A CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT PROTESTANT BEGINNINGS IN HISPANIC MINISTRY IN THE USA, 1829-1995

Compiled by Dr. Clifton L. Holland

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Historical Overview of U.S. relations with Spain and Mexico:

Spanish "conquistador" Hernando Cortés begins the exploration and conquest of Mexico:	1519
Alvarez de Pineda explores the Gulf Coast:	1519
Cortés conquers the Aztecs in Teotihuacán (Mexico City) and establishes Spanish rule:	1521
Pánfilo de Narvaez begins the exploration of Florida and Texas:	1528
The Viceroyalty of New Spain established over Mexico and the western part of what is	1535
now the United States of America:	
Cabeza de Vaca explores the territory of Texas:	1535
Spanish explorations in the territory of Arizona and New Mexico:	1539
Francisco Vásquez de Coronado explores what is now the Southwestern U.S. and parts of	1540
the Great Plains states:	
Hernando de Soto explores Florida and other Southern states and discovers the	1539-1541
Mississippi River:	
Spanish explorer Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo discovers the territory of California:	1542
Spanish colonization of New Mexico begins:	1548
St. Augustine founded by the Spanish in Florida:	1565
Santa Fe founded by the Spanish in New Mexico:	1609
Spanish colonization of the territory of Arizona begins:	1687
Spain begins the colonization of Alta California:	1769
Los Angeles founded by the Spanish in Alta California:	1781
Spanish forces withdraw from the eastern seaboard of what is now U.S. territory, Mexico	1821
becomes independent of Spain, and Anglo-Americans begin to colonize Texas:	
Texas becomes independent of Mexico:	1836
Texas becomes the 28 th state of the Union:	1845
California declares its independence from Mexico:	1846
Mexican-American War, U.S. occupies Northern Mexico:	1846-1848
Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico cedes to U.S. the territories of California, Arizona,	1848
New Mexico and other large fragments of its territory; also approves the prior annexation	
of Texas:	
The Gadsden Purchase, U.S. takes possession of southern Arizona and New Mexico:	1853
Spanish-American War, U.S. occupies Cuba and Puerto Rico:	1898
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Number of known Protestant denominations working with Hispanics in 1930:	22
Number of known Protestant denominations working with Hispanics in 1960:	32
Number of known Protestant denominations working with Hispanics in 1990:	79
Number of known Protestant denominations working with Hispanics in 1960:	32

Significant Hispanic Protestant Beginnings or Events, 1829-1995:

1829 –	Sumner Bacon, called "a colorful and controversial Cumberland Presbyterian
1844	evangelist," was the first Presbyterian to begin missionary work among
1044	Hispanics in Texas; he began his ministry as an itinerant evangelist among the
	Anglo Americans of east and central Texas and later became a colporteur with
	the American Bible Society in 1833; he distributed Spanish Bibles and New
	Testaments and shared the Gospel message with the Spanish-speaking people
	with whom he frequently came into contact; when he died in 1844, no one in his
	denomination was willing to continue his work among the Mexican population.
1839 -	William C. Blair, an Old School Presbyterian clergyman, becomes the first
1000	person to receive a formal denominational appointment to evangelize Mexicans
	in Texas, when he began his ministry with the Assembly's Board of Foreign
	Missions in Victoria, Texas; he had a long career in Texas and died in 1873.
1846 -	Another Old School Presbyterian minister, John McCullough was assigned to
1040 -	work in San Antonio, Texas, by the Board of Foreign Missions, where he
	ministered to Anglos, Germans and Mexicans; in 1848, McCullough secured the
	services of a Spaniard who was a converted Roman Catholic, who came to San
	Antonio under the auspices of the Evangelical Society of New York to minister to
	the Mexican American population; McCullough later moved to Galveston, Texas,
	where he died in 1870.
1849 -	The Rev. Hiram W. Read arrives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to begin Hispanic
	ministry for the Southern Baptist Convention; his first convert in Albuquerque
	was Blas Chávez who became a Baptist preacher and served for fifty years.
1852 -	Melinda Rankin (1811-1888), an independent Presbyterian missionary and
	school teacher, arrived in Texas to begin her ministry among Mexicans in Texas
	and Mexico; she made several frustrating attempts at establishing a school for
	Mexican girls in Brownsville, which she finally accomplished in 1858; Rankin's
	sister arrived to help her in 1855, supported by the nondenominational American
	and Foreign Christian Union.
1853 -	The Methodist Episcopal Church (North) begins Hispanic ministry in New Mexico
	under the ministry of the Rev. Benigno Cárdenas, a former Roman Catholic
	priest in Santa Fe.
1860s	The Rev. Henry C. Riley, an Episcopalian, was reported to have pastored a
-	Spanish-speaking congregation in New York City "for some time," according to
	Melinda Rankin in 1868 (Rankin, 1875); in 1969, Riley was sent to Mexico by the
	American and Foreign Christian Union to organize nondenominational
	Protestant churches in Mexico City; in 1873, was appointed as "Bishop of the
	Valley of Mexico" for the Mexican Church of Jesus, which in 1904 became
1001	affiliated with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA.
1861 -	The Texas Baptist Convention (part of the Southern Baptist Convention)
1000	appoints J.W.D. Creath as its first missionary worker among the Mexicans.
1869 -	The Rev. Thomas Harwood reopens the New Mexico mission of the Methodist
	Episcopal Church and begins to train Mexicans for leadership in the Methodist
1871 -	church. Alejo Hernández, a Roman Catholic seminary student in Aguascalientes,
10/1-	Mexico, is converted to Protestantism in Brownsville, Texas, where he became
	a licensed preacher with the Methodist Episcopal Church (South) and served
	in Laredo, Texas, and Mexico City from 1871-1875.
1874 -	The West Texas Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (South)
1074	creates a Mexican border district.
1876 -	The First Baptist Church (Southern Baptist) of San Antonio organizes a
10,0	1 St. Suprior Straton (Southern Baption) of Santanionio organizes a

