



Bahia Conference headquarters in 2019.

Photo courtesy of Bahia Conference Archives.

# Bahia Conference

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The Bahia Conference (Associação Bahia or AB) is an administrative unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church located in the territory of East Brazil Union Mission (União Leste Brasileira or ULB).

The Bahia Conference is headquartered at 28 Professor Hugo Baltazar da Silveira Street in ZIP code 40050-300 in the Jardim Baiano neighborhood in the city of Salvador in the state of Bahia, Brazil.<sup>1</sup>

AB's territory covers about 10 percent of the geographical area of Bahia in the following cities: Araçás, Camaçari, Candeias, Catu, Conde, Dias d'Ávila, Itanagra, Itaparica, Lauro de Freitas, Madre de Deus, Mata de São João, Pojuca, Salvador, São Francisco do Conde, São Sebastião do Passé, Simões Filho, and Vera Cruz. The Conference's mission field covers a population of approximately 4,346,394 inhabitants, serving a total of 43,203 members<sup>2</sup>. Adventists in the region are organized in 56 pastoral districts, in which there are 226 churches and 213 groups<sup>3</sup>. There are also 158 Adventurer Clubs<sup>4</sup> with 3,366 members and 284 Pathfinder Clubs<sup>5</sup> with 8,196 members.<sup>6</sup>

In the area covered by the AB, there are 11 units of the Adventist Educational Network, namely: Castelo Branco Adventist Academy (Colegio Adventista de Castelo Branco or CACB) with 1,034 students; Salvador Adventist Academy (Colegio Adventista de Salvador or CAS) with 1,008 students; Itapagipe Adventist Academy (Colegio Adv de Itapagipe or CADI) with 672 students; Lauro de Freitas Adventist Academy (Colégio Adventista de Lauro de Freitas or CALF) with 878 students; Amaralina Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista de Amaralina or EADA) with 550 students; IAPI Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista de IAPI or EAIAPI) with 330 students; Jardim Cruzeiro Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista de Jardim Cruzeiro or EAJC) with 363 students; Liberty Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista de Liberdade or EAL) with 754 students; Paripe Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista de Paripe or EAP) with 393 students; Praia Grande Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista Praia Grande or EAPG) with 363 students; and São Caetano Adventist Academy (Escola Adventista São Craetano or EASC) with 583 students. At the end of 2019, a total of 6,928 students were enrolled in these schools.<sup>7</sup>

Salvador New Time Radio is also located in AB's territory on frequency AM 920.<sup>8</sup> The cities of Catu and Salvador have TV Novo Tempo [Hope Channel Brazil] open channel (39), which reaches around 4.5 million people.<sup>9</sup> Under the guidance of AB leaders, there is a team of 86 canvassers<sup>10</sup> spreading the Gospel through literature. The field has 979 staff members,<sup>11</sup> including licensed and credential workers and employees. Of these, 747 work in education, 60 in churches, six in the Multibom store, 97 are evangelists and Bible workers, 15 are licensed pastors, and 54 are ordained pastors.<sup>12</sup>

## The Origin of the SDA Church Work in the Conference Territory

The General Conference sent a group of American and German missionaries to Brazil around 1900 to 1910 with the mission of contributing to the development of Adventist work in the country. Among them were John Lipke, William H. Thurston, J. W. Westphal, Huldreich Graf, W. A. Spicer, and F. W. Spies. These few workers had the difficult task of taking the Advent message to the immense Brazilian territory.<sup>13</sup> The state of Bahia alone had 561,026 km<sup>2</sup> of territory, and there were few roads and a population around 250,000 people. In those days, that mission was really a huge task.<sup>14</sup>

In 1901, the SDA General Conference leadership decided to establish Unions as administrative units around the world. On that occasion, the South American Union Mission (now the Argentina Union Conference) was created. In its administrative territory was the Brazilian Conference (presently the Rio de Janeiro Conference), whose mission field was all of Brazil. It was established after an Adventist assembly in the city of Gaspar Alto in the state of Santa Catarina in southern Brazil. When the Brazilian Conference was created in 1902, it was headquartered in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil's capital at the time.<sup>15</sup> On March 14, 1906, the South American Union Mission was reorganized to cover new territories and conferences.<sup>16</sup>

With the reorganization of the Union, the Brazilian Conference territory was divided into four conferences and missions.<sup>17</sup> The meeting responsible for the division of the Brazilian field took place in the city of Paraná in Argentina.<sup>18</sup> One of these four administrative units became the North Brazil Mission (now the Rio de Janeiro Conference), which was headquartered in Rio de Janeiro. Its president was F. W. Spies, who traveled through the Brazil hinterlands carrying the Gospel. In parallel with the work of reorganizing the mission fields, Pastor John Lipke worked in the city of Recife in the state of Pernambuco. After completing his work there in 1910, he traveled to Bahia where he began to conduct Bible study meetings along with Camilo Pereira, and they were successful in this mission.<sup>19</sup>

