

IGLESIA PRESBITERIANA EMMANUEL

New Church Development
Information Packet
November 15 2011

*All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,
which means 'God is with us.'*

– Matthew 1:22-23

Members of the Administrative Commission

The Rev. Martha Cross Sexton, Chair
Elder Marti Lipovsky, San Diego First, Secretary
Elder Barry Billingsley, Solana Beach
The Rev. Don Edic
The Rev. Ronn Garton
Elder Robert Matthews, Christ United
Elder Christy Zatkin, La Jolla

Ex Officio

The Rev. Clark Cowden, Executive Presbyter

Officers of Iglesia**Provisional Elders**

Jpetul (Pedro) J'ernantes, Lay Pastor
Rosy Estrada
Ausencio Arellano

Provisional Deacons

Clarita Abarca
Fabiola Bello
Martin Hernandez
Miguel Franco

History of the Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana

The congregation was begun in 1983 at San Diego First Presbyterian Church under the pastorate of the Rev. Tom Simpson who provided leadership for 20 years. It moved in 1997 to its own campus in Golden Hills. It has continued its ministry even during long periods with no pastor. From 2008 - 2010, Pastor Efrain Romero provided leadership. Since early 2010, the congregation has been led by three members elected as “provisional elders.” (Because at this time Iglesia is not a chartered church of the PC-USA, it cannot ordain officers, but has practiced becoming Presbyterian by electing provisional elders and deacons.)

Administrative Commission

In April 2010 the current Administrative Commission, appointed by then-Moderator of the Presbytery of San Diego, Gerry Tayler, held its first meeting. At about the same time the Presbytery appointed one of the provisional elders of Iglesia, Jpetul J’ernantes, to serve as Lay Pastor on a half-time basis. He has been providing effective leadership in worship, pastoral care, administration, outreach, youth, and Christian education.

The Presbytery’s charge to the Administrative Commission included these directives: “To educate and enable church leaders to govern under PC-USA guidelines; to provide broad oversight to the pastor and elected lay leadership, and to recognize those leaders as elders as soon as appropriate.” After meeting with the lay pastor, provisional elders and provisional deacons, the Administrative Commission concluded it was appropriate to begin immediately to move the officers and congregation into the process of becoming a chartered church of the PC-USA. The Commission charged the officers of Iglesia to devote special attention to the areas of finance and leadership training.

Finances

First, they were asked to develop an annual budget. This was accomplished after the officers appointed a Budget Committee.

Second, they were asked to promote stewardship of time, treasure and talents. Giving to the church from its members has increased by ten percent in both 2010 and 2011, despite hard economic times.

Third, they were asked to improve accounting and bookkeeping. All these things have been accomplished and are now standard operating procedure.

With the generous support of several Presbytery congregations, increased giving by the members, and a half-time pastor, the church is able to meet its monthly obligations. The Iglesia Fund held by the Presbytery for its benefit is reserved for emergencies and unexpected expenses.

The Administrative Commission encourages those congregations already making contributions to support the ministry of Iglesia to continue to do so. Further, all congregations are encouraged to support our Presbytery’s first Hispanic Church as their budgets permit.

Leadership Training

The officers and members of Iglesia asked for training and the Administrative Commission has helped to encourage and facilitate this.

1. Pedro J'ernantes offered classes at the church on the BOOK OF ORDER and THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS for anyone interested. These classes were well attended by both adults and youth.
2. The Rev. Juan Daniel Espitia offered a day of training for the provisional officers on the Constitution, doctrine and practice of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
3. Thirteen members of Iglesia are involved in a year-long program offered by the Hispanic Council of the Presbytery. This involves one all-day course each month (with required reading) taught by Spanish-speaking Presbyterian ministers. Subjects covered include: Reformed Theology, Presbyterian Polity, Old Testament, New Testament, Christian Education, Worship and Sacraments, Pastoral and Family Care, Christian Ethics, and Evangelism. Not only do the enrollees study and participate in the classes; they also pay registration fees and tuition for the privilege.
4. Iglesia joins with other Spanish-speaking Presbyterians from Solana Beach, Chula Vista, and the Imperial Valley for occasional camps and spiritual retreats.

Other Ministries of the Church

The physical plant is well used, not only by the congregation and the presbytery, but also by outside groups. The Sunday schedule includes monthly officer meetings (at 7:00 a.m.), Sunday School for all ages, and a worship service. There is also a Wednesday evening Bible Study and Prayers. Friday evenings there are Bible Studies and gatherings for men, women, and youth. The Hispanic Council of our Presbytery regularly meets here. During the week the building is rented by Uplift for computer training of children and youth and by other groups approved by the officers.

A large proportion of the congregation is under age 25. This has led to many activities for families, children, and youth. In addition to Sunday School, there is provision for young children who leave the worship service prior to the sermon. The large youth group meets regularly for speakers, service or fellowship. Youth are also involved in leadership as ushers, collecting the offering, and leading prayers. Parents and other members are involved as volunteer leaders for these activities. Families attend occasional camps and retreats sponsored by the church and/or by the combined Hispanic churches of the Presbytery.

At different times throughout the year there are home Bible Studies when members serve as hosts.

Visits to Congregational Participants

The officers of Iglesia decided to compile a church directory and to assign provisional elders and deacons to visit each church household in order to ascertain the level of commitment to becoming a chartered church. Twenty-five families, including many children and youth who participate regularly, were visited by the officers. There was a very positive response with congregants ready to sign a covenant and live up to the commitment. The officers explained that the commitment involves personal sacrifice of time and money, as well as faithfulness to Christ, the particular church, and the presbytery.

Selection of a New Church Name

As commitment to seeking to charter the church grew stronger, a congregational meeting was scheduled for September 4 2011 for the purpose of selecting a name for the church. Many suggestions were submitted, but the leading contenders were

Iglesia Presbiteriana Hispana de San Deigo
Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel.

There was spirited discussion of the two names with many speaking for the second listed name because it is Biblical, inclusive, and an accurate reflection of the participants' conviction that God has been with them, God is with them, God will continue to be with them. As a result, 75 percent of those voting chose the second option and the congregation now seeks to be chartered as Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel.

Signing of the Covenant

At the worship service of September 11, 2011, 58 people signed a covenant, asking to be constituted as a church to be known as Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel. They covenanted "to work together in ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, bound to him and to one another as a part of the body of Christ in this place according to the principles of faith, mission, and order of the Presbyterian Church (USA)."

Next Steps

- 1. The Administrative Commission requests that the Presbytery of San Diego vote on November 15 2011 to approve the Covenant of Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel, thereby authorizing it to become a chartered church of this Presbytery and the Presbyterian Church (USA).**
- 2. The Presbytery's Missions and Evangelism Committee requests approval of the Covenant of Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel.**
3. Following approval of the Covenant by the Presbytery, the Administrative Commission will work with the current provisional officers of the church to see that the congregation
 - A. Nominates and elects a Nominating Committee.
 - B. Elects elder and, deacons.
4. The Administrative Commission will oversee the training of the officers elected.
5. The Administrative Commission will examine, ordain, and install officers of the church.
6. The Administrative Commission will continue to help the officers and the congregation
 - A. Secure pastoral leadership.
 - B. Plan for the service and witness of Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel.
 - C. Coordinate its work with other churches.
 - D. Develop bylaws for the congregation conforming to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the policies of the Presbytery of San Diego.
7. The Administrative Commission will give other forms of support and encouragement that will strengthen the mission of the congregation for one year after the date of the installation of the officers.