	Mexican mission under the direction of Jacob Korman.
1877 -	The first Mexican Presbyterian congregation in Texas was organized in
	Brownsville by the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern Presbyterians).
1879 -	The Rev. Antonio Diaz began work among Mexicans in Los Angeles under the auspices of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North); Diaz establishes a Spanish-speaking mission at the Fort Street Methodist Church; in 1884, Diaz became a Presbyterian minister and worked with the Rev. Carlos Bransby in established several Presbyterian missions among Mexicans in the Los Angeles
	area.
1881 -	The official beginning of permanent Southern Baptist work in Texas at Laredo; in 1981, the Mexican Baptist Convention of Texas celebrated 100 years of Hispanic Baptist work.
1885 -	The New Mexico Spanish-speaking Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) was organized in Peralta, New Mexico, under the leadership of Thomas Harwood.
1885 -	The Methodist Episcopal Church (South) organizes the Mexican Border
	Conference; previously, ministry to Mexicans in Texas had been coordinated through two mission districts, one in San Diego (near Corpus Christi) and the other in San Antonio.
1888 -	The Rev. A. Moss Merwin, a former missionary in Chile under the Presbyterian Board, begins his ministry among the Mexican population of Los Angeles; Merwin became the first Superintendent of Mexican Work in Southern California for the Presbyterian Church in the USA (Northern); Mary Merwin, Moss' daughter, became the Superintendent after Moss' death in 1905; by 1930, about 20 Spanish-speaking Presbyterian churches and missions had been established in Southern California
1000	been established in Southern California.
1892 -	Walter S. Scott of San Antonio, Texas, is ordained for the Presbyterian ministry and commissioned as "evangelist to the Mexican people" by the Presbytery of Western Texas of the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern).
1896 -	The Rev. A. B. Case begins work among Mexicans in Southern California; he had previously served in Mexico as a missionary with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions of the Congregational Church; several Spanish-speaking congregations were established by Case in Redlands, Chino, Santa Ana, San Bernardino and Piru; in 1897, Case and his supporters founded the interdenominational California Spanish Missionary Society.
1899 -	The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ begins Hispanic ministry in San Antonio, Texas.
1901 -	The First Baptist Church of Santa Barbara, California, establishes a Mexican mission, pastored by C.T. Valdivia, who also established a mission in Oxnard, CA, in 1903; these were the first two Spanish-speaking ministries of the Southern California Baptist Convention, affiliated with the American (Northern) Baptist Convention.
1905 -	The General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists begins Hispanic ministry in the Boyle Heights district of East Los Angeles; in 2003 there were at least 700 Hispanic Adventist churches and missions in the USA.
1908 -	The Texas-Mexican Presbytery was organized by the Presbyterian Church in the US (Southern Presbyterians).
1910 -	The Church of the Nazarene begins Hispanic ministry in the Bunker Hill section of Los Angeles, CA.
1911 -	The Rev. Vernon McCombs is appointed by the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) as director of Spanish work in Los Angeles; the McCombs had previously served as Methodist missionaries in Peru, from 1906-1910; in 1912, the Spanish and Portuguese District of the Southern California Conference was organized under McCombs leadership; between 1911 and 1920, about 70