The North Brazil Mission covered the territories that are currently part of the Southeast Brazil (União Sudeste Brasileira or USEB), Northeast Brazil (União Nordeste Brasileira or UNeB), East Brazil (União Leste Brasileira or ULB), North Brazil (União Norte Brasileira or UNB) and Northwest Brazil (União Noroeste Brasileira or UNoB) unions.<sup>20</sup> From the splitting of this administrative unit in 1911, the East Brazil Mission was created, headquartered at 115 Rua do Poço in the city of Itapagipe in the state of Bahia.<sup>21</sup> Its first president was Pastor John Lipke.<sup>22</sup> However, Lipke fell ill and was transferred to southeastern Brazil in order to recover his health. Then, Pastor Manoel Kuempel, who joined John Lipke's team in 1912, continued the evangelistic work being carried out in Bahia. Shortly thereafter, Camilo José Pereira moved to São Paulo to work with John Lipke, and Kuempel received the assistance of Max Rhode as well.

The development of the work in Ilhéus, Santana, and Porto Novo do Corrente was good, but the work in Salvador did not seem to advance as quickly. In the period from 1910 to 1914, the baptism records in this city depict only a few converts. Analyzing the results, John Lipke even called the city "the most ungrateful field in the north of this country."<sup>23</sup> However, it is known that among the baptized in 1911 was Zacharias Martins Rodrigues. In that same period, Camilo José Pereira worked as a missionary in the capital, Salvador. At the time, the East Brazil Mission had no organized church although there was a total of 30 members spread across three congregations in the territory. After the creation of this administrative unit, its founders defined as their objective to bring the Gospel to the people so that it could reach as many people as possible. About 108 years after that commitment, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Bahia keeps that mission alive.<sup>24</sup>

In the year of its establishment, the East Brazil Mission served the states of Bahia, Sergipe, Alagoas, and Pernambuco.<sup>25</sup> Around 1915, in Maceió, the capital of the state of Alagoas, Zacharias Martins Rodrigues managed to study the Bible with some of those interested in knowing the Gospel.<sup>26</sup> Nevertheless, there is no record of missionary work at that time in the state of Sergipe. In 1914, a survey reevaluated it and proposed the distribution of some territories. Thus, in order to overcome the difficulties, the East Brazil Mission underwent administrative changes. However, since May 1914, Ricardo José Wilfart led the Gospel preaching works in addition to receiving the help of several young natives in the state of Pernambuco, resulting in strong progress in evangelization.<sup>27</sup>

Canvassers Manoel Kuempel, Max Rhode, and Zacharias Martins Rodrigues were the main missionaries in Northeast Brazil. Brother Kuempel fell ill on one of his trips to Bahia countryside in 1914, and was unable to go to Maceió as he had been assigned. Work in the state of Bahia was assigned to him in 1915, with Rhode responsible for the evangelism in Pará, and Zacharias in Maceió.<sup>28</sup> In fact, the city of Salvador was a difficult field as people did not seem willing to learn about the Gospel. Despite that, five people were baptized in September 1914. That year, 136 members joined the East Brazil Mission.<sup>29</sup>

## Conference Organizational History

For many years, the workers performed a good missionary work in the field and, with the results of these efforts, the need to create the Pernambuco Mission arose in 1916.<sup>30</sup> After another reorganization of the territory in 1919, the first administrative headquarters was created with the name of the state, Bahia Mission. Its mission field at first covered only the states of Sergipe and Bahia.<sup>31</sup> The state of Alagoas was under the care of Pernambuco Mission, which also covered the states of Paraíba and Rio Grande do Norte.<sup>32</sup> At that time, Bahia Mission was overseen by East Brazil Union Conference (União Leste Brasileira or ULB, currently the Southeast Brazil Union Conference).<sup>33</sup>

Still in 1919, the American missionary Frank Chollar was called to work in Bahia Mission, serving as president. At this time, the field had only one licensed worker in activity, Zacarias Martins Rodrigues.<sup>34</sup> For this reason, they sent Leo Halliwell, Manoel Pereira, and Ayres Ferreira Paes to work in the region. In 1921, the Bahia Mission territory was reorganized, and Halliwell became the president since Frank Chollar had to leave the field to serve in another Mission.<sup>35</sup> Even after the arrival of more workers, the difficulties were still great, and Bahia was considered one of the least privileged fields in the Brazilian territory.<sup>36</sup>

