lasting form of ethnic identification” (Changing Faiths, p. 4 TK).

As noted in the Pew Study:

“The houses of worship most frequented by Latinos have distinctly ethnic characteristics. A majority of those in the congregation are Hispanic; some Latinos serve as clergy; and liturgies are available in Spanish. The growth of the Hispanic population is leading to the emergence of Latino-oriented churches in all the major religious traditions across the country.

“Foreign-born Latinos are most likely to attend Hispanic-oriented churches and to comprise the largest share of Latinos who worship at such churches. **However, large shares of native-born Latinos as well as those who speak little or no Spanish also report attending churches with ethnic characteristics. Similarly, while Latinos who live in areas densely populated by Latinos are most likely to report attending Hispanic-oriented churches, smaller but still substantial shares of Latinos who live in areas where Hispanics are a sparse presence also say they attend ethnic churches. Latino-oriented churches, then, are not exclusively a product of either immigration or of residential settlement patterns. ...** [Emphasis added.]

Ethnic Church Characteristics of Latinos by Major Religious Traditions

% whose church has...	Among Hispanic churchgoers who are...			
	Catholic	Evangelical	Mainline Protestant	Other Christian
Hispanic clergy	82%	82%	72%	77%
Spanish-language services	91	81	67	86
Mostly Hispanic congregation	79	66	53	69
All three characteristics	70	62	48	61

This latter point is critical to selecting the right groups for the Episcopal Church to focus on, as well as what that church, worship style and clergy should be. This is already evident in examining the makeup of our own Episcopal Latino/Hispanic identified churches

“This study defines an ethnic church as having three characteristics: at least some of the clergy are Latino, services are available in Spanish and most of the congregants are Hispanic. Among churchgoing Latinos, two thirds attend a church with these characteristics. The ethnic church is strongest among Catholics, but it is also

a prominent feature among Hispanic evangelicals and those in other Christian traditions.

As with the renewalist beliefs and behaviors described in Chapter 3, the extent to which Latinos worship at Hispanic-oriented churches is a clear indication that the Hispanic population is creating its

own distinct forms of religious practice as well as its own religious institutions. By clustering in ethnic churches, the growing Latino population is concentrating its impact on the nation's religious landscape" (**Changing Faiths, p. 49 TK**).

The above findings are especially important given communities served by the Episcopal Church and the implications about our future growth.

Ethnic Church Characteristics of Latinos by Density

Among Hispanics who live in areas that are...

% whose church has...	0-14% Latino	15-29% Latino	30-49% Latino	50-74% Latino	75-100% Latino
Hispanic clergy	62%	76%	81%	83%	88%
Spanish-language services	77	79	90	89	92
Mostly Hispanic congregation	57	65	76	76	85
All three characteristics	43	56	68	68	80

Note: Percent Latino in respondent's residential area derived from telephone area code and exchange.