	Mexican missions were established in California by the Methodists.
1911 -	The American Baptist Churches in the USA (formerly known as the American
	Baptist Convention or Northern Baptists) appointed the Rev. and Mrs. L. E.
	Troyer as general missionaries for Spanish work under the Southern California
	Baptist Convention; the Troyers had served as Baptist missionaries in Puerto
	Rico and Mexico prior to returning to California in 1910; between 1911 and
	1917, more than 17 Spanish-speaking churches and missions were
	established.
1912 -	The first two leaders of what was to become the Apostolic Assembly of Faith in
	Jesus Christ, the first Hispanic Pentecostal denomination in the USA, begin to
	evangelize Mexicans in Southern California: Juan Navarro and Francisco
	Llorente; during 1914-1915, churches were organized in Colton, San
	Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles (the Spanish Apostolic Faith Mission on
	North Hill Street) and Watts; the first convention of this new denomination was
	held in 1925 in San Bernardino with the participation of 27 affiliated pastors;
1912 -	however, it was not incorporated in California until 1930. The New York City Mission Society begins work among Spanish-speaking
1312	immigrants, later establishing the Church of the Good Neighbor, which became
	the "mother church" for many other Hispanic congregations.
1915 -	The young Rev. Henry C. Ball begins his life-long ministry with the newly
	formed Assemblies of God in Texas, where he established a Spanish-speaking
	church in Kingsville; he was appointed the first General Superintendent of the
	Mexican District of the Assemblies of God in 1917, which was renamed the
	Latin American District Council in 1929.
1915 -	The Friends Church (Quakers) begins Hispanic ministry in Whittier, California,
	under the leadership of Enrique Cobos, originally called the Jimtown Mission
	and now known as the Pico Rivera Friends Church.
1917 -	The Free Methodist Church in North America begins ministry among Hispanics
1010	in Los Angeles, California.
1918 -	Miss Alice E. Luce begins work among Hispanics in Los Angeles, California,
	and establishes the first Spanish-speaking Assembly of God church, "El Aposento Alto," in a rented hall near the Mexican Plaza; Ball reports that
	another Spanish-speaking Assembly of God congregation also existed in 1918
	in San José, California.
1920s	The Evangelical Lutheran Church begins Hispanic ministry in Texas.
-	The Evangenear Eatheran Charen Bogine Hieparie Himsety in Toxac.
1920s	The Evangelical United Brethren (a German denomination) begins Hispanic
-	ministry in Texas; in 2003, there were 15 Hispanic congregations in six states,
	with the largest number in California (9).
1921 -	The Christian & Missionary Alliance begins Hispanic ministry in San Antonio,
105:	Texas.
1921 -	The First Spanish Baptist Church was organized in New York City as part of
	the American Baptist Convention, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Perry D.
	Woods of the Home Mission Board and Miss Albertina D. Bischoff of the
1921 -	Women's Baptist Home Mission Society. Rodney W. Roundy, Associate Secretary of the Home Mission Council,
1921 -	reported that Protestant denominations had at least 300 Spanish-speaking
	churches and missions in the USA, with a paid staff of 250 ministers and
	Christian workers, in addition to 157 mission school teachers; also, that there
	were more "preaching points" than the number of reported churches and
	missions.
1923 -	The Latin American Council of Christian Churches (known as CLADIC in
	Spanish) was organized in Houston, Texas, under the leadership of the Rev.
	Francisco Olazabal, who left the Assemblies of God over a dispute with the

