

Report from Coordinator for Multicultural Ministries

I am pleased to offer the following report on my work as I continue visiting, organizing and attending meetings by our local pastors, students and leaders in our community.

I. Projects

- I began a monthly prayer for the ministry we're developing with other three pastors. We are gathering at Western Seminary. I believe the leadership of CMM must be guided through the power of prayer and the Holy Spirit. I am very excited about this project because I felt I needed to invest more time in this area and inviting other pastors to join me.
- March 17th, at WTS together with "Uno en Cristo" a local Latino association of pastors. Few people arrived because, according to some of the attendees were concerned that this meeting was a set up - fake meeting- by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) The leaders of this meeting we decided to do it again but this time in one of our Latino congregation in Holland.
- One of the challenges for our immigrant community is the rights and responsibilities under the American law. On April 23rd, I promoted and organized a gathering in one of the Hispanic/ Latino congregations in Holland. To that end, I invited Pastor Jose Pacheco from "La Roca" Church and Lawyer Sarah Yore-Van Oosterhout from Lighthouse Immigrant Advocates (<http://lighthouseimmigrantadvocates.com>) to provide useful information to our immigrant community. The activity succeeded and I'm glad for the opportunity and support I received from the Holland Classis. More than 20 people attended to this meeting.
- Looking forward to supporting our Latino brothers and sisters of the immigrant community, I have planned to have the next meeting on May 2nd, 2017 at Third Reformed Church. The purpose of this activity is finding together a better way to respond to the question "What can we do for the Holland immigrant community?"
 - We would like to create a pool of drivers for those immigrants who need to go to Detroit or Chicago area for their immigration appointments.
 - We hope to create a church networking along the border -on the Mexico side- for those brothers and sisters who are facing deportation.

II. Student/Candidate Visitations

I am pleased to inform that one of the most exciting part of my job is visiting and encouraging our multicultural and diverse students and pastors in the Holland classis.

- I had the honor to spend quality time with M. Div student Israel Alvarado at Calvin Seminary in GR. I heard his current challenges and victories while investing in his Seminary education. He asked me to keep praying for his ministry in his neighborhood, his family, and calling. At the end of our meeting, he expressed appreciation for our ministry. He has been doing great with his studies and will soon finish another year this next May. Israel thanks the Classis for the support provided during this year.
- I also had a great time with Isaias D'Oleo in GR. He shared with me about the importance of the Latinos investing time and effort in their education. In May he will be graduating from Calvin's Th.M program. He thanked me for the work I've been doing in our Classis and appreciated the support I have given him along the support from the Holland Classis. I was amazed to know that despite his

financial struggles, he achieved a 3.95 GPA at Calvin. Isaias also shared with me that he was one of the five students accepted into the PhD program for the next year at Calvin Seminary out of more than 30 applications. He is very excited and feel blessed about this huge opportunity. We praise the Lord for what He has done on Isaias's life and his calling.

- It is an honor to announce that three of Latino students that we have supported with books the last two semesters are graduating this month. Praise the Lord for their lives and their families:
 - Wilford Dilbert, M. Div program, Western Theological Seminary.
 - Gretchen Torres, Graduate Certificate in Urban Pastoral Ministry, Western Theo. Seminary.
 - Isaias D'Oleo, Th.M program, Calvin Theological Seminary.

III. Visitations to Other Leaders/Commissioned Pastors

- In the last couple months, I have been participating as part of the Government Team in Allendale with Pastor Enrique Cuevas and his wife Michelle. They shared with me that they have had challenging months, but they can see a better future in this ministry. Most of my participation in this government team has been to gently remind of the cultural challenges of a Latino pastor in the United States environment and setting. It's been an honor to be part of this team. Praise God for this.
- More recently, I have been working with a new couple of pastors and church planters, Mario and Maria Romani. They recently moved in Holland and have a strong desire to follow God's will in this community. Showing hospitality to the newcomers has been a great honor and responsibility. They are looking forward to seeing one of their children going Hope College the next academic year.
- After many months, I've finally visited church planters Jose Luis and Franciel in Grandville, they used to live in Holland. I heard about the challenges as church planters they have faced in the church they are currently serving. They shared with me the greatest possibilities and challenges as they follow their calling. One of the challenges for them is to improve their English and not depending often from the translation services offered in their congregation. I am looking forward to find a way to help them on this challenge. I didn't have the opportunity to talk with the other two couples who are also working in this ministry. But I will in the coming weeks.

IV. Summary

First I want to thank Nicholas Knebl from the Executive Committee for revising my Job description but especially for giving me the space and time to share the challenges and blessing of my ministry. Thank you!

Also, during the visits and meetings I have realized the importance of spending time with our students, pastors and leaders in our community, listening and praying for each other. I am thankful for their trust and their precious time that they shared with me. Many have expressed me their thankfulness and appreciation for the work done by our Classis through the CMM. I am looking forward continue to serve the church in this way.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jose Angel Lopez Dominguez