



NEW PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING CHURCH PLANNED FOR TORONTO, CANADA

These are times that are both exciting and challenging for the Hisportic Christian Mission. Last fall Jose and Fátima Fernandes approached the HCM Board of Directors with the proposal of moving from Orlando, FL, to plant a new church among the ever-growing number of immigrants in Toronto, Canada.

The Need: Canada's Growing Portuguese-speaking Communities

Toronto, Ontario's capital and largest city, along with its suburbs, has Canada's largest concentration of Portuguese-speaking people. Portuguese people began moving into the city in the 1950s. In the 1980s, Portuguese-speaking Brazilians began moving into the city. By 2007, the estimated number of Portuguese-speaking people in Canada was over 600,000, with 46% of these living in Toronto. According to some estimates, the Brazilians in Toronto currently number over 25,000. This population is growing because of the "open arms" policy toward immigration in Canada.

Brazilians face difficulties due to the differences in climate, culture, and lifestyle. Many settle in "Little Portugal" in Toronto to have the benefits of social services and local businesses and to network with Portuguese-speaking people. Less than 10% of Portuguese-speaking people living in Toronto are involved in the community's evangelical churches. There is no Portuguese-speaking Christian Church/Church of Christ in Canada.



The Team: José, Fátima, Guilherme, and Simone

José Ignácio Fernandes is well qualified to be the Church Planter and Lead Pastor of the church plant in Toronto. He is a committed Christian, well acquainted with the Restoration Movement Christian Churches and Churches of Christ in Brazil and the United States. An experienced church planter, he launched and ministered with the El Shaddai Christian Church, Orlando, Florida, for six years. He speaks Portuguese, as well as English and French, the languages of Canada. As an entrepreneur, José learned how to launch and develop a project from inception to operation. Working for Air France and Varig Air Lines, he learned marketing and promotion. José's wife, Regina Fátima, whom he married in 1976, supports his ministry and complements it through her ministries of

service and prayer. She will be the Prayer Team Coordinator and Children's Director.

Completing the Church Planting Team will be Simone Fernandes as the Worship Leader and Events Coordinator, and Guilherme Fernandes as Worship Team member and Financial Administrator.

The Goals and Objectives

1. To establish a culturally familiar setting where Portuguese-speaking people can worship God and express their cultural and family traditions
2. To develop a ministry of pastoral and social service in the community
3. To develop an outreach ministry around individual talents, the arts and special events
4. To train leaders
5. To aid new immigrants to integrate into the larger Canadian population and culture

The Cost

The projected budget calls for \$300,000 to be used over a four-year period. This includes monies for salaries, rent, church programs, and promotion in the community. Impact Canada, a church-planting mission in Toronto, and East 91st Street Christian Church in Indianapolis have agreed to partner with HCM in this project and raise one-half of the funds, if HCM will accept the challenge to raise the rest. HCM needs commitments of \$150,000 to be given over a three-year period to fund this project. Jose and Fátima will be able to begin the Toronto church when \$75,000 is committed. Pray that churches and individuals will be led by God to commit these funds.

Atlanta Project Update

Sérgio Santos, the church planter for the Portuguese-speaking church in Atlanta, GA, and his wife, Márcia, will be arriving in the United States in late April. The current plans are to have them in the Alpharetta area of Atlanta by late fall, building relationships with the Brazilians who live in the northern part of Atlanta.



They will be living first in New York state where they will be working for a few months with Pastors Elias Pereira and Evaldo Fernandes in a new church plant started by the Orchard Group in Mamaroneck, NY.

Sérgio will be available to visit churches while we continue to raise support. He will have an opportunity to gain experience working with Brazilian immigrants in the United States. Both he and Márcia will also be studying English.

Great Pastors Retreat

Twenty-seven of the HCM Pastors and wives met together, along with Carl and Naomi Bookout and Wayne and Gail Long, for the first annual Pastors Retreat, held January 25-27 at the Hampton Inn in Somerset, NJ.

Using the theme, "Vestindo a Camisa" (Putting on the Shirt), the group discussed the needs of the Mission, prayed over personal needs, and built stronger relationships. Everyone present put on the "HCM team shirt" and made a recommitment to continue to work together to plant Portuguese-speaking churches.



Some of the Pastors and wives in their "team shirts"

Change of Pastors

Terezinha Pereira, who is the founding Pastor of the New Covenant Christian Church (MINA), Natick, MA, became Pastor Emeritus on March 16. Hudson and Sandra Oliveira, who had been serving as the Associate Pastors, were installed as the Pastors of the church. Our thanks go to Pastor Terezinha for her years of faithful ministry.



Prayer Needs

- Julio Dias, Pastor of the Missionary Christian Church, Rockville, MD, having surgery during the first week of April
- Luciano and Andréia Rodrigues, that God will provide direction and funding for their training at a Christian college
- Mónica Fife, wife of Jeff Fife, missionary to Brazil, recovery from surgery for a brain tumor, April 1
- For finances to be raised for the HCM Projects (Atlanta, Toronto, Virginia, Keystone [Pennsylvania], Florida, and Astoria, Queens, NY)
- For the continued outreach of the HCM churches

E-mail Newsletter

In order to communicate faster with those who support the ministry of Hisportic Christian Mission and also to save money from postage expenses, we would like to send this newsletter by e-mail to as many as is possible.

If you would be willing to participate, please send your e-mail address to us, either by mail to the mission office address or by e-mail to cbookout@hcm.org.

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Enabling Missions-minded Christians to evangelize and plant churches among Portuguese-speaking peoples in America and beyond.

