

**A CHRONOLOGY OF PROTESTANT ORIGINS IN MEXICO: 1824-2004**

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(Last revised on 9 April 2020)

**Historical Overview of Mexico:**

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| Spanish Conquest under Hernán Cortés:   | 1520                 |
| Independence from Spain Declared:   | 1810                 |
| Independent Republic Established:   | 1822                 |
| Period of Civil Wars -- fifty different administrations:  | 1822-1917            |
| Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends Mexican-American War (Half of national territory ceded to the U.S., including Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California) | 1848                 |
| Mexican Revolution:   | 1910-1917            |
| Separation of Church and State First Established:   | Constitution of 1857 |
| Separation of Church and State reestablished:   | Constitution of 1919 |
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| Number of North American Agencies reported in Mexico in 1985:   | 209                  |
| Number of North American Agencies reported in Mexico in 1996:   | 178                  |
| Number of North American Agencies reported in Mexico in 2007:   | 167                  |
| *Indicates European Mission Agency  |                      |

**Significant Protestant Beginnings: mission agencies and national denominations**

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| <b>1800-1849 (two groups)</b>   |
| 1824 - Independent Bible colporteur, John Brigham   |
| 1827 - *British and Foreign Bible Society colporteur, James Thomson   |
| <b>1850-1899 (20 groups)</b>  |
| 1850 - "Mexican Church of Jesus", an autonomous Catholic breakaway movement led by Catholic priests in Mexico City; later affiliated with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA (1873).  |
| 1855 - Independent school work in Monterrey, Nuevo León, by Miss Melinda Rankin (a Presbyterian who later joined the American and Foreign Christian Union) until 1872; Rankin and her associates founded schools and churches in the states of Nuevo León, Coahuila, Zacatecas, Tamaulipas and San Luis Potosí. |
| 1861 - *German Lutheran Congregation in Mexico City (the first organized Protestant church in Mexico)   |
| 1864 - Independent Baptist church organized by James Hickey and Thomas M. Westrup in Monterrey, Nuevo León.   |
| 1868 - American and Foreign Christian Union (later the Protestant Episcopal Church) absorbed "The Mexican Church of Jesus" in Mexico City under Henry Riley.  |
| 1870 - American Baptist Home Mission Society (absorbed Hickey's work in Monterrey; Thomas M. Westrup agent)   |
| 1871 - American Friends Church (Religious Society of Friends, Richmond, VA) in Matamoros  |
| 1872 - American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational Church) in Guadalajara; now   |