KEY FINDING

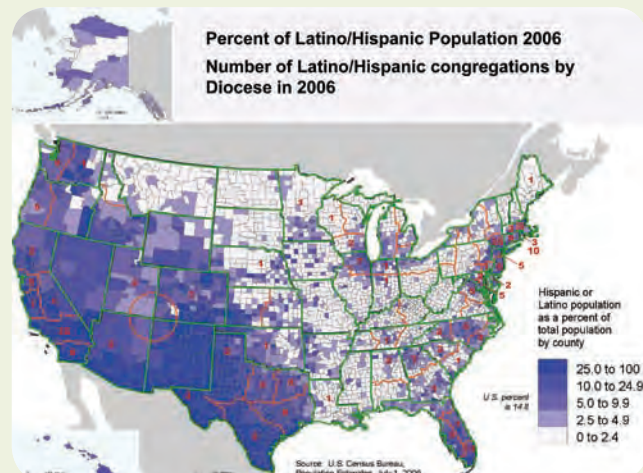
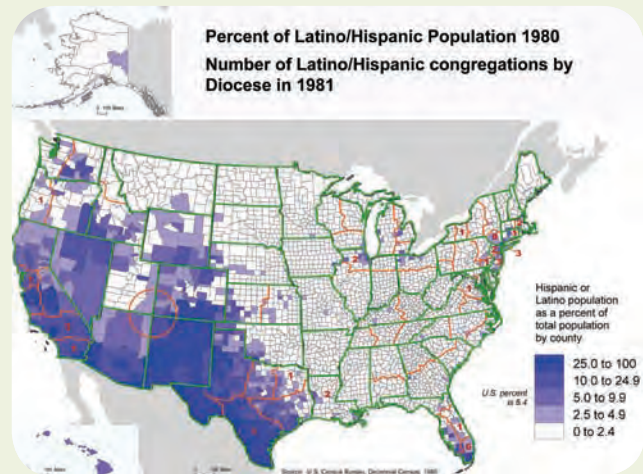
This means that growth is actually available for us organically, if we can put the pieces of the puzzle together as the chart above reflects.

The Pew Study summarizes this point well:

"While the size of the ethnic church phenomenon may be, to a great extent, driven by immigration, its vitality across the whole of the Hispanic population is nevertheless compelling. For example, 61% of Latino Catholics who say they can carry on a conversation in English "pretty well" and 23% of those who rate their ability at "very well" say that they prefer to attend Mass in Spanish. These Latinos demonstrate an attachment to ethnically oriented worship that goes beyond linguistic necessity.

Put another way, with 70% of Latinos who are English dominant attending churches where Spanish services are available, the ethnic church phenomenon is plainly not limited to Spanish speakers. Moreover, the fact that over half of Latinos who are native born say they attend services where most of the congregants are also Latino also shows that this phenomenon cannot fully be accounted for by the immigrant experience. Indeed, a great many

Latinos who speak only English, were born in the U.S. and trace their ancestry in the U.S. for several generations attend churches that are characterized by a Hispanic orientation" (**Changing Faiths, p. 55 TK**). [Emphasis added.]



The implications of our research and evaluation process point clearly to growth opportunities for the Episcopal Church:

- The Latino/Hispanic population is now over 38 million, with over 7 million young adults and 20-somethings who prefer Spanish or are bilingual.
- Due to the dispersal of the Latino/Hispanic population, there are now 447 Episcopal churches whose areas have a greater than 40% Latino/Hispanic population, which equates to over 15% of our current churches.
- Latino/Hispanic converts are seeking a closer, spiritual relationship with

God. We have identified three key Episcopal strengths that strongly support our ability to reach converts at this level: (1) our liturgy; (2) our openness; and (3) social outreach. We will speak in more detail about these strengths in the planning portion of this document.

- We have already supported or transformed 298 churches that fit the desired model for culturally relevant worship, including Latino/Hispanic clergy, Spanish services, and Latino/Hispanic congregations.



Mind Mapping: Who Should We Be Reaching Out To?

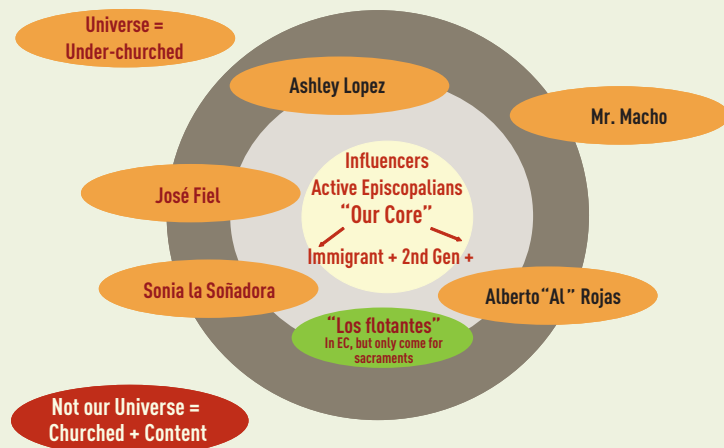
At the *Nuevo Amanecer* conference in Peach Tree City, Georgia, on July 1, 2008, our committee mapped out what in marketing terms is called our “target audience.” To do this, we used a professional group moderator to guide us through the process of developing psychographic profiles, called Mind Mapping.