	Anglo-American leadership; CLADIC's headquarters are now located in Brownsville, Texas; also, Bethel Temple is established in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles in 1923 by the Rev. Francisco Olazabal.
1925 -	Latin American Council of the Pentecostal Church of God began work in New York City as an extension of its ministry in Puerto Rico; the former became independent of the mother church in Puerto Rico, Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal, during the 1950s; Everett Wilson refers to the related denomination in NYC as the "Council of (Spanish) Christian Churches of New York."
1926 -	Alice E. Luce establishes the Latin American Bible Institute of the Assemblies of God in San Diego, California; later, this school was moved to La Mesa, then to Los Angeles, and finally to La Puente, CA, where it remains today. Also in 1926, Ball established a similar institute in San Antonio, Texas, which was relocated later to Saspamco and then to Ysleta, Texas, now a suburb of El Paso, where it is presently.
1929 -	The Assemblies of God reorganized its Spanish-speaking work into two districts: the Latin American District Council (includes all the states west of the Mississippi River, in addition to Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan and Indiana) and the Spanish Eastern District Council (the rest of the states of the Union plus Puerto Rico).
1929 -	The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, California.
1930 -	The Pacific Coast Latin American Conference was organized under the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America; in 1930, McLean reported there were ten Spanish-speaking churches with a total of about 300 members.
1930 -	The Church of the Nazarene organized its Latin American District in the Southwest, which included Spanish-speaking churches in California, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas and Northern Mexico (Chihuahua, Sonora and Baja California); this district included 11 churches in the USA with 415 members in 1930, according to McLean.
1930 -	Robert McLean reports the existence of 367 Protestant Spanish-speaking congregations in the USA with an estimated 26,600 members, but this does not include any Pentecostal denominations.
1931 -	The Church of God of Anderson, Indiana, begins Hispanic ministry in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles, CA.
1932 -	The Mennonite Church begins Hispanic ministry in Chicago; in 1999 there were 68 Hispanic congregations and 3,471 members.
1933 -	The Salvation Army begins Hispanic ministry in the Belvedere Gardens district of Los Angeles, CA.
1937 -	Fifty-five Spanish-speaking congregations are reported to exist in New York City: six were affiliated with the New York Mission Society, 18 with Pentecostal groups, and the others with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Adventist, Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian churches.
1937 -	The Mennonite Brethren began Hispanic ministry in Texas in 1937 and in California in 1956; in 1982 there were seven congregations and 284 members in Texas, and eight congregations and 291 members in California; training for Hispanic leaders is offered at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, CA; in 1994, the Pacific District Conference reported 20 Hispanic churches and missions with a total membership of 600.
1939 -	The Assembly of Christian Churches is organized in New York City among Puerto Rican leaders who were loyal to the Rev. Francisco Olazabal but who decided to form their own organization and separate from the Latin American Council of Christian Churches, with headquarters in Brownsville, Texas, which was led by Mexicans.

1946 - The Church of God of Cleveland, Tennessee, begins Hispanic ministry in the USA under the leadership of Josué Rubio. 1950s The independent Christian Churches and Churches of Christ (non-instrumental) begins ministry among Hispanics in Los Angeles, CA. 1950s The Episcopal Church begins Hispanic ministry in East Los Angeles, CA. 1950s The Damascus Christian Church is organized in New York City among Hispanics by the Rev. Leoncia Rosada Rousseau (known as 'Mama Leo'). 1950s The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod begins Hispanic ministry in Texas. 1953 - The Conservative Baptist Association begins Hispanic ministry in Whittler, California. 1958 - The General Conference Mennonite Church began its work among Hispanics in Lansdale, PA; during the 1980s Hispanic work began in several other states and in Toronto, Canada; in 1986, there were seven Hispanic congregations in the USA and Canada. 1960s The Evangelical Free Church begins Hispanic ministry in Chicago, Illinois; later, the Mexican Baptist Seminary was founded in 1973 in Chicago, in 2003, there were 10 Hispanic churches and missions in Illinois, 18 in Southern California, seven in Northern California and three each in Colorado and Florida, for a total of 41. 1960s The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ begins Hispanic ministry in the USA. 1960s The Christian Church-Disciples of Christ begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los Angeles, CA. 1960s The General Association of Regular Baptists (GARB) begins Hispanic ministry in Los A		
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	Library in Pasadena, CA; this study was based on two years of field research by Holland while a Master's student at the School of World Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA; the book includes a directory of 227
	Hispanic churches in Los Angeles and Orange counties.
1983 -	Ildefonso Ortiz of Worldteam produced a "Directory of Churches, Organizations and Ministries of the Hispanic Evangelical Churches in Miami-Dade," with technical assistance provided by IDEA-PROLADES, that included 222 Hispanic churches and missions, distributed as follows: Southern Baptist Convention (37), independent Pentecostal churches (31), Assemblies of God (17), other independent churches (15), United Methodist Church (14), independent Baptist churches (13), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (9), Lutheran churches (9), Presbyterian churches (8), Episcopal churches (6), and the
	Pentecostal Church of God (6).
1985 -	Dr. Everett Wilson reports the existence of at least 2,159 Hispanic Pentecostal churches in the USA in his article on "Hispanic Pentecostals" in the <i>Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements</i> , edited by Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee.
1985 -	The Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM), a national association of churches and ministries targeting second and third generation Latinos, is organized in Santa Ana, CA, under the leadership of the Rev. Daniel De León of Templo Calvario (Assemblies of God) in Santa Ana, CA. The Rev. Luis Madrigal (a Presbyterian minister who works with World Vision USA in Monrovia, CA,) was named the Executive Director.
1986 -	Lou Cordova, a staff member of the Institute for Latin American Studies (ILAS) at the U.S. Center for World Mission in Pasadena, CA, produced a "Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California" for the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (known as AHET in Spanish), with technical assistance provided by IDEA-PROLADES. A total of 1,048 Hispanic churches were listed in nine counties: Los Angeles county (687), Orange (80), San Diego (75), San Bernardino (65), Riverside (52), Ventura (29), Kern (26), Imperial (22) and Santa Barbara (12); the denominations with the largest number of churches and missions were: Assemblies of God (124), Apostolic Assembly (108), American Baptist Churches (97), Seventh-day Adventist (68), Southern Baptist Convention (67), Foursquare Gospel (48), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (45), Church of the Nazarene (40), Conservative Baptist Association (24), United Methodist (19), Presbyterian Church USA (18), and the Assembly of Christian Churches (16).
1988 -	Graduate student Stewart Stout produced "A Guide to Hispanic Protestant Churches in the San Francisco Bay Area" as part of a National Study of Hispanic Church Growth in the USA, sponsored by IDEA-PROLADES; the study lists 157 Hispanic churches in six counties, with the denominations with the largest number of churches being: Assemblies of God (28), Southern Baptist Convention (16), Seventh-day Adventist (9), American Baptist Churches (8), and the Church of God-Cleveland, TN (7); 49 churches were unaffiliated.
1993 -	IDEA-PROLADES reports the creation of a national database of Hispanic churches in the USA with 6,837 listings, which was developed as a support service for the Hispanic Association for Bilingual-Bicultural Ministries (HABBM); the distribution of Hispanic churches and missions by state was as follows (8 largest): California (2,388), Texas (1,799), Florida (643), New York (353), Illinois (277), Arizona (231), New Mexico (173), and New Jersey (118); the largest denominations in terms of number of churches and missions were: Assemblies of God (1,268), Southern Baptist Convention (759), other Baptists (447), Apostolic Assembly (444), Seventh-day Adventists (283), Churches of Christ (248), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (227), United Methodist Church