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| affiliated with the United Church Board for World Ministry of the United Church of Christ (UCC).   |
| 1872 - Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (Northern) in Zacatecas with Phillips and Thomson, and Mexico City with Pitkin and Hutchinson; now affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in the USA.   |
| 1873 - Methodist Episcopal Church (North) in Mexico City with William Butler; both the Northern and Southern Methodist Churches are now affiliated with the United Methodist Church, World Program Division, and the World Methodist Council.  |
| 1873 - Methodist Episcopal Church (South) in Mexico City with Bishop Keener.   |
| 1873-1874 - Presbyterian Church (Southern) in Matamoros with Antonio T. Graybill; now affiliated with the Presbyterian Church in the USA.  |
| 1875-1979 - Associated Reformed Presbyterian Church in Tampico with the Rev. Neil E. Pressly.  |
| 1876 - The Protestant Episcopal Church takes over the work of the American and Foreign Christian Union in the Valley of Mexico and Morelos under Bishop Riley.   |
| 1878 - American Bible Society Agency established in Mexico City with the Rev. Arthur Gore, taking over the work began earlier by the British & Foreign Bible Society.  |
| 1880 - Southern Baptist Convention begins work in Muzquiz-Coahuila with the Rev. John Westrup, and in Saltillo with the Rev. William Powell.   |
| 1888 - Cumberland Presbyterian Church begins work in Guanajuato and Aguascalientes with the Rev. H. Sharp.   |
| 1890-1892 - *Christian Missions in Many Lands (Plymouth Brethren) begins work in Orizaba, Veracruz.  |
| 1893 - Seventh-Day Baptist General Conference (Charlotte, NC) begins work in Guadalajara.  |
| 1895 - Christian Women's Board of Missions (Christian Church-Disciples of Christ) begins work in Ciudad Juárez and Monterrey with the M. L. Hoblit and the Masons.   |
| <b>1900-1949 (50 groups)</b>   |
| 1901 – Thomas M. Westrup becomes affiliated with the Stone-Campbell movement in Monterrey and served the Mission as editor of Spanish publications, translator, song writer, and preacher; after his death in 1909, his son Enrique T. Westrup carried on the work of the Christian Church-Disciples of Christ in Monterrey.   |
| 1902 - Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) begins work in Mexico City.  |
| 1903 - Church of the Nazarene, World Mission Division, begins work in Mexico City with the Straffors and Millers.  |
| 1904 - Protestant Episcopal Church Foreign Mission Society   |
| 1906 - Peniel Missionary Society (Pilgrim Holiness Church)   |
| 1911-1916 – Independent Pentecostal missionary George Thomas begins evangelistic work in the gold mining town of Nacazari de García in the Sierra Madre Occidental mountains, state of Sonora, where George S. Montgomery of Oakland, CA, operated the La Trinidad Mining Company. Thomas later joined the Assemblies of God (1916-1921). The migratory nature of the Mexican gold miners and the mining camps meant that no permanent Protestant work was established there.                                |
| 1914 – Romana de Valenzuela was converted to the Pentecostal Faith in the USA and return to her hometown of Aldama, Chihuahua, to evangelize her family, friends and community; this marked the beginning of a growing number of Oneness Pentecostal congregations in northern Mexico, originally called the "Spiritual Evangelical Church," that later became known as the Apostolic Church of Faith in Jesus Christ - Iglesia Apostólica de la Fe en Cristo Jesús, which was officially organized in 1928. |
| 1915 - 1918 – Fermín Escárcega, Antonio Delarré and Octavio Lostanau engaged in itinerant preaching in the State of Sonora; Escárcega founded a church in Tacupeto, Sonora (1920-1922), and Delarré founded a church in Agua Prieta on the Mexico-Arizona border.  |
| 1917 – Henry C. Ball became the first superintendent of Hispanic ministry for the Assemblies of God in Texas; in 1917 he pastored a Spanish-speaking church in Brownsville, TX, and began to visit towns on the Mexican side of the border; in September 1917, Miss Sunshine Marshall (later Ball's wife) and Miss Alice Luce began an evangelistic ministry in Monterrey, Nuevo León, but they were forced to return to the USA after a short stay of three months.   |
| 1917 – Miguel Guillén and Felipe Douglas Millisted founded the first Assembly of God church in Mexico in the town of Villanueva (Rancho La Rosita), Tamaulipas.  |
| 1917 - "The Cincinnati Plan" (a mission "comity" agreement among major denominations that assigned mission agencies to different geographical areas of Mexico to avoid the duplication of efforts; the plan was generally unworkable and the national church leaders ignored the agreement).   |
| 1917 - Free Methodist Church   |
| 1919 - *Swedish Free Mission (Filadelfia Swedish Pentecostal Churches, Axel and Ester Andersson) – first known as Sharon Independent Evangelical Church in Mexico City; now known as the Independent Evangelical Church of the Mexican Republic; other denominations and independent churches trace their origins to this original Swedish Pentecostal movement in Mexico.   |
| 1920 - Church of God (Seventh Day)   |
| 1920 - Church of God in the Mexican Republic-IDRM (split from Assemblies of God; founded by David Ruesga)  |
| 1922 - Wesleyan Church World Missions  |
| 1922-1926 An estimated 20,000 Mennonites from Canada immigrated to Mexico to establish agricultural colonies in  |

