

UNIDAD IGLESIAS HERMANAS MINISTERIOS UNIDOS DE FE Y VIDA SINODO LUTERANO SALVADOREÑO

SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES FOR THE II PARTNERSHIP ENCOUNTER

DATES: NOVEMBER 16 – 19, 2009

PLACE: LOYOLA CENTER, SAN SALVADOR, EL SALVADOR. CENTRAL AMERICA

Under the theme United at the lord's table, we realized the Second Partnership Encounter at the Loyola Center, San Salvador, November 16 -19, 2009, attended by representatives from sister churches in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the United States, and Central America.

1. INTERCHANGE OF EXPERIENCES DURING THE VISITS TO THE MICROREGIONS AT THE SECOND ENCOUNTER

- Devotionals directed by pastoral teams and community leadership, as well as participation by children's choirs from different congregations.
- Presentations by the children: they raise themes about human rights, quality of life, health, and protection of the environment, risk prevention, the reality of community life in El Salvador for the security and quality of family life and the children.
- Presentation of the work of the youth, its organization, and its contribution to the church: they demonstrate the work of accompaniment of the Lutheran Church in the formation, training and leadership, processes for violence prevention, and other themes for the benefit of the youth at the national level.
- Adult representation: theme of congregational organization and commitment to making it happen in the different places where the Lutheran Church can be found.
- Presentation of the ministries formed in the different churches concerning sustainability and community development, realizing presentations from different groups such as women's cooperatives and local webs that strengthen the organization and production in community development and family economics.
- The Love and Solidarity Ministry made known the work it does in favor of homeless men and women, including processes for reinsertion into working life, educational efforts with children accommodated by the Casa Esperanza.
- The Lutheran Clinic: presentation of how its work is going and the challenges that it has for continuing, they emphasize the way the partnerships through the Health Mission that have developed each year strengthen the accompaniment at the clinic and the different communities that attend.

- A plan was made by the churches in the microregion and participants had the chance to visit communities affected by the storm Ida. A time was also dedicated for delegates to from local congregations to have dialogue and share with sister churches.

TESTIMONY OF PARTNERSHIP MEMBERS

A) The experience in the morning at Los Olivos with church representation: they recognize the work done by the youth about community development. They point out the lack of time needed to share with and get to know the people better. The time was very short, but they could appreciate the work, organization, and accompaniment that the Salvadoran Lutheran Church achieves.

B) Visits to San Vicente in the afternoon were very different. First I will share a pair of acts, and later the spiritual aspects. The situation in Verapaz is very difficult. 19 confirmed deaths, 18 missing, 100 people left homeless, 800 people in community housing.

- There was a meeting with the mayor. It was felt that the mayor is working to the best of his ability. They walked to the site of the destruction: devastated houses, fallen trees, streets filled with mud, and a bad odor perceived in the air. Several blocks of the community were destroyed. Only huge rocks remained.
- At the site, they conversed with families tremendously affected, over the ground existed their house. We had a group prayer and laid our hands on each member of the family, seeing a paradox between the wounds and the hope, they knew the theory, but now they live the experience. The resurrected Christ lives among us.
- They visited other women, one of whom couldn't find her mother or her son.
- We were, through the ministry of the three pastors (Vilma, Abelina, and Norma), living the paradox of life and hope.
- What was significant from this experience is that there isn't a Lutheran church in this place, from the consensus of this group. (A ministry of pastoral accompaniment and Crisis Recuperation, directed by Reverend Vilma Rodriguez and women psychologists from Nicaragua and other Central American countries, shared their accompaniment from November 9th to this date.)
- That which we have heard and seen will tell the paradox of wounds and hope, and of course of the injustice and the effect to which our brothers and sisters suffer for the vulnerability before natural or social phenomena.

2. Group: Nahualapa, Tepeagua y San Lorenzo

- The experience began with a procession of children and youth. It was a profound experience. Some children carried the Salvadoran flag, showing faith even from a political perspective. Following the flag, one of them came dressed as a tree, another child carrying a pitcher of pure water, and two children felt very excited and one little girl unsettled for her outfit with paper sacks and fast food. The liturgy was about choosing the option of pure water, conscious of all the trash that we create in the world. It was a confrontation between wounds and hope.
- That methodology used to present problems in the community was made known. They used socio-dramas, teaching what they learn in Sunday school and how they practice it. The youth presented a socio-drama. The adults presented the socio-drama about the problems with the earth.
- The work in the community was observed. New strategies were learned in our countries. They are alive in the microregions. It is an honor to walk with the Salvadoran Lutheran Church. They have a children's preschool project program. We were very impressed that this program values children's education and the aspect of maintaining security for risk prevention.
- They visited affected communities, finishing our day in Tepeagua, received with joy and gratitude.