Mind Mapping is a process of exploring what individuals really think inside, how they live, and what’s important to them. This type of brainstorming session is founded on the idea that all behavior is based on beliefs. In order to change behavior, we have to understand the beliefs that drive the behavior.

Essentially, Mind Mapping is a tool marketers use to shift thinking from “What are we selling?” to “What are consumers buying?” For our purposes, Mind Mapping allows us to see things from the perspective of our potential congregants, and subsequently, to tailor what we offer to fit our congregants.

Mind Mapping offered us a process to identify potential groups among the unchurched and under-churched Latino/Hispanic population. During our session, five potential target groups were explored in detail. We selected primary and secondary groups to focus on, and we developed objectives, strategies, and tactics for both of these groups.

Zooming in on the Target



The Mind Mapping chart above helps define our “universe” and who we are reaching out to. The people we want to reach are those who feel under-churched; our universe does not include those who are currently attending a church of another denomination and are content.

At the core of our universe are first- and second-generation Latinos/Hispanics who are active Episcopalians. As we move out to the second sphere, we have identified five personalities or archetypes that represent groups we would like to reach. Included in this second sphere is a group called “los flotantes” or “the floaters,” but they are not a target group. These people come to church for sacraments but are not seeking community or fellowship, and they will not participate in the life of the church.

The potential groups of young adults we identified during our Mind Mapping were each assigned fictional individual representatives to help us identify each group. Please note that by creating these five fictional characters – Ashley, Alberto, Jose, Sonia, and Mr. Macho – we are seeking to identify archetypes, not create stereotypes. We realize that no two people are alike and no one will fall neatly or perfectly into any of these five groups. But for the purposes of marketing and keeping our efforts sharply focused, it is important to understand how the group we are seeking to reach – today’s 20-something Latinos/Hispanics – breaks down demographically. We need to know to whom we are speaking, even in a general sense, before we know how best to communicate.

FIRST GENERATION



SONIA LA SOÑADORA:

Sonia is a Latina/Hispanic woman, in her late 20s to early 30s with kids at home. She is foreign-born and may have come to the

U.S. illegally. She now has her residency and is working hard to make a better life for herself and her family. She speaks mostly Spanish, but wants to learn English to help her get ahead. Sonia likely works as a housekeeper or in a service industry; she is living below her potential employment level due to her difficulty speaking English.

Sonia is a hard worker, she is resilient and resourceful. There are many people (her kids, family and friends) who depend on her and demand a lot of her, and she works hard to make everyone happy. She has very strong faith, but can’t seem to find a church that understands her real-life experiences. Also, she is a single mom and living with her boyfriend, so she often feels “unworthy” or embarrassed

at church. Her faith is, essentially, impeded by feelings of unworthiness and by her demanding (and often inflexible) work schedule.

Summary: She is seeking refuge and help from her overwhelming world. Her faith is strong, but her belief in institutions is not.



JOSÉ FIEL: José is a Latino/Hispanic immigrant, likely in his late 20s to early 30s. He is in the U.S. illegally and may live with a group of other men or with

extended family as he tries to establish himself. He speaks only Spanish and is likely a day laborer, earning very little money. He works hard and is trying to get ahead because he is responsible for supporting himself and his family in Latin America. José often feels lonely and isolated in the US. He does not have a strong social network and he lives in constant fear of “La Migra.” (Immigration Law Enforcement Agency.)

