

## **Stone Hill Church Celebrates Our Ethnic and Cultural Diversity** **Hispanic Heritage Month**

Hispanic Heritage Week was first authorized in 1968 to recognize the rich culture and contributions of Americans who trace their roots to Spain, Mexico, Central America, South America, and Spanish-speaking nations of the Caribbean. It was expanded to Hispanic Heritage Month in 1988 and covers a 30 day period from September 15 – October 15. Sept. 15 marks the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. The designated period is also a nod to those from Mexico, Chile, and Belize which celebrate their independence on Sept. 16, Sept. 18, and Sept 21, respectively.

In 2019 the Hispanic population of the US is over 60 million, making people of Hispanic origin the nation's largest ethnic or racial minority. Hispanics constitute 18.3% of the nation's total population. New Jersey is one of 12 states with a population of 1 million or more Hispanic residents.

We honor our Hispanic brothers and sisters and celebrate their rich and vibrant traditions of faith, family, hard work, and patriotism. We are grateful for the many contributions they make to our church and society.

### **What is the difference between the terms Hispanic and Latinx?**

While the terms are often used by many interchangeably, they actually mean two different things. The term Hispanic was first introduced by the Nixon administration on the 1970 census and refers to a person who is from, or a descendant of someone who is from, a Spanish-speaking country. The U.S. Census still uses the term "Hispanic," defined as the "heritage, nationality, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before arriving in the United States." It also emphasizes that people who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be any race.

The terms Latino, Latina and Latinx on the other hand refer to geographical origin. Someone who considers themselves to be Latinx might be from, or a descendant of someone who is from, a country in Latin America. But, just like the term Hispanic, Latinx does not refer to race.

Latin America is the portion of the Americas comprising countries where Romance languages —languages that derived from Latin—such as Spanish and Portuguese are predominantly spoken. The term is used for those places brought under the Spanish Empire, and the Portuguese Empire in Brazil.