3. Group from Cara Sucia y Santa Ana

- It is situated close to the Guatemalan border, and in the same way that we enjoyed the countryside we noticed the poverty in which the people live. We had a devotional. We learned of the diaconal work of the two microregions. The work that is done with the children, youth, adults, and indigenous was also known.
- Lessons about the Bible according to ages, very interesting how the church works with the indigenous population.
- The fight for the preservation of the Náhuatl language in the communities.
- The communities are affected by the floods and strong winds, and they explained how they organize to prevent their effects.
- The winds that came in January damaged the chicken farm. They destroyed the radio station Radio Estereo Sur.
- The church located in Santa Ana was visited. They were welcome by the children. They visited the community Cutumay Camones, where the organized community put a stop to the government project concerning the garbage dump.
- We learned about the need to make a short-term and long-term plan of sustainability. Working and strengthening the old projects before starting new projects, and that these shouldn't only be directed by they pastors, but also by the community organization.

2. COMMITMENTS ACQUIRED IN THE SECOND PARTNERSHIP ENCOUNTER AND SLS.

The themes covered summarize into four areas:

a) Sustainability

- The multiple relationships is a circle that represents the national church, the communities, and the partnerships. The communication should be part of the partnerships' relations so that feedback of a mutual accompaniment exists in the micro-regions as part of the process of institutional strengthening.
- Partnership relations and the national church should establish strategies that contribute to the sustainability of the local churches with the micro-regional focus.
- Expand the concept of partnership to the micro-region and work in its focus of priorities. Enhance the sharing of spiritual gifts/talents at the local level and enliven them among the churches, seen with a sustainable model.
- Strengthen the practices of cooperative training in the community and the micro-regions, and build sustainable relations between the congregations and the Salvadoran communities and promote sustainable employment in the communities.
- Share gifts and talents, human resources for a mutual knowledge that transcends beyond a project that has been financed and that contributes to a process.
- Accompaniment of diaconal projects to measure qualitative change in the community life.
- Establish a mutual accompaniment in the solidarity with the pastors, that the Sister Parish Office direct 10% of money received for diaconal projects to the Salvadoran Lutheran Church Pastors Endowment Fund.
- Make studies of feasibility for new projects in the micro-regions and the pastor shall Propose a project to the partner, but from the perspective of micro-regional planning.
- The pastors shall have professional and technical support. We look with confidence that we are guided by total transparency with everyone speaking to each other.
- Strengthen the culture and formation of cooperatives in the Salvadoran Lutheran Church and in the micro-regions.

b) Transparency

- In the theme of transparency, think in broader perspectives, define the transparency relations through dialogue. Consider transparency in the integral sense: communication, trust, deepening relations in order to maintain an ambiance of hope and mutual learning, bettering the mechanisms of partnership transparency. What is it that they are doing, and what is the state of the project? [Relations and projects shall] be studied from within the micro-regions before an individual pastor proposes individual relations. When the projects are planned, the pastors should be supported with professional help.
- Eradicate [the narrow focus of] bilateral relations, so that the partnership relations be of an institutional character, that the resources should be shared according to micro-regional needs.

c) Communication

- Establish a communication network for a more fluid and permanent communication between the partners, using e-mail for teleconferences, informing about the work of the micro-regions or a newsletter from the office of sister churches, although it's recognized that there are differences in technological capabilities. Many communities don't have the adequate technology, but it's possible to give training about computational technology.
- Create a database system of information listing each of the Salvadoran churches organized by micro-region, recording the relation that each has with its sister church.
- Give a report regarding the diaconal programs that the church has and list which congregations participate in economic development projects or community development projects of a similar nature.
- Share information about the encounters, and meetings in each of the micro-regions. We have to have less conferences and more conversations with questions and answers.
- Give out information on all the partnership relations [within a congregation and the micro-region] so that we are able to quantify the accompaniment across the partnership relations and where they work.
- Identify the overlap where we are all working in the same place and extend the partnership relation so that the whole church has its partnership counterpart. [Make connections between churches and between partner churches and the national church – so that partnerships are local, regionally coordinated and connected, and national.]
- Any projects should have prolonged accompaniment, inherent from the start. Regular communication of the successes and challenges of projects is needed, sharing with all the partnerships how the projects are proceeding.

d) Methodology

- We recommend that in future encounters there should be more meetings in each micro-region. During these small meetings, less speeches and more conversation with questions and answers.
- We should look at the places in which it is possible that we work in the same place, and distribute the partnerships so that each church has a partner. We support the transparency of the partners so that we know who has a partnership with whom, what they do, and the status of any projects.
- We desire to strengthen the micro-regions and in support of this, during then next encounter, we wish that everyone with a relation in a micro-region meet with its own micro-region, Oastors and leaders of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church.
- We could meet with micro-regional partners in the regions for 2 or 3 days, with a meeting with the whole group the day before and the day after. During the meeting with the whole group, there can be presentations from each micro-region.

ATTACHED:

- . List of local and international participants.
- . Speeches.
- . Photographs.

For the event, received financial support from:

NMZ, Norelbia, Alemania. Eu 1,000.00 Eu.

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Rev, Hanz Seller, Munich, Alemania 1,500.00 Eu

Group Gift (enrollment to 15 people from churches Milwaukee \$ 375.00)

Funding for international participants. \$ 6,000.00

(Participation fee \$ 250. Per person)

Each delegate, covered his airfare)

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