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| the states of Chihuahua and Durango at the invitation of the Mexican government; the groups include: <i>Altkolonier Mennonitengemeinde; Kleingemeinde; Sommerfelder Mennonitengemeinde and Reinländer-Gemeinde.</i>   |
| 1922 - Pentecostal Evangelical Christian Church in Pachuca, Hidalgo (Andrés Ornelas); now part of FRAPI.  |
| 1923 - Mexican Union Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church   |
| 1923 - Independent Congregational Church (Estevan Chávez Escoto); now part of FRAPI.  |
| 1924-1925 - Reformed Church in America, World Ministries  |
| 1926 - Spiritual Evangelical Christian Church (founded by Irish Oneness Pentecostal missionary Joseph Stewart in Monterrey; doctrinally, this denomination is similar to the Apostolic Church of Faith in Jesus Christ, which was first organized in 1928, but whose origins can be traced to 1914) |
| 1927 - Interdenominational Christian Church (Portales)  |
| 1929 - Bethel Church of Tacubaya (Jesús Huerta Romero); now part of FRAPI.  |
| 1929 - Independent churches of Christ (Stone-Campbell Movement)   |
| 1930 - Movement of Independent Evangelical Pentecostal Churches-MIEPI (Valente Aponte González)   |
| 1930 - Metropolitan Church Association  |
| 1932 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN)   |
| 1931 - Ephesis Church in Puebla (Miguel Leal Rojas); now part of FRAPI.   |
| 1933 - Independent Christian Church (Raymundo Ramírez)  |
| 1934 - America's Keswick  |
| 1936-1937 - The Salvation Army, USA   |
| 1935 - Pentecostal Apostolic Universal Christian Church of Jesus (Palemón Moreno Rivera)  |
| 1935-1936 - Wycliffe Bible Translators (first field started), also known as Summer Institute of Linguistics   |
| 1938 - Church of New Victory (Iglesia de la Nueva Victoria)   |
| 1942 - Pentecostal Church of God  |
| 1943 - Child Evangelism Fellowship  |
| 1943 - International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, Mission Board   |
| 1943 - World Mission Prayer League  |
| 1944 - Church of God of Prophecy  |
| 1944 - Churches of Christ in Christian Union (independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ)  |
| 1945 - Mexican Mission Ministries   |
| 1946 - Evangelical Covenant Church  |
| 1946 - Evangelical Methodist Church Missions  |
| 1946 - Church of God (Anderson, Indiana)  |
| 1946 - Missionary Aviation Fellowship   |
| 1947 - Pentecostal Holiness Church Missions   |
| 1947 - Independent Presbyterian Church (a split from the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico)  |
| 1947 - Christian Fellowship Union, Inc.   |
| 1949 - Air Mail from God (now, Trans World Missions)  |
| 1949 - Missionary Revival Crusade; later known as Calvary Churches and still later as Centers of Faith, Hope and Love (founded by Daniel Ost).  |
| 1949 - Pentecostal Church of God  |
| <b>1950-1969 (65 groups)</b>  |
| 1950s - National Conservative Presbyterian Church of Mexico (a split from the National Presbyterian Church, led by Eleazar Z. Pérez of the El Divino Salvador parish in Mexico City; a conservative and fundamentalist body influenced by Carl McIntire in the USA)                                 |
| 1950 - Baptist Bible Fellowship International   |
| 1950 - Mennonite Brethren Missions  |
| 1950 - Mennonite Mission Board of the Pacific   |
| 1950 - General Conference Mennonite Church  |
| 1950 - Mexican Border Missions  |
| 1950 - World Gospel Mission   |
| 1951 - Church of God of Apostolic Faith   |
| 1951 - Grace Brethren Foreign Missions  |
| 1951 - Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod Mission  |
| 1951 - Baptist General Conference   |
| 1951 - Evangelical Mennonite Brethren Conference  |
| 1951 - United Missionary Fellowship   |
| 1952 - International Pentecostal Church of Christ   |
| 1952 - Conservative Baptist Home Mission  |
| 1953 - World Baptist Fellowship Mission   |