Jose is focused on working hard and figuring out the “system” in the US. His faith often takes a backseat to work and other responsibilities. When it comes to church, he has a lot of faith (and some fatalistic views) but often does not actively participate at church. He primarily seeks help and services from the church, such as information on jobs, immigration, and food stamps.

Summary: He is driven by immediate, tangible information needs. Faith is secondary.

SECOND GENERATION PLUS



ASHLEY LOPEZ: Ashley is a young Latina/Hispanic woman, 18 to early 20s. She was born in the U.S. and is completely bilingual and

bicultural. She is either working on finishing up her education or she is at her first “real” job. Either way, Ashley is focused on success. She is goal-oriented and wants to build a career and a good life for herself. She is also trying to figure out exactly “who she is,” since she straddles two cultures and two worlds a lot of the time. She looks up to her parents and often goes to them for advice; but right now, her friends (and what they think) are extremely important to her.

Ashley’s parents tell her church is important, but where can she fit it in her busy schedule? Besides, she does not really feel like anyone understands her at church and it’s just not fun. She believes in God and is faithful, but she doesn’t like it when the church tells her what to do or passes judgment. She is really looking for a church where she can make her own choices and decisions – and feel like she belongs.

Summary: She’s looking for herself, not really for religion. If Church were “cool,” and acknowledged her, maybe she’d try it.



ALBERTO “AL” ROJAS: Al is a second generation (or more) Latino/Hispanic man in his 30s or 40s. He is married, with kids at home. He speaks some Spanish,

but definitely speaks English at work and with friends. He is a successful, self-made businessman. Recently, he moved his family to the suburbs, but they still visit his mother and father in the city every weekend. Lately, Al is really into buying electronics for his new house and he is proud to be able to provide for his family.

Al goes to church with his family on the weekends, but he really doesn’t feel like he fits in. He believes in God and thanks Him for all that he has been able to accomplish, but

he is just not sure what his role is within the church. After all, how could the priest possibly understand his reality? When he goes to church, he has the feeling he is missing something, but he’s not sure exactly what it is.

Summary: He is “along for the ride” at church with his wife. He is missing something, but not sure what it is.



MR. MACHO : He is a second generation (or more) Latino/Hispanic in his 20s or 30s. He grew up in the barrio and he is still in the barrio. Mr. Macho is

bilingual and has had access to education and jobs in the US, but they are just not “for him.” He struggled to finish high school and ever since has been working blue-collar jobs just to get by. He never sees his kids because his novia left him for someone else. He hangs out with friends on the weekends and sometimes runs with gangs, just to keep things “interesting.” Overall, he feels like a failure and he is “stuck” in a place he can’t seem to get out of.

Mr. Macho believes in God, but faith is more of a tradition, not an active element in his life. He often feels embarrassed or unworthy at church, so he really only goes for the sacraments: to attend his kid’s baptism, for example. When he’s at church, he feels like everyone is judging him, so he lays low and tries to stay as “invisible” as possible.

Summary: He seeks aid, and church is part of the “system” he plays. He has little belief in God and little faith: they have “let him down.”

