

BRAZILIAN MINISTRY DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

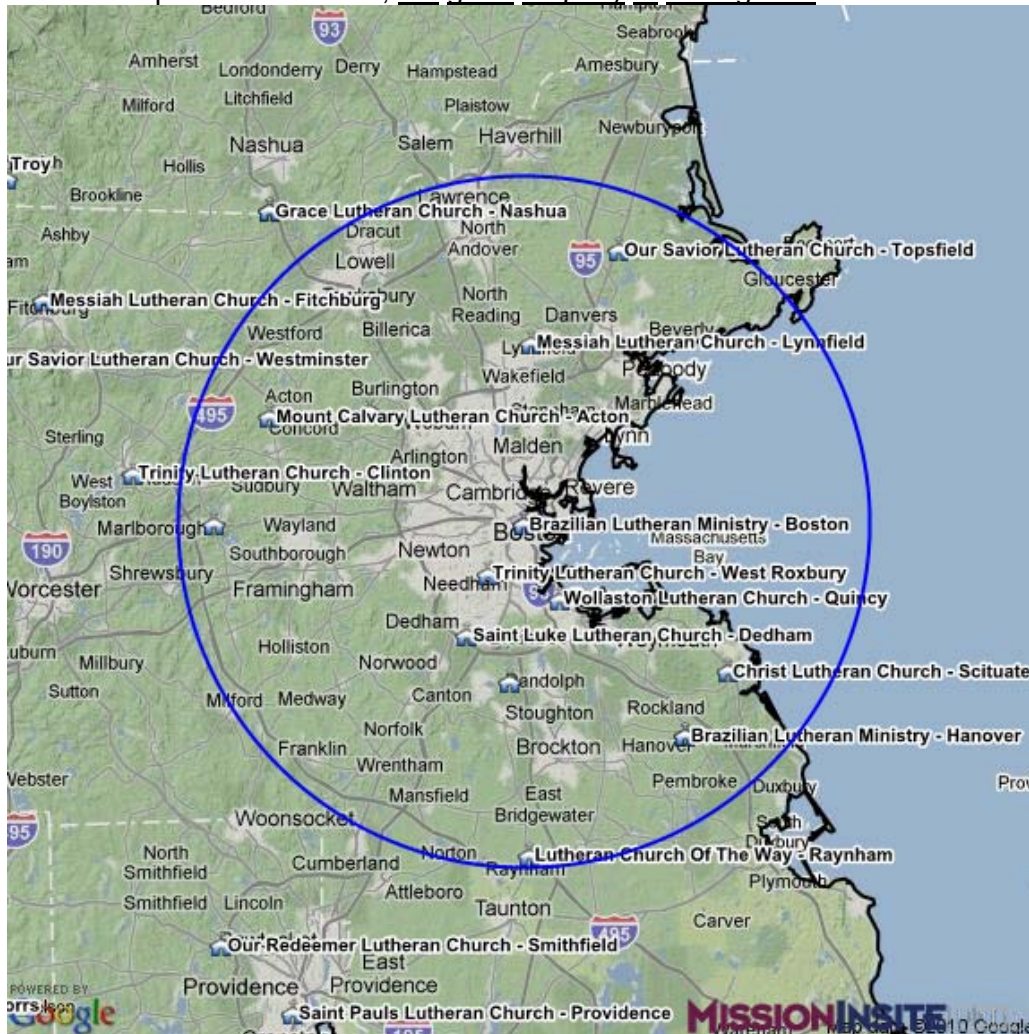
Outreach to Brazilian Lutherans began about twelve years ago at FLC with a volunteer Brazilian Pastor who began with a small group of expatriate Brazilians; that group eventually grew into two worshipping “families” (one meeting at FLC and other at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Hanover). Pastor Augusto Riss arrived in February 2003, as the first full-time pastor called from Brazil; he focused primarily on ministering to Brazilian Lutherans, and provided pastoral services to the FLC and Hanover groups until February 2008, when he returned to Brazil due to the expiration of his visa. After Pastor Riss’ departure the Brazilian Lutherans have been served on an interim basis by Pastors Ingo Dutzmann and Landon Schkade, neither of whom speaks Portuguese. Unfortunately, due to the lack of a Portuguese-speaking pastor who understands the culture, the two groups have shrunk from approximately 95 souls to a core group of 15-20, which meets for worship and fellowship on the second and fourth Saturdays of each month at FLC. (**Note:** In the last full year of Pastor Riss’ ministry, the Brazilian groups gathered total offerings of approximately \$22,000.) However, with no Portuguese-speaking pastor available, home Bible studies have pretty much ceased and there is no organized outreach to the unchurched, which needs to be a primary focus of the ministry due to the large number of Brazilians who have made their home in Southeastern New England.

The picture below is part of the worshipping community that gathered at FLC’ on September 24th to welcome Pastoral Candidate Paul Lantz and his wife Rosangela Oliveira of Brazil (front row, couple on the right); the Lantz’s have three children not present. Paul is the first-ever “Anglo” to graduate from our sister church seminary in Brazil with an M.Div. and he is a life-long member of Faith Lutheran Church, Troy, Michigan, where he served as director of outreach for 15 years as it grew from 700 weekly worshippers to over 2,500.



The opportunities and the spiritual needs amongst non-churched Portuguese-speaking communities in metro Boston, let alone the spiritual needs of our Brazilian Lutheran brothers and sisters, are beckoning to our church body.

Within the 27-mile radius around FLC, which roughly parallels I-495, there are an estimated 75,280 souls who speak Portuguese as their first language at home. When one adds Fall River, the Cape and other areas of Southeastern New England, the total number of Portuguese speakers is estimated to exceed 130,000, including many whose grandparents and great-grandparents immigrated in the early 1900's from Cape Verde and Portugal to be part of the then booming fishing industry. Like Hispanics elsewhere, the great majority of Portuguese



speakers in New England are unchurched and dechurched; many of the former category are “disaffected” Roman Catholics.

Once a called missionary has had time to “re-grow the fellowship” that worships at FLC, then his attention should be given to developing relationships in the following communities, identified by the Brazilian Lutherans as high priority areas for evangelism: Plymouth, Quincy, East Boston, Somerville, Framingham/Marlborough, and Hyannis/Mashpee. (As a note: Lutheran Church of the Cross in Hanover has indicated its continued interest in hosting a Brazilian fellowship.)