

PRESBYTERY OF SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND (PSNE)
ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION (AC) FOR THE
IGREJA PRESBITERIANA BRASILEIRA (IPB) HYANNIS FELLOWSHIP

**Presbytery Charge to the Administrative
Commission from the February 16, 2022 Stated PSNE
Meeting**

1. Receive applications for membership in the church, in the form of an organizing covenant, which shall be prepared in both Portuguese and English.
2. At its discretion, declare the Igreja Presbiteriana Brasileira an organized congregation of the presbytery.
3. Assume the powers of the session, until such time as a duly elected session is installed.
4. Work closely with the congregation in the following areas:
 - a. Formally calling installed pastoral leadership.
 - b. Planning for the service and witness of the congregation.
 - c. Providing training and resources to officers, especially with respect to polity and finance.
 - d. Counseling concerning incorporation and bylaws for the congregation conforming to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

January 20, 2023

Dear Colleagues,

The AC would like to issue our final report recommendations based on our interactions with the wonderful fellowship at IPB-Hyannis.

Since being convened, we have visited for worship, had conversation over an amazing luncheon, toured IPB-Hyannis and Latinx In Action, had Zoom meetings with Rev. Alonso and Katia Dachuna, had a series of in person meetings between our Presbyter and the Dachunas, several private conversations between an AC member and Alonso, translated some polity into Portuguese, had an AC member preach in Alonso's absence and met monthly among ourselves, with few exceptions.

We have also interviewed a couple of past members of the COM and the previous New Church Development Committee about Alonso's reception into the PSNE. We've consulted Presbyter/Clerk Colleagues regarding polity issues. A preliminary report seeking some guidance was presented to a recent COM meeting. And we have spent time considering the options for study and further discussion. We have also responded to several follow up emails from IPB-Hyannis asking PSNE to pause and then drop the AC, stating that IPB- Hyannis would like to leave things as they are with PSNE. These responses have been in person and followed up with correspondence.

IPB-Hyannis has faced many challenges and out right discriminations in the past 20 years - many of which are related to their immigrant status. They are also deeply engaged in the work of Jesus in their community, particularly through the new worshipping community, Latinix in Action and their ecumenical work in Hyannis. The Dachunas and extended family and the Brazilians who have been a part of IPB-Hyannis over the years are to be honored and celebrated for this work and witness.

The AC concludes that there are three issues challenging IPB-Hyannis Fellowship's PC(USA) membership which are long term and consistent. They are:

- 1) Pastoral authority is the model of leadership. There is no formal steering committee and knowledge of Presbyterian polity regarding shared leadership with Session and Deacons
- 2) There is financial dependency on PSNE for viability due to the fluctuations of membership as worshippers move back and forth between the US and Brazil.
- 3) A deep theological impasse was uncovered: withholding baptism and therefore membership from some who requests it...i.e. those who are LBGTQ+.

Issues 1 and 2 could likely be worked through with training and extra efforts in creative evangelism. Rev. Dachuna tells us that issue 3 is hard and fast for him at this time. He will not baptize someone who is LBGTQ+.

Given the theological impasse limiting baptism and membership, the recommendation of the Administrative Commission at this time is that IPB-Hyannis is not positioned to become a congregation in the PC(USA).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Anne Weirich, HR - Moderator
Elder Peter Cameron - Secretary
Elder Gerson Roca
Rev. Tiffany Nicely Holleck

And we also acknowledge and give thanks for the work of Rev. Greg Keosaian (former convener) and Rev. Linn Rohr's willingness to serve.