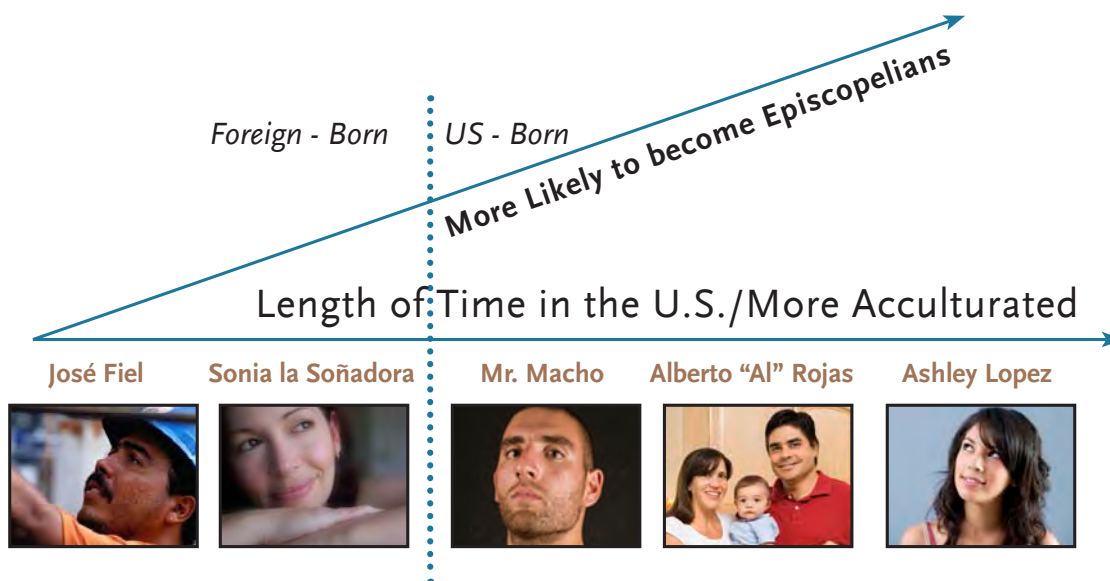
SO, WHAT DOES THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OFFER THESE PEOPLE?

The Episcopal Church fosters both individuality and inclusiveness, which appeals to Latinos/Hispanics who want to maintain control and have choices, but who also want to feel as if they belong to and are active in “something bigger.” The Episcopal Church offers them ways to become involved in social action and outreach services within the larger community. Also the service is familiar to those

with Roman Catholic backgrounds, and our open, Biblically centered theology is attractive to evangelicals. Because of its broad theology, the Episcopal Church welcomes discussion on issues of morality and contemporary social/political concerns. It offers freedom from condemnation, an invitation to commune, and it fosters a deepened sense of spirituality. The Episcopal Church can be a place to grow in many different ways toward faith while allowing participation in a community where your voice and ideas truly matter.

Acculturation Continuum

The Pew Study suggests that changes in religious affiliation may be associated with the complex process of migration and assimilation. “Conversion is higher among the native born than the foreign born, for example it is also higher among English Speaking Latinos than among Spanish speakers.” (Changing Faith, p.41)



3 KEY GROUPS TO FOCUS ON

As a committee, we recognize the need to support existing ministries with Latino/Hispanic congregations as well as seek to build new congregations across acculturation levels. Therefore, the strategy section will focus on the following groupings:

- New Immigrant Ministries (Sonia)
- New Ministries with Second-Generation + (Ashley)
- Strengthening Existing Latino/Hispanic Ministries (Wide Ranging)

While we recognize the need to minister to all of the five congregant archetypes we explored, we feel that both Sonia la Soñadora, a first-generation representation, and Ashley Lopez, a more acculturated representation, are where we should focus our efforts and resources. This does not mean that the Episcopal Church should not recognize and seek to minister to all Latinos/Hispanics, but for the purposes of strategic use of efforts, these two groups are where we should concentrate initially.

A fundamental principal of marketing is allocation of priorities, monies, and efforts. In focusing these resources on the Sonia group (first-generation) and the Ashley group (more acculturated), our rationale is that women in the Latino/Hispanic community are the gatekeepers for many things. Traditionally, women are responsible for their families, especially in terms of religion and health/well being. We also recognize the stabilizing and grounding influence these women have in their families, work places, and communities. They are stakeholders, and therefore should be our top priorities. It is our perception that out of all the archetypes we examined, these two representations were the most ready to establish a community and be an active part of the church.

Although these two potential congregants vary in acculturation and language preferences, we also found some commonalities in mindset. Each is working hard to make a better life for herself and her family. They both are also resourceful and proud of all they have been able to accomplish. Each is faithful; they carry in their souls a tradition of faith and believing that has been passed down for generations. However, in one way or another – either because of work, lifestyle, discrimination or past experience – each of our potential members feels “out of touch” or “out of place” at church. They are looking for a place to make their own choices and build their own faithful and religious identity.