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	(199), Presbyterian Church USA (143), Church of the Nazarene (129), American Baptist Churches (124), Foursquare Gospel (113), Evangelical Lutheran (111) and the Christian & Missionary Alliance (102); the total number of Hispanic churches and missions in the USA was estimated to be over 10,000 in 1993.
1993 -	The History Committee of the Hispanic Association for Theological Education (known as AHET in Spanish) publishes "Hacia una historia de la Iglesia Evangélica Hispana de California del Sur," with Dr. Rodelo Wilson as the General Editor. This study provides an historical overview of the first 120 years of Hispanic ministry in Southern California (Chapter 1), followed by a chapter each on the historical development of Hispanic ministry of 12 denominations: United Presbyterian Church, United Methodist Church, Congregational Church, American Baptist Convention, Apostolic Assembly of Faith in Jesus Christ, Assemblies of God, Free Methodist Church, Church of God (Anderson, IN), Southern Baptist Convention, Conservative Baptist Association, Churches of Christ and Victory Outreach.
1995 -	IDEA-PROLADES produced "A Resource Directory of Hispanic Protestant Churches in Southern California" that included 1,626 Hispanic churches and missions, distributed in 10 counties as follows: Los Angeles (1,026), Orange (182), San Diego (99), Riverside (97), San Bernardino (93), Ventura (45), Imperial (29), Santa Barbara (27), Kern (25) and San Luis Obispo (6); the denominational totals were as follows: Assemblies of God (148), Apostolic Assembly (131), various Baptist groups (99), Seventh-day Adventist (95), Foursquare Gospel (83), Southern Baptist Convention (54), Church of the Nazarene (54), Church of God-Cleveland, TN (54), American Baptist Churches (48), various Pentecostal groups (44), Church of God of Prophecy (43), and the Presbyterian Church USA (34).
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Seventh-day Adventist Reform Movement
Soldiers of the Cross, International Evangelical Church (Miami, NYC, Los
Angeles, etc.)
United Lutheran Church (Texas and Chicago)
United Pentecostal Church
Vineyard Ministries International
Wesleyan Church
World Wide Missionary Movement (from Puerto Rico)

Please send corrections and additions to Dr. Clifton L. Holland at: prolades@racsa.co.cr

NOTES:

- Dates listed indicate the earliest recorded ministry or in case of discrepancies, the date most frequently indicated.
- (2) Protestant denominations include those that have begun ministry among Hispanics or those that were founded as Hispanic organizations by Hispanic leaders.

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Dr. Clifton L. Holland, Director Apartado 1524-2050, San Pedro, Costa Rica Telephone: (506) 2283-8300; Fax (506) 2234-7682

E-Mail: <u>mailto:prolades@racsa.co.cr</u>
Internet: <u>http://www.prolades.com/</u>