Communitàs UMC Luso-Brazilian Ministry

Mission

"To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

Description

Communitàs basically means -common humanity-. We have added what we believe to be vital to the concept: Common humanity in God, who was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.

Unique Opportunities in Ministry

Communitàs is a recent church plant "under construction". The challenges of doing pastoral care among Luso-Brazilians in Atlanta, particularly in the Metro-Atlanta context are both promising and demanding.

Here are some of the challenges we encounter in our context of ministry with the Brazilians today: (1) invisibility, (2) social isolation, (3) high level of stress, (4) parallel ethics and value chocks, (5) culture of illegality, and (6) intellectual ‘smashing’.

Communitàs UMC was initially formed by a majority of legal/documented immigrants, who have given to the community a certain stability and culture of continuity and long lasting adherences. We foresee changes on this profile however, as more undocumented people become part of the community. Communitàs will surely experience the many struggles other Brazilian churches are facing with the culture of transit, since the majority of undocumented Brazilians see themselves as “sojourners” rather than “immigrants”, because they perceive their permanence in the U.S. as temporary. This concept influences many to describe themselves as “economic refugees”, whose ultimate goal is to return to Brazil with the skills and resources necessary to succeed economically. The questions we have asked are: What’s the most responsive, relevant missiological approach to the contexts and experiences of Luso-Brazilians? How do we become home for the immigrant-a meaningful community of affection and healing?

Doing church and ministry that fosters a transforming praxis, considering the character of the reality, is a must! In other words, we do not want to simply reproduce what other churches are doing in the area. We know that we are called to be an alternative community.

Site Details

Outreach

Outreach is mostly relational and based on both personal and communal connections with Brazilians in the Metro-Atlanta area.

Meeting the Five Areas of Ministry
Administration:
Participation in leadership meetings
Coordinating special programs, like Communitas' Brazilian Colonial Coffee Hour and/or our Open Mic.
Planning retreats and/or a community day
Coordinating a ministry strategy

Liturgy (Worship and Preaching):
Active participation in planning the Order of Worship, particularly in the Lord's Supper rituals on monthly basis.
Opportunities for dialectical preaching during Communitas "Crer & Pensar" on bi-monthly basis,

Mission and Outreach:
Communitas works contextually, works creatively, and does not have standardized and/or systematic mission and outreach programs. Developing relational and communal connections with Portuguese speaking people (you do not have to dominate the language!) must foster creativity.

Pastoral Calling and Congregational Care:
To reflect, fully participate and respond to Communitas UMC’s nature and strategies, those involved in pastoral care at Communitas:

(1) should be able to help us build a place to be. He or she should be well aware that “invisibility” is one of the most dehumanizing kinds of social exclusion and that this kind of invisibility creates what we can call "social apartheid",

(2) must be willing to work along side the leadership and community members to foster a Christian community environment that helps people to recover the possibility to freely dream again, to plan their lives, and to seek a better life. We need partners in ministry that see the need for churches and religious communities to help people overcome the feelings generated by the struggles of life in the U.S. as immigrants. This implies helping people regain their dignity and self-esteem; providing structures and networks to support families and help break patterns of destructive behavior (alcoholism, criminality and prostitution); emphasizing talents that stand in opposition to material riches, and fortifying the person’s dignity.

(3) should embrace our perception that a better life is not necessarily related to a better salary. It has much to do with committed networks, union, love and affection.

A well-trained, open minded, socio-culturally sensitive student would help Communitas create community environments for Luso-Brazilian immigrants where they can overcome vulnerabilities (cognitive, psychological, social, institutional, economic-financial, environmental), threats and risks (injury or death, loss of economic security, lack of physical, psychological, and social well-being, including the lack of cultural and social reproduction etc).

Religious Education:
Children attend Mount Pisgah UMC's Sunday School.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>The UMC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location Type</td>
<td>Urban</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Attendance</td>
<td>20-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship Times</td>
<td>Crer &amp; Pensar (Believing &amp; Thinking), Sundays, 7pm-8pm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Schedule</td>
<td>[1] ARCA (Youth Group), Fridays, 7pm-9pm.</td>
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<td>[2] Crer &amp; Pensar (Believing &amp; Thinking), Sundays, 7pm-8pm.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[3] Community meal and fellowship, Sundays, 8pm-10pm.</td>
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<td>[4] Unitâs (Small Groups, to be implemented or in process), in different days, times, and locations.</td>
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<td>Stipend?</td>
<td>Transportation cost may be covered.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distance from Candler</td>
<td>21 miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessible to persons with disabilities?</td>
<td>No. Unfortunately.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accessible via public transportation?</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can women be ordained?</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>What role do women play in leadership?</td>
<td>Women exercise leadership/coordination in practically all ministries at Communitâs.</td>
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**Contact**

http://communitasumc.org/

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**Additional Comments:**
We believe that the Church, of divine origin and human composition, is a mystery, a people and a covenant: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. She is not God’s Kingdom, but expression, vanguard, anticipation, and sign of this very same Kingdom. Created according to God’s heart, within the economy of salvation, she is Christ-centered, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit, and formed by people, with their personalities, temperaments, and stories of life. She is mission driven, situated in time and space, in a given culture and conjuncture- (LWdeS).