Finally, it is important to remember that while we reach out to new segments of the Latino/Hispanic population, we must continue to strengthen and support the Church’s existing ministries among other groups in this demographic. This strategy to grow should in no way undercut the work that is already being done.

Theological Basis

The catechism of The Book of Common Prayer states the mission of the Episcopal Church is “to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.” Also, the church is apostolic “because it continues in the teaching and fellowship of the apostles and is sent to carry out Christ’s mission to all people.” Both of these statements are foundational for the Episcopal Church.

The Latino/Hispanic Ministry Strategic Vision is simply an organic, natural manifestation of these statements. It seeks to carry out the very doctrinal belief about the church, which is that the gospel is to be proclaimed and shared with all persons. Given the increasing Hispanic/Latino population, this strategy facilitates the church’s effort to be faithful to its mission.

Fundamental to the identity of the Episcopal Church is its welcoming and hospitable environment. There is room for persons of different theological and doctrinal positions within the Episcopal Church, just as there is room for persons of different class backgrounds.

Such hospitality needs to extend to persons who are different from most of the members of the Episcopal Church. This hospitality flies in the face of the xenophobia increasing in the U.S. This hospitality proclaims the gospel in a countercultural way, demonstrating to the rest of society that God cares for all persons, no matter their legal status, their sins, their color, etc.

What is the origin and nature of this hospitality in the Episcopal Church?

The book *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity*, (Abingdon, 2001) edited by Amy Oden, describes it in these terms:

“At the very least, hospitality can include acts of welcoming family and friends. Its meaning within the Christian biblical and historical traditions has focused on receiving the alien and extending one’s resources to them. Hospitality responds to the physical, social, and spiritual needs of the stranger” (pp. 13-14).

“Taken as a feature of Christian life, hospitality is not so much a singular act of welcome as it is a way, an orientation that attends to otherness, listening and learning, valuing and honoring” (p. 14).

“Hospitality, then, is always a spiritual discipline of opening one’s own life to God’s life and revelation” (p. 15)

“Hospitality is characterized by a particular moral stance in the world that can best be described as readiness [to welcome the stranger and to vulnerable]” (p. 15).

“The astounding range and depths of the evidence tells us that hospitality as a practice and as a virtue held a central place in early Christian life. Indeed, there is hardly a place we can look where we will not see traces of it. One encounters it at every turn. Paradoxically, however, hospitality is rarely addressed directly as a topic, but more commonly is touched upon in the context of discussing something else.... The pervasive character of hospitality in early Christian writing demonstrates a lack of self-consciousness, a matter-of-factness that suggests it is simply a given part of life, not the stuff of esoteric treatise” (p. 27).

A phrase that relates to hospitality and welcoming, and connects it to the Eucharist, is “Welcoming all to the Table.” The use of the openness of the Eucharist, the welcoming and reconciling nature of the Eucharist, is also a foundational identity for the Episcopal Church. The biblical connection for this is Jesus’ breaking bread frequently with all kinds of people, with sinners, Pharisees, religious leaders, ordinary persons, tax collectors, the feeding of the five thousand, etc. The Latino/Hispanic Strategic Vision is a manifestation of Jesus’ breaking bread with all persons and our attempt to follow his example.

Goals

Based on the findings presented in the previous sections of this document, our committee has formulated some obtainable, measurable objectives. We call on the Church to use this document as a resource and strive with us to meet the objectives listed below.

