

A CHRONOLOGY OF PROTESTANT ORIGINS IN MEXICO

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(Last revised on August 30, 2020)

Historical Overview of Mexico:

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
Number of North American Agencies reported in Mexico in 1985:	209
Number of North American Agencies reported in Mexico in 1996:	178
*Indicates European Mission Agency	

Significant Protestant Beginnings: mission agencies and national denominations

1800-1849 (two groups)
1826 – John C. Brigham (1794-1862), of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (created in 1810 by members of the Congregational Church in Boston, Massachusetts), was sent to observe and report on conditions in the newly independent countries from Spain in South America and Mexico (visiting Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Mexico) between 1823-1826; he spent about two months in Mexico during early 1826, before returning to New York City in May of that year; he later served as Senior Correspondence Secretary of the American Bible Society (founded in 1816) from 1826 until his death in 1862.
1827 - *British and Foreign Bible Society colporteur, James Thomson
1850-1899 (20 groups)
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 Westrup in Monterrey, Nuevo León.
1865 - *Work of the Plymouth Brethren began with James Pascoe, a young mining engineer (age 24) from England who became a Brethren missionary and settled in Teluca, State of Mexico.
1868 - American and Foreign Christian Union (later the Protestant Episcopal Church) absorbed "The Mexican Church of Jesus" in Mexico City under Bishop Henry Riley.
1870 - American Baptist Home Mission Society (absorbed Hickey's work in Monterrey)
1871 - American Friends Church (Religious Society of Friends, Richmond, VA) in Matamoras
1872 - American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (Congregational Church) in Guadalajara; now 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 Matamoras 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 Henry 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 O. Westrup, and in Saltillo-Coahuila with the Rev. William Powell in 1882.
1888 - Cumberland Presbyterian Church begins work in Guanajuato and Aguascalientes with the Rev. H. Sharp.
1891 - *The Plymouth Brethren) began work in Orizaba, Veracruz, after J. Eglon Harris and his family arrived from England and settled there.
1891- Salvador Marchisio, an Italian living in the United States, arrived in Mexico City as a colporteur of Seventh-day Adventist literature; in 1894, Adventist work formally began in Guadalajara and in 1899 in Mexico City.
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 Hoblits and Masons.
1900-1949 (50 groups)
1902 - Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) begins work in Mexico City.
1903 - Church of the Nazarene 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.
1914 - "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).
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 - 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 the states of Chihuahua and Durango at the invitation of the Mexican government; the groups include: <i>Altkolonier Mennonitengemeinde</i> ; <i>Kleingemeinde</i> ; <i>Sommerfelder Mennonitengemeinde</i> and <i>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 established
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.
1930 - Movement of Independent Evangelical Pentecostal Churches-MIEPI (Valente Aponte González)
1930 - Metropolitan Church Association
1932 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN)
1931 - Ephesus 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
1950-1969 (64 groups)
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 - Mexican Missionary Church, later known as <i>Iglesia Mexicana del Evangelio de Cristo Pentecostés</i>
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
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 - 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 (Quakers)
1967 - Church of God (Holiness) Mission
1967 - Foundation for His Ministry
1967 - Missions of Baja, Inc.
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
1970-1979 (31 groups)
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
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.
1980-1996 (69 groups)
1980 - Christian Missionary Fellowship (Indiana), now CMF International
1980 - Christian Union Mission
1980 - Global Outreach with the Gospel
1980 - Presbyterian Evangelistic Fellowship
1981 - Harvest
1981 - Comisión Centros Cristianos / Christian Centers Commission
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 - 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
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)
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
DATE OF ORIGIN UNKNOWN (10)
AmeriTribes
Christian Aid Mission
Church of Christ Final Call Ministries
Full Gospel Grace Fellowship
*Glad Tidings Missionary Society, Canada
Gospel Fellowship Association
In Touch Mission International
Operation Mobilization
United Evangelical Churches
Youth For Christ, USA
TOTALS: 242 GROUPS

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) 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.

(5) Jean-Jacques Bauswein and Lukas Vischer, **The Reformed Family Worldwide** (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999).