

AMERICAN BAPTIST NATIONAL PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING CAUCUS

Caucus Nacional Batista Americano de Língua Portuguesa

2015 ACTIVITY REPORT

We held our first Executive Committee Meeting during the Biannual Mission Summit in Overland Park, Kansas, on June 26-28, 201. One of our discussions was the importance to follow up on our previous efforts in the area of San Francisco California, where we had been contacting Brazilian pastors and churches, trying to motivate independent churches and their leaders to join the ABC. We've been seeking to establish a support group for the Caucus in North California. We decided to increase the support to our 5 churches in the area that had recently joined the ABC through our efforts, specially the larger one, the "Message of Peace Church", which is the "mother church" which supports the other 4 churches.

Our second meeting occurred during the "Space for Grace" gathering in Los Angeles Nov. 4-7, 2015, following a trend of reaching out to Brazilian pastors in the California area following the direction of our Executive Committee. One of the decisions of the Committee was putting in practice for the year 2016 a "Retreat and Conference of Brazilian Leaders and Pastors of the California Area", in association with the ABCOFLASH, (American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, Southwest and Hawaii). The date chosen for the Retreat and Conference was April 22-23, 2016, in San Luis Obispo, a midway between Los Angeles and San Francisco. The theme was "The Mission and Ministry of the Brazilian Church in the USA Context". In this Retreat we gave a logistic support and participated in the planning development of the event.

Another important meeting will be held on August 12 and 13 during the Multicultural Conference of the MBMM (Massachusetts Baptist Multicultural Ministry). The meeting will be led by me and the Caucus Regional Representative, Rev. Jackson Oliveira.

In 2015, we had also a great victory as our regional caucus approved the formation of the Ministerial Association of the Portuguese-Speaking Churches of Massachusetts as a chapter of the Conference of Ministers of Massachusetts. This way, the Portuguese-Speaking Pastors and churches would be better served and the work load of the Conference would be eased and made more efficient.

A great challenge we still face is the need to better integrate our caucus constituency in the country and to motivate the Brazilian pastors and churches to be more involved in the structure, programs, and activities of our denomination. For this we need to put together a complete and updated national directory of our caucus. For several reasons, we know it's not an easy task, but at least we have one for Massachusetts, which was completed recently.

We praise God for all that has been accomplished, and trust him to be our helper as we struggle onwards, facing the challenges that lay ahead.

Elizabeth Pinto
Los Angeles, August 15, 2016