



MINUTE FOR MISSION

March 15, 2006

Moving from "Survival Mode" to "Missional Mode"



Worship is lively in the Spanish Evangelical Church in Madrid.

Spain and Portugal are "bridge countries" between Africa, Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East. They are no longer colonial powers. As a part of the European Union, they are finding ways to bring Muslims, Christians, and Jews together in economic, political, and social harmony. This harmony had been weakened since before the Counter Reformation, which forced them into isolation from one another.

During the past thirty years, Spain and Portugal have separated themselves from the devastating impact of two dictatorships—Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain. Many immigrants are coming to both countries from Central and South America and Africa.



MINUTE FOR MISSION

March 15, 2006

Moving from "Survival Mode" to "Missional Mode"



Worship is lively in the Spanish Evangelical Church in Madrid.

Spain and Portugal are "bridge countries" between Africa, Europe, the Americas, and the Middle East. They are no longer colonial powers. As a part of the European Union, they are finding ways to bring Muslims, Christians, and Jews together in economic, political, and social harmony. This harmony had been weakened since before the Counter Reformation, which forced them into isolation from one another.

During the past thirty years, Spain and Portugal have separated themselves from the devastating impact of two dictatorships—Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain. Many immigrants are coming to both countries from Central and South America and Africa.

The Protestant churches are experiencing significant growth. Thirty years ago, the Protestant community in Spain was estimated to be 40,000 people. Today the Protestant community numbers over 350,000. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) works in partnership with two small historical Protestant churches. In Spain, it partners with the Spanish Evangelical Church, which is Methodist and Presbyterian in background. Its early missionaries came from England and Scotland. In Portugal, the PC(USA) works with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal, which is now having church merger discussions with the Methodist Church of Portugal. It is exciting that we work in partnership with two Reformed Protestant church bodies on the Iberian Peninsula that are moving from a "survival mode" to a "missional mode."

In the past two years, two Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries, Eastminster and Wabash Valley, have developed partnerships with two Spanish Evangelical Church Presbyteries. Cherokee and Northern Waters Presbyteries have established partnerships with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal.

The new Spanish government, elected in March 2004, seeks to establish a secular state that includes all the minority religious groups of Spain (Protestants, Jews, and Muslims) along with the dominant Catholic cultural community. The minority religious groups' voices are beginning to be heard and not just tolerated. Bryce and Phyllis Little

PC(USA) Regional Liaisons for Spain and Portugal

The Protestant churches are experiencing significant growth. Thirty years ago, the Protestant community in Spain was estimated to be 40,000 people. Today the Protestant community numbers over 350,000. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) works in partnership with two small historical Protestant churches. In Spain, it partners with the Spanish Evangelical Church, which is Methodist and Presbyterian in background. Its early missionaries came from England and Scotland. In Portugal, the PC(USA) works with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal, which is now having church merger discussions with the Methodist Church of Portugal. It is exciting that we work in partnership with two Reformed Protestant church bodies on the Iberian Peninsula that are moving from a "survival mode" to a "missional mode."

In the past two years, two Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) presbyteries, Eastminster and Wabash Valley, have developed partnerships with two Spanish Evangelical Church Presbyteries. Cherokee and Northern Waters Presbyteries have established partnerships with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Portugal.

The new Spanish government, elected in March 2004, seeks to establish a secular state that includes all the minority religious groups of Spain (Protestants, Jews, and Muslims) along with the dominant Catholic cultural community. The minority religious groups' voices are beginning to be heard and not just tolerated. Bryce and Phyllis Little

PC(USA) Regional Liaisons for Spain and Portugal

Do you have a mission story to tell? Would you like to read inspiring stories of Presbyterians in mission? Visit the Witness Season Web site: www.pcusa.org/witness. New minutes for mission are posted on the 1st and 15th of each month.

For more information on the Witness Season mission education emphasis contact Billie Healy, Associate for Mission Education Resources (888) 728-7228, ext. 5689, or Bhealy@ctr.pcusa.org.

Do you have a mission story to tell? Would you like to read inspiring stories of Presbyterians in mission? Visit the Witness Season Web site: www.pcusa.org/witness. New minutes for mission are posted on the 1st and 15th of each month.

For more information on the Witness Season mission education emphasis contact Billie Healy, Associate for Mission Education Resources (888) 728-7228, ext. 5689, or Bhealy@ctr.pcusa.org.