

**A CHRONOLOGY OF PROTESTANT BEGINNINGS:
LEEWARD ISLANDS**

by Dr. Clifton L. Holland

(last revised on June 12, 2003)

Historical Overview:

Discovery by Christopher Columbus on several voyages to the New World:	1492-1500
Spanish occupation and first Roman Catholic missionaries arrive in Guadalupe:	1523
French take control of Guadalupe and other smaller islands:	1630s
British take control (except for the French-controlled islands), Treaty of Versailles:	1793
British colonize Anguilla, St. Kitts-Nevis and the Virgin Islands:	1816
Slavery abolished:	1838
Separation of the Virgin Islands:	1871
Antigua achieves self-government:	1966
Separation of St. Kitts from Anguilla:	1980
Indicates European society*	

**Significant Protestant Beginnings or Events in the following islands:
Anguilla, Antigua, Guadeloupe (also Basse-Terre, Grande-Terre and Marie-
Galante), Montserrat, St. Kitts, St. Christopher and Nevis, and the Virgin
Islands (U.S. and Britain domains).**

- 1623 - First British settlement in the Caribbean on St. Kitts, led by Thomas Walker; also occupied Nevis Island in 1628.
- 1634 - *Anglican chaplains arrive with British occupation; the Church of England becomes the Established Church after the first Anglican priest arrived in Antigua; after 1824, Antigua became part of the Bishopric of Barbados; the Bishopric of Antigua was established in 1842 with responsibility for church matters in Antigua, Aruba, Barbuda, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, Saba, St. Barts, St. Eustatuis, St. Martin and St. Kitts; this area is now part of the Church in the Province of the West Indies.
- 1635 - *French Huguenot colonists settle on Guadalupe and Martinique; this was the basis for the development of the Reformed Church of the Antilles – Eglise Evangélique de la Guadeloupe.
- 1732 - *The Moravian Church began its pioneer work among African slaves in the Caribbean at St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands (Danish West Indies)

with missionaries Leonard Dober and David Nitschmann, and later with Frederick Martin (1736-1750); work began in St. John in 1754, St. Croix in 1755, Antigua in 1756 and St. Kitts in 1777; now part of the East Indies Province of the Moravian Church.

- 1755 - *Danish Lutheran Church begins work in the Virgin Islands (Danish West Indies) among African slaves.
- 1760 - *Wesleyan Methodist layman Nathaniel Gilbert, a plantation owner who was converted in England through the teaching of John Wesley, returned to Antigua in 1760 and became a lay preacher.
- 1786 - *The Wesleyan Methodist Church began work in Antigua and St. Kitts in 1786 under missionaries William Warrener and William Hammett, respectively, by the authority of Bishop Dr. Thomas Coke; visits were also made by Dr. Coke and his associates to St. Christopher and Nevis islands, St. Eustatius (Dutch colony), and the Windward Islands (Dominica and St. Vincent); in 1789 work was begun in Jamaica (which became the headquarters for Methodist work in the Caribbean) and Barbados; by 1796 Methodist work had begun in Nevis, Tortola, Montserrat and St. Bartholemew (Swedish colony); work in Anguilla began in 1813 and St. Martin in 1817; in 1968, Methodist work in these and other islands became part of the Conference of the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas.
- 1795 - *The Anglican "Slave Conversion Society" (later known as the Christian Faith Society), under the Bishop of London, begins work in Jamaica and Barbados; work began in St. Kitts in 1795, Antigua in 1798, Nevis in 1805 and St. Vincent in 1810.
- 1813 - *The (Evangelical Anglican) Church Missionary Society begins work in Antigua through the efforts of William Dawes.
- 1850 - *Roman Catholic Church establishes a parish on Anguilla, and in 1861 in St. Kitts-Nevis.
- 1904 - *The Salvation Army arrives in Antigua.
- 1910 - Canadian Pentecostals arrive on Montserrat and build a thriving work, still related to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.
- 1943 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN): St. Kitts in 1943, Guadeloupe in 1946 and Antigua in 1954.
- 1944 - Seventh-day Adventists: Antigua and Anguilla; entered Guadalupe in 1965; later in St. Kitts-Nevis.
- 1946 - Church of God (Anderson, IN): in St. Kitts and Nevis in 1946.
- 1947 - World Team (formerly, West Indies Mission) in Guadalupe
- 1950 - Independent Faith Mission in Antigua.
- 1963 - Baptist International Missions in the U.S. Virgin Islands; Anguilla in 1968; Antigua in 1975; St. Christopher-Nevis in 1994.

- 1964 - Southern Baptist Convention in Guadeloupe, Antigua and St. Kitts.
- 1986 - Christian Church and Churches of Christ in the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- 1995 - Mission to the World, Presbyterian Church of America, in the British Virgin Islands.
- 1996 - Habitat for Humanity International

Date of Origin Unknown:

- Antioch Baptist Church
- Assemblies of the First Born
- Brethren Assemblies or Christian Brethren (Plymouth Brethren)
- Church of God of Prophecy
- Evangelical Faith Mission
- Pentecostal churches in France have sent missionaries to several islands, including Guadalupe.
- Pilgrim Holiness (now part of The Wesleyan Church)



NOTES:

- (1) Dates listed indicate the earliest recorded ministry or in case of discrepancies, the date most frequently indicated.
- (2) North American Agencies include U.S. and Canadian.

SOURCES:

- (1) Daryl L. Platt, "Who Represents the Evangelical Churches 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, June 1991. Used by permission of the author.
- (2) PROLADES (Latin American Socio-religious Studies Program), international headquarters in San José, Costa Rica: www.prolades.com, prolades@racsa.co.cr
- (3) John A. Siewert and Edna G. Valdez, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1997).
- (4) Jean-Jacques Bauswein and Lukas Vischer, ***The Reformed Family Worldwide*** (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999).

(5) Clifton L. Holland, editor, ***World Christianity: Central America and the Caribbean*** (MARC-World Vision International, 1981)

(6) J. Gordon Melton and Martin Baumann, editors, ***Religions of the World*** (ABC-Clio Publishers, 2002)