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| 1953 - Baptist Missionary Association of America  |
| 1953 - World Baptist Fellowship Mission   |
| 1953 – Bethel Christian Church (founded by Moisés Salas Cruz, formerly with David Ruesga) |
| 1954 - Christian and Missionary Alliance  |
| 1954 – National Evangelical Pentecostal Church (founded by Isidro Pérez and Noé Ruiz)     |
| 1955 - American Baptist Association   |
| 1956 - Gospel Missionary Union  |
| 1956 - Mexican Christian Mission  |
| 1957 - Christians in Action   |
| 1957 - Operation Mobilization   |
| 1957 - Next Towns Crusade, Inc.   |
| 1958 - Franconia Mennonite Conference Mission   |
| 1959 - Central American Mission (CAM International)                                       |
| 1959 - Bethany Missionary Association   |
| 1959 - World Missions, Inc.   |
| 1960 - Baptist Mid-Missions   |
| 1960 - BCM International, Inc.  |
| 1960 - National Association of Congregational Christian Churches                          |
| 1960 - World-Wide Missions International  |
| 1960 - Youth Enterprises, Inc.  |
| 1961 - Mexican Border Missions  |
| 1961 - Project Partner with Christ  |
| 1962 - Campus Crusade for Christ  |
| 1962 - Christian Reformed World Missions  |
| 1962 - Elim Fellowship  |
| 1962 - Source of Light Ministries International   |
| 1962 - World Literature Crusade   |
| 1963 - Apostolic Church of Pentecost  |
| 1963 - Congregational Holiness Church Missions  |
| 1963 - World Vision International   |
| 1964 - Gospel Recordings, Inc.  |
| 1964 - New Life League  |
| 1964 - Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Churches   |
| 1964 - YUGO Ministries (Youth Unlimited Gospel Outreach)                                  |
| 1965 - Baptist International Missions   |
| 1965 - Bible Missionary Church  |
| 1965 - Open Bible Standard Missions   |
| 1965 - Youth With A Mission (YWAM)  |
| 1966 - The Navigators   |
| 1967 - Luis Palau Evangelistic Association  |
| 1967 - Evangelical Friends Mission  |
| 1967 - Church of God (Holiness) Mission   |
| 1967 - Foundation for His Ministry  |
| 1967 - Missions of Baja, Inc.   |
| 1967 - Gospel Fellowship Association  |
| 1967 - Vacation Samaritans (affiliated with Church of God, Anderson, IN)                  |
| 1968 - Christian Nationals Evangelistic Commission  |
| 1968 - Christian Reformed World Relief  |
| 1968 - Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Missions                                      |
| <b>1970-1979 (31 groups)</b>  |
| 1970 - Latin America Mission (MILAMEX, Latin America Mission of Mexico)                   |
| 1971 - Bethany Fellowship Missions  |
| 1971 - Baptist World Missions   |
| 1971 - Globe Missionary Evangelism  |
| 1971 - UFM, International (USA)   |
| 1972 - Children's Haven International   |
| 1972 - Missionary Air Transport, Inc.   |
| 1972 - New Tribes Mission   |
| 1972 - Shield of Faith  |

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| 1972 - Totonac Bible Center, Inc.   |
| 1973 - Macedonian Missionary Service  |
| 1973 - Presbyterian Church in America   |
| 1974 - Evangelical Congregational Church  |
| 1975 - AMG International  |
| 1975 - International Orphanage Association  |
| 1975 - Trinity International Baptist Missions   |
| 1976 - Mission SOS  |
| 1976 - Mennonite Board of Missions  |
| 1976 - Seventh Day Baptist Missionary Society   |
| 1977 - Bible Missionary Church  |
| 1978 - Icthus International   |
| 1978 - Wycliffe Associates, Inc.  |
| 1979 - Brethren Church Mission Board  |
| 1979 - Association of Free Lutheran Congregations   |
| 1979 - American Messianic Fellowship  |
| 1979 - Compassion International   |
| 1979 - Food for the Hungry  |
| 1979 - Logoi, Inc.  |
| 1979 - O.C. Ministries (Overseas Crusades)  |
| 1979 - United Pentecostal Church International  |
| 1979 - We Go, Inc.  |
| <b>1980-1989 (42 groups)</b>  |
| 1980 - Christian Missionary Fellowship (Indiana), now CMF International (Stone-Campbell Movement)                 |
| 1980 - Christian Union Mission  |
| 1980 - Global Outreach with the Gospel  |
| 1980 - Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship   |
| 1981 - Harvest  |
| 1981 - Mennonite Central Committee  |
| 1981 - World Indigenous Missions  |
| 1982 - Blessings International  |
| 1982 - Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, Canada   |
| 1982 - Frontier Ministries International  |
| 1982 - Calvary Missionary Fellowship  |
| 1982 - Calvary Commission, Inc.   |
| 1982 - The Missionary Church, Overseas Ministries (World Partners)  |
| 1983 - Christian Faith Ministries   |
| 1983 - Maranatha Baptist Mission  |
| 1983 - New Covenant Evangelical Ministries  |
| 1983 - Pocket Testament League  |
| 1983 - Priority One International   |
| 1983 - Reach Ministries International.  |
| 1983 - Self Help Foundation   |
| 1983 - World Salt Foundation  |
| 1983 - Childcare International  |
| 1983 - Mission Ministries, Inc.   |
| 1984 - Mexico Inland Mission  |
| 1984 - Fellowship of Independent Missions (Fellowship International Mission?)                                     |
| 1984 - All Peoples Baptist Mission  |
| 1984 - Pocket Testament League  |
| 1984 - AmeriTribes  |
| 1984 - Presbyterian Reformed Church of Mexico (in fellowship with the Christian Reformed Church of North America) |
| 1984 - VELA Ministries International  |
| 1985 - In-Depth Evangelism Associates (IDEA Ministries)   |
| 1985 - Independent Faith Mission  |
| 1985 - Christian Advance International  |
| 1985 - Precious Seed Ministries   |
| 1986 - Calvary International  |
| 1986 - International Outreach Ministries  |