OBJECTIVES

1. Increase the number of new Latino/Hispanic Episcopal congregations. Presently we have 110 congregations with at least 70% Latino/Hispanic members and an additional 188 congregations with less than 70% Latino/Hispanic members totaling 298. Our intent is to increase this by 15% in the next Triennium (2010-2012). Our work will focus on dioceses within the states with the largest number of Latinos/Hispanics and States that have had the largest growth of Latino/Hispanic Population: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington. In partnership with interested dioceses we intend to start 44 new congregations in these 17 States. We will create a curriculum with the Offices of Church Planting and Evangelism, recruit diocesan, clergy and lay leadership, train them and assist them in creating these new initiatives.
2. Generate growth to 15% within 100 existing non-Latino/English speaking congregations. There are 4,000 congregations with less than 75 average Sunday attendance. The Office of Research & Statistics will help identify those 100 congregations within the 17 specific states with growing Latino/Hispanic populations who do not currently have existing Latino/Hispanic ministry. We will create a curriculum with the Offices of Congregational Vitality and Evangelism to recruit and train clergy and lay leadership to increase the number of Latino/Hispanic participation in their congregations.
3. Increase the Latino/Hispanic leadership in the Episcopal Church. Create pamphlets, educational forums, educational resources in collaboration with the office of Diocesan Services to teach about the history, polity and other important aspects of the church. We will assist these congregations in urging Latino/Hispanic involvement in the various aspects of the life of the church.
4. Develop shared tools, training and resources to support Latino/Hispanic ministry for churches in growing Latino/Hispanic areas. The National Strategic Vision Oversight Committee will work with the program offices of Church Planting, Evangelism, Congregational Vitality and Morehouse Resources to create curriculum providing step by step guidance to 1) Initiating new Latino/Hispanic congregations, 2) Inviting new members into congregations who do not currently have existing Latino/Hispanic ministry. We will create marketing tools, media resources that will help dioceses and local congregations initiate new Latino/Hispanic congregations, invite and involve Latino/Hispanics to existing congregations. Provide training sessions where diocesan clergy and lay leaders could be trained in the implementation of the strategies utilizing webinar classes as well as diocesan or provincial training events. Create an

educational program for teaching Latino/Hispanic culture, spirituality and language skills to clergy, seminarians and laity who feel called to engage in this ministry.

5. In collaboration with the Office of Research and Statistics, establish unified measurement criteria for assessing success in the number of Latino/Hispanic congregants, including measurement of congregational composition. We will create an instrument to assess the growth and evaluate the process. This instrument will involve the collection of data, as well as narrative in order to have quantifiable and qualifiable research. Each diocese and congregation involved will be required to participate in this evaluation process regularly. The Office of Research and Statistics will compile the findings and share them with the National Strategic Vision Oversight Committee who will serve in an advisory capacity making appropriate adjustments in order to ensure success.

STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The following strategies offer the Episcopal Church an opportunity to compile and share best-practices manuals, workshop curriculum, and advertising/public notice materials. Some of these strategies have already been implemented in congregations that will have experience to share and key materials for support, as well as possibly offering training.

Strategy 1: Create a welcoming atmosphere.

Develop resources and tools for approaching Latinos/Hispanics from a culturally sensitive perspective. Use signage for the church service, music selection, greeters, newcomer classes, etc., to bring them in and make them want to stay.

- Use greeters who are bilingual and develop a comfortable process for newcomers.
- Create a Latino-/Hispanic-friendly atmosphere with Eucharist services in Spanish, and special focus on music, multimedia, liturgical dance, and an emphasis on saints and the broad/open theology of the Episcopal Church.
- Offer culturally relevant fellowship, such as Saturday services and Latino/Hispanic desserts at coffee hour and celebrate culturally relevant feast days and festivals, such as Quinceañeras and el Día de la Virgen.
- Host Latino/Hispanic cultural events for the community.

Strategy 2: Create awareness of the Church and its offerings.

Open the church up to the community to host events and truly engage the community as well as create awareness. Build on current best practices and existing liturgies, successful public service programs, etc.

