



# 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
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; known in Venezuela as "Brethren who gather in the name of the Lord."
- 1890 - Christian and Missionary Alliance (1895)
- 1893 - \*Evangelical German Lutheran Church established, Pastor Ramin Beelitz; followed by Pastor Heinrich Voigt in 1904
- 1896 - Plymouth Brethren missionary John Mitchell arrives from Canada.
- 1897 - Presbyterian Church USA, Foreign Mission Board (first missionaries, Mr. & Mrs. Theodore Pound)
- 1897 - Hebron Institute and Missionary Association
- 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 - Assemblies of God Foreign Missions
- 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 - The first Canadian “Open Brethren” missionaries arrive, Mr. & Mrs. William Williams.
- 1918 - Orinoco River Mission (started as independent work in 1914 by Dr. Van Eding) – the affiliated national church body is called ASIGEO (Asociación de Iglesias Evangélicas del Oriente)
- 1919 - Bethel Pentecostal Assembly
- 1919 - Independent Pentecostal work in Barquisimeto, led by G. F. Bender (became part of United World Mission in 1947).
- 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 Aristides Díaz.
- 1929 - Independent Pentecostal work in El Tocuyo, led by Jacob Feuerstein (became part of United World Mission in 1947).
- 1940 - Assemblies of God, USA; founded by Irvin Olson who built on the work began by G. F. Bender and Hilda Meyrick in Barquisimeto; Olson founded a church in Caracas in 1942 that has become known as the “mother church” of the Assemblies of God in Venezuela.
- 1942 - Child Evangelism Fellowship
- 1946 - New Tribes Mission, USA & Canada
- 1947 - United World Mission (a union of 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 - Evangelical Pentecostal Union of Venezuela (a national church body founded by Exeario Sosa in Barquisimeto)
- 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 Venezuelan Evangelical Pentecostal Association.
- 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 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 & Missionary Alliance, Canada  
 Christian Church and Churches of Christ  
 Reformed Church in America  
 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) 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) 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](http://www.prolades.com)
- (4) Dayton Roberts and John Siewert, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1989).
- (5) John A. Siewert and Edna G. Valdez, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1997).