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| 1986 - Global Strategy Mission Association  |
| 1986 - Mazahua Mission  |
| 1987 - Advent Christian Church, World Missions  |
| 1987 - Liberty Baptist Mission  |
| 1987 - Habitat for Humanity International   |
| 1988 - TEAM (The Evangelical Alliance Mission)  |
| <b>1990-1999 (29 groups)</b>  |
| 1990 - Brethren in Christ World Missions  |
| 1990 - OMS International, Inc. (USA and Canada)   |
| 1990 - Medical Ambassadors Mission  |
| 1990 - Impact International   |
| 1990 - Kids Alive International   |
| 1990 - WEC International  |
| 1990 - World Teach (formerly, West Indies Mission)  |
| 1991 - Association of Baptist for World Evangelism (ABWE)   |
| 1991 - Action International Ministries  |
| 1991 - AMF International  |
| 1991 - International Partnership Missions   |
| 1992 - International Gospel Outreach  |
| 1992 - North American Baptist Conference  |
| 1992 - The Master's Harvest   |
| 1992 - World Servants   |
| 1993 - Evangelical Mennonite Church   |
| 1993 - Evangelical Presbyterian Church  |
| 1993 - Fraternity of Pentecostal Churches (FRAPI); an association formed by eight autonomous churches and their affiliates. |
| 1995 - Christ for the City International (affiliated with Latin America Mission)  |
| 1995 - Living Water Teaching International  |
| 1995 - Mission Society for United Methodists  |
| 1995 - Primitive Methodist Church USA   |
| 1995 - Ripe for Harvest, Inc.   |
| 1995 - The Master's Mission, Inc.   |
| 1995 - Walk Thru The Bible Ministries   |
| 1996 - International Family Missions  |
| 1996 - Baptist International Outreach   |
| <b>2000-2004 (12 groups)</b>  |
| 2000 - Global Outreach International  |
| 2002 - The Luke Society   |
| 2000 - Walk Thru the Bible Ministries   |
| 2002 - Josue Yrion World Evangelism and Missions  |
| 2002 - Ministries In Action   |
| 2002 - STEM (Short-Term Evangelical Missions)   |
| 2003 - General Baptist International  |
| 2003 - Hosanna  |
| 2004 - Audio Scripture Ministries   |
| 2004 - Christ's Mandate for Missions  |
| 2004 - International Institute for Christian Studies  |
| 2004 - Palm Missionary Ministries   |
| <b>DATE OF ORIGIN UNKNOWN (2)</b>   |
| Christian Aid Mission   |
| *Glad Tidings Missionary Society, Canada  |
| <b>TOTALS: 253 GROUPS</b>   |



## NOTES:

(1) Dates listed indicate the earliest recorded ministry or in case of discrepancies, the date most frequently indicated.

(2) With the separation of Church and State in 1857, church lands were confiscated and privileges demolished. Historical data taken from the ***Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean*** (Collier, Blakemore and Skidmore 1985: 217,302-303).

## SOURCES:

(1) Daryl Platt, "Who Represents the Evangelical Church in Latin America? A Study of the Evangelical Fellowship Organizations." Pasadena, CA: an unpublished Doctor of Missiology dissertation, School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1991; modifications, corrections and updates by Clifton L. Holland, 1997-2009.

(2) North American Agencies include U.S. and Canadian (Roberts and Siewert, ***Mission Handbook: North American Protestant Ministries Overseas***, MARC 1989).

(3) John A. Siewert and Edna G. Valdez, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1997).

(4) Linda J. Weber and Dotsey Welliver, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas, 2007-2009*** (Evangelism and Missions Information Service, EMIS; Wheaton, IL.

(5) Additional historical information was derived from personal interviews in Mexico conducted by Clifton L. Holland, and from published sources in Spanish that are now part of his personal library, including books, articles, letters and other documents.

(6) Also, denominational histories and mission studies in English were consulted to verify dates and add relevant information.