



A CHRONOLOGY OF PROTESTANT BEGINNINGS: VENEZUELA

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Historical Overview of Venezuela:

Independence from Spain declared:	1810
Federation of Gran Colombia:	1819
Independent Republic established:	1831
Constitutional religious liberty established:	1834
Bi-lateral agreement With the Vatican Established:	1964
Number of North American Agencies in 1989:	54
Number of North American agencies in 1996:	51
Number of North American agencies in 2006:	47
Indicates European society*	



Significant Protestant Beginnings or Events:

- 1819 - *British and Foreign Bible Society work began (other visits in 1825 and 1854)
- 1832 - *Anglican services first established, along with an Anglican cemetery, in Caracas-La Guaira; first Anglican chapel in La Guaira in 1833.
- 1865 - *The first Lutheran pastor arrives; a Protestant Council was formed in 1870 among foreign residents, mainly Germans and Englishmen.
- 1876 - American Bible Society colporteur, J. de Palma
- 1878 - Messiah Methodist Church established in Caracas (later affiliated with the Presbyterian work)
- 1883 - *Early evangelistic efforts by Plymouth Brethren laymen who came to work on railroad construction between Caracas and the port of La Guaira.
- 1884 - Independent Protestant youth worker, Emilio Bryant
- 1886 - American Bible Society colporteur, Francisco Penzotti (permanent work since 1887)
- 1889 - *First Plymouth Brethren (“Open Brethren”) missionaries arrive, Mr. & Mrs. Charles Bright from England (the work was later affiliated with the Missionary Service Committee of Canada and Christian Missions in Many Lands in the USA); first congregation was established in 1890 in Caracas-Miracielos; the Plymouth Brethren are known in Venezuela as “Brethren who gather in the name of the Lord.”
- 1893 - *Evangelical German Lutheran Church established, Pastor Ramin Beelitz; followed by Pastor Heinrich Voigt in 1904
- 1895 - Christian and Missionary Alliance, two missionary ladies arrive in Caracas, followed by the Rev. and Mrs. Gerald A. Bailly in February 1897 who founded the Hebron Home Training Institute for Native Workers in the mountains near Caracas.

- 1896 - Plymouth Brethren missionary John Mitchell arrives from Canada.
- 1897 - Presbyterian Church USA, Foreign Mission Board (first missionaries, Mr. & Mrs. Theodore S. Pound)
- 1898 - *Swedish Evangelical Free Church of USA – Swedish Pietists
- 1899 - *Evangelical Mission of South America, David Finstrom (incorporated into the Evangelical Free Church in 1920); the national church body is known as ADIEL (Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas Libres de Venezuela), created in 1953.
- 1906 - *The Scandinavian Alliance Mission, later known as The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM) – Swedish Pietists (Thomas Bach and John Christiansen); the national church body is known as OVICE (Organización Venezolana de Iglesias Cristianas Evangélicas), created in 1966.
- 1910 - Seventh-Day Adventist General Conference
- 1911 - *British and Foreign Bible Society establish permanent office in Caracas (united with the American Bible Society in 1942 to form the United Bible Societies)
- 1912 - Canadian “Open Brethren” missionaries arrive, Mr. & Mrs. William Williams and Mr. Gordon Johnston, who established their first assembly in 1916 in Puerto Cabello.
- 1919 - Orinoco River Mission (ORM), founded as an independent work by Dr. Van and Mrs. Gara Edding after working with the Baillys in Caracas and Margarita Island from 1914-1919; the ORM established the affiliated national church body known as ASIGEO (Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas del Oriente)
- 1919 - Independent Pentecostal work in Barquisimeto by Mr. and Mrs. Gottfried F. Bender (who joined the Assemblies of God in 1937); Bethel Pentecostal Assembly established in Barquisimeto in September 1921.
- 1920 - Evangelical Free Church of North America – Swedish Pietist heritage; the national church body is known as ADIEL (Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas Libres de Venezuela), created in 1953.
- 1924 - Baptist Mid-Missions
- 1926 - Northern Baptist missionaries begin work in Carúpano (1926-1947, now part of Southern Baptist work)
- 1927 - Apostolic Missionary Evangelical Christian Church, also known as The Native Venezuelan Churches (Iglesias Nativas Venezolanas de Apure), founded by Arístides Díaz.
- 1929 - Independent Pentecostal work in El Tocuyo, led by Jacob Feuerstein; became part of United World Mission in 1947.
- 1940 - Assemblies of God Foreign Missions, USA; founded by the Rev. Irvin Olson who built on the work began by Gottfried F. Bender in Barquisimeto and Mr. Blattner in Falcón State; Olson founded a church in Caracas in 1942 that became known as the “mother church” of the Assemblies of God in Venezuela; the General Council of the Assemblies of God was organized in 1948.
- 1942 - Child Evangelism Fellowship
- 1946 - New Tribes Mission, USA & Canada
- 1947 - **United World Mission** (a union of some of the national Pentecostal churches founded by G. F. Bender, beginning in 1919, and Jacob Feuerstein, dating from 1929; in 1969, a separate convention was formed, called the Association of Evangelical Churches of the United World Mission.
- 1949 - Southern Baptist Convention (1942), Foreign Mission Board (now, International Mission Board)
- 1950s - *Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement (headquarters in Germany)