- Host funerals, welcoming extended families.
- Offer vacation Bible camp in the summer.
- Support area causes and local programs.
- Air public service announcements about special programs with nonprofits to increase awareness and create some positive public recognition.
- Develop autonomous leadership and mono-cultural ministry representing a particular community (i.e., Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, etc.).
- Offer food pantries, soup kitchens, and clothing ministries.
- Offer programs assisting with housing and employment.

- Offer ESL classes.
- Offer after-school programs for children.

Strategy 3: Build programs that create spiritual growth and increase self-esteem.

Offer programs that will nourish the faith journey at their own speed and style.

- Offer prayer groups, retreats, groups on parenting, finding your inner self, Bible Study, etc.
- Offer leadership conferences and lay leadership training.
- Network with community organizations and government agencies to support immigration rights and work on immigrant issues.
- Host a pastoral dinner with a culturally relevant topic.

Strategy 4: Build programs to create empowerment opportunities.

Utilize a series of free counseling and support programs that offer the opportunity to chart a different course in life by making positive changes and advancement as well as acknowledging who he/she is today.

- Offer training workshops for computer and Internet skills, preparing tax returns, scholarship and college applications, resume writing, and career counseling.
- Offer GED training.
- Develop a micro-enterprise program to help those with special talents develop business opportunities.
- Offer referral programs for areas of health, finances, law, and education.

Strategy 5: Create a National Strategic Vision Oversight Committee.

This Committee will be comprised of

Latino/Hispanic experts representing clergy, laity, and trainers to oversee:

- Tools and Resources
- Sharing Best Practices
- Pastoral Manuals
- Training the Trainers

Strategy 6: Acquire and Disseminate Accurate/Current Demographic Data.

- Use data to identify trends/shifts in populations.
- Use data to analyze congregational composition vs. surrounding population composition.
- Use information about new church starts from the ECUSA website (http://www.episcopalchurch.org/growth_60791_ENG_HTM) when initiating these new ministries.
- Secure a mapping of the population of Latinos/Hispanics in their community using demographic resources on the Church Center website and decide on a planting model.
- Before starting a new service, canvas and secure at least 50 Latinos/Hispanics from the community.

This is just the beginning. Now, as participating diocese and local congregations start to put this plan into action, we call for your feedback. What is working well? What is meeting unexpected resistance? What new ideas have you come up with?

Together we can continue to develop and refine our strategies and tactics. As you begin to share your best practices, observations, and ideas, we will offer a supplemental manual – a companion piece to this document – which will be updated periodically.

Appendix

CHART 1

Latino Population by Neighborhood Type, 2000

	N	(%)
Latino Minority	20,207,127	57
Latino Majority	15,031,354	43
Total	35,238,481	100

SOURCE: Authors' calculations from Census 2000 SF3.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, Dispersal and Concentration: Patterns of Latino Residential Settlement, by Roberto Suro, Dec. 2004.

CHART 2

Number and Percent of Latinos by Neighborhood Type and Nativity, 2000

	All Latinos		Foreign-Born Latinos		Native-Born Latinos	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Latino Minority	20,207,127	57	7,380,192	52	12,826,935	61
Latino Majority	15,031,354	43	6,777,625	48	8,253,729	39
Total	35,238,481	100	14,157,817	100	21,080,664	100

SOURCE: Authors' calculations from Census 2000 SF3.

All Latinos Foreign-Born Latinos Native-Born Latinos

CHART 3**Number and Percent of Latinos by Neighborhood Type and Nativity, 2000**

	English Monolingual		Bilingual		Spanish Monolingual		Total	
	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)	N	(%)
Latino Minority	5,044,211	75	9,426,453	55	3,490,820	47	17,961,484	47
Latino Majority	1,720,533	25	7,771,282	45	3,947,660	53	13,439,475	43
Total	6,764,744	100	17,197,735	100	7,438,480	100	31,400,959	100

SOURCE: Authors' calculations from Census 2000 SF3.

NOTE: The sample excludes those under 5 years of age.

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