

Religious Experiences

Religious participation provides an important basis of community and spiritual sustenance for Latino immigrants. Since the earliest Spanish language Mass occurred in 1981 at the St. Thomas More Newman Center at the University of Oregon, Spanish speaking congregations have blossomed across the county, representing a wide range of denominations, including Catholic, Pentecostal, Latter-Day Saints, Baptist, and Seventh-day Adventists.

St. Mary's Church, Catholic Mass

St. Mary's Church of Eugene offers a Spanish Mass every Sunday at 1:00 pm. as well as bilingual and Spanish masses on Holy Day of Obligation and Special Feast Day Masses. The celebration honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe is the largest gathering held by the Spanish-speaking congregation at St. Mary's Catholic Church. Held on December 12th, this event commemorates the appearance of the Virgin Mary to Saint Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac near Mexico City from 9 through 12 December, 1531. After his final encounter with the Virgin, her image miraculously appeared on his cloak, which is still venerated today in The Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City. La Virgen de Guadalupe has become a powerful symbol of Catholic and Mexican identity, also known as the "Patroness of the Americas." In December of 2008, more than 500 people attended the special Spanish mass for the Virgen de Guadalupe at St. Mary's Church.

Ministerio La Esperanza

A Catholic group that meets weekly at Saint Mary's church, Ministerio La Esperanza offers a form of devotional worship that supplements the regular Mass. La Esperanza was formed five years ago by Tony Gutierrez, and has grown from a group of 4 to more than 250 today largely due to his dedication. La Esperanza holds a weekly devotional service that includes singing, dancing and a guest speaker. Additionally, they hold a weekly Bible study, a youth ministry, retreats, and a monthly night of prayer.

Tabernaculo de la Verdad

Tabernaculo de la Verdad was founded in Springfield in 1997 by Pastor Rubén Bahena and his family. Through their hard work, and after several changes in location, the church has grown to around 300 regular members and is now among the largest Pentecostal churches in Springfield. The Tabernaculo additionally holds smaller devotional groups in the community, as well as Bible studies, counseling for members, and youth groups and music lessons, and a monthly Time of Rejoicing of all night prayer.

Iglesia de Cristo Mahanaím

Pastor Josué Velásquez and his family came to Lane County in 1996. Starting with a small congregation in Junction City, they founded the Church of Christ Mahanaím. After persevering through a period without a permanent location, they have since established themselves in Eugene and become one of the largest Evangelical congregations in the area. In addition to regular church services, the Iglesia de Cristo Mahanaím holds various events in the community, including marches, jubilees, retreats, and youth ministries. Sunday services are weekly aired on Comcast channel 12, and are also aired on the radio and the Internet. They also host the famous Evangelical preacher, Jimmy Powers.

Iglesia Centro de Fe

Centro de Fe is one of the earliest Latino churches to be established in Lane County. It was founded 18 years ago by Pastor Luís Vergara, who began his outreach by providing services to the community. His church continues this tradition today, by helping families in the community in need of aid during hard times. Additionally, the church holds ministries and music lessons for the youth.