- 1951 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN)
- 1951 - Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod (1947)
- 1951 - Mennonite Brethren Mission Services
- 1954 - Worldwide Evangelistic Crusade (WEC International)
- 1954 - Independent Baptist Church of Venezuela (a national church body founded by Oscar Galdona in Barquisimeto and Luis Galdona in Caracas)
- 1955 - International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- 1956 - United Pentecostal Church International
- 1957 - A split from the Assemblies of God produced the Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela (UEPV), a national autonomous church body founded by Exeario Sosa and ten other pastors in Santa Bárbara del Julia; this was said to be a reaction against U.S. missionary paternalism. Since the 1960s, this denomination has had a close working relationship with the Disciples of Christ in Puerto Rico.
- 1958 - Baptist Bible Fellowship International
- 1958 - Evangelical Church of the Cross (a national Pentecostal church body founded by Sacramento Cobos in Zulia)
- 1959 - The Evangelical Council of Venezuela – El Consejo Evangélico de Venezuela (CEV)
- 1959 - The Lutheran Council of Venezuela, affiliated with the World Lutheran Federation
- 1959 - Venezuelan National Baptist Convention, affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, USA.
- 1950s - Peniel Church (a national Pentecostal church body founded in Valencia)
- 1960 - Christian Church of North America
- 1960 - Emaus Pentecostal Church (a national church body)
- 1965 - Missionary Aviation Fellowship
- 1968 - Church of God of Prophecy
- 1968 - Fellowship International Mission
- 1970s - International Trinitarian Light of the World Church (a national Pentecostal body founded by Capitan Jaime Banks Puertas in Guanare)
- 1972 - The Christian & Missionary Alliance
- 1975 - The Navigators
- 1978 - Eastern Mennonite Missions
- 1978 - Evangelical Mennonite Church
- 1978 - International Pentecostal Holiness Church
- 1979 - Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church
- 1979 - Assemblies of God Evangelical Confraternity – a split from the Assemblies of God led by Valentín Vale.
- 1980 - Baptist International Missions
- 1980 - Brethren in Christ World Missions
- 1980 - Church of God (Anderson, IN)
- 1982 - Church of the Nazarene
- 1982 - Harvest
- 1983 - Maranatha Baptist Mission
- 1984 - Bible Missionary Church
- 1986 - Team Expansion, Inc.
- 1986 - Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society, now known as CBInternational.
- 1989 - Impact International
- 1989 - Latin America Mission
- 1990 - Mission Ministries, Inc.
- 1990 - FEBInternational of Canada
- 1992 - Canadian Baptist Ministries
- 1993 - Church Resource Ministries

- 1994 - Christian Outreach International
- 1994 - Servants in Faith & Technology
- 1995 - Medical Ambassadors International

Date of Origin Unknown:

Christian Church and Churches of Christ
Spanish World Gospel Mission



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) Platt, Daryl L., "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) Jacinto Ayerra, **Los Protestantes en Venezuela** (Caracas, Venezuela: Ediciones Tripode, 1980).
- (3) PROLADES (Latin American Socio-religious Studies Program), international headquarters in San José, Costa Rica: www.prolades.com
- (4) Roberts, Dayton and John Siewert, editors: **Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas** (MARC 1989).
- (5) Siewert, John A. and Edna G. Valdez, editors: **Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas** (MARC 1997).
- (6) Weber, Linda J. and Dotsy Welliver, editors. **Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas (2007-2009)**. Wheaton, IL: Evangelism and Missions Information Service (EMIS), 2007.