Notwithstanding, the Church continued to be successful in its mission and, in 1926, Salvador had a congregation that met in two different buildings: one in downtown and another in the Bonfim neighborhood (currently the Itapagipe neighborhood). The church had been organized this way by Pastor Gustavo Storch.<sup>37</sup> At the building in Bonfim neighborhood, an Adventist primary school started to operate,<sup>38</sup> and it was led by teacher Philonila Assumpção. The building was granted to Bahia Mission by Antônio Assumpção, Philonila's husband, for a period

of 20 years.<sup>39</sup> In 1928, Antônio Assumpção led the construction of a new temple for the congregation of Salvador “on his own.” The expectation of UEB leadership was that the temple would become “the lighthouse of that city.”<sup>40</sup> The new building was inaugurated in September 1929 and served both as a temple and as a primary school for Adventists in the capital.<sup>41</sup> The following year, the Mission leadership acquired a piece of land in the center of Salvador, and they had plans to build the Central Church and the Mission office there.<sup>42</sup>

As a reflection of the financial crisis caused by the crash of the New York Stock Exchange in 1929, missionary offerings declined.<sup>43</sup> This led the South American Division and UEB to join the Bahia Mission and Pernambuco Mission in 1932.<sup>44</sup> The name given to this new administrative unit was the Northeast Brazil Mission, and it covered the states of Bahia, Sergipe, Alagoas, Pernambuco, Paraíba, and Rio Grande do Norte. It was headquartered in the city of Recife in the state of Pernambuco, and its president was Gustavo Storch.<sup>45</sup> With the merger of the two missions, Pastor José dos Passos was called to work as an ordained minister in the state of Bahia.<sup>46</sup>

Even with the merging of the two missions, the work in the region continued to progress. In 1935, Salvador had two organized churches: one in the region of Itapagipe in the area known as Cidade Baixa, and another one established in the Center of Salvador.<sup>47</sup> In 1937, Bahia Mission was reorganized and was responsible for the mission field in the states of Bahia and Sergipe under the leadership of Germano Streithorst and Otto Groeschel. At the time, 27 years after the beginning of the work, the Mission already served 477 members organized in three churches and some groups in addition to three schools.<sup>48</sup> Eight years later, Salvador alone had three churches, the same number of churches that the whole field had in its beginning.<sup>49</sup>

In 1948, the name of the state of Sergipe was added to Bahia Mission’s name, which changed its status to Bahia Sergipe Mission.<sup>50</sup> From 1951, part of the territory of southern Bahia was incorporated into Rio São Francisco Mission,<sup>51</sup> established in 1945 and headquartered in the city of Pirapora in the state of Minas Gerais.<sup>52</sup> This administrative unit of the church contained more than a third of Bahia’s territory including the region of the cities of São Francisco, Juazeiro, and Palmas do Monte Alto in addition to the north of Minas Gerais. From 1955, Bahia Sergipe Mission started to administer the mission field of Rio Espírito Santo Mission (currently the Espírito Santo Conference).<sup>53</sup> At the end of the decade, the Mission territory had a population of 6,477,536 people with 15 organized churches, 2,467 members, 11 ordained pastors, eight licensed pastors, 30 evangelist canvassers, and 10 missionary teachers.<sup>54</sup>

During the 1960s, Bahia Sergipe Mission showed considerable growth. At the end of 1965, Salvador had a total of nine congregations including churches and groups.<sup>55</sup> Of these, only three were organized churches: Central Church, Itapagipe Church, and Capelinha Church. It is worth mentioning that the Itapagipe temple was considered the largest evangelical temple in the capital with a capacity to hold about 1,000 people.<sup>56</sup>

In parallel to this, the Mission also focused on providing health care. From 1965, Bahia’s capital opened an ambulatory care facility that operated in the building of Central Salvador Church.<sup>57</sup> In 1968, the medical unit



moved to the Brotas neighborhood in Salvador. Coordinated by Juanita Kretschmar, the clinic had its medical activities directed by a professor at the Faculty of Medicine of Bahia. There, the professor guided a team of 12 students from the 5th and 6th year of medical school to care for the sick. In addition, the clinic had a dental office.<sup>58</sup> However, its activities ended in the 1960s. Another achievement for Bahia Sergipe Mission in this period was the acquisition of a missionary aircraft with the objective of reaching the most distant places covered by the Mission.<sup>59</sup>

Until the end of the 1960s, the missionary work of Bahia Sergipe Mission was concentrated in the Bahia countryside and in the state of Sergipe. However, from the 1970s, the field directed its evangelistic efforts towards Salvador. Thus, between 1970 and 1971, the Mission promoted two series of meetings: one at Central Salvador Church and another in the Mission's Mobile Auditorium. Every night for three months, more than 1,000 people attended the meetings at the Mobile Auditorium. As a result, about 300 people were reached in just three months of work.<sup>60</sup>

It was also during the 1970s that other cities in the metropolitan region of Salvador were reached with the Adventist message. The city of Catu, known as "oil headquarters in Bahia," was one of those. Missionary work in Catu began through a member of Central Salvador Church who preached to co-workers and city dwellers. In 1972, Catu already had a group of Adventists with 80 people enrolled in the Sabbath School, some of whom had already been baptized. In September of that year, members of the small congregation laid the cornerstone for a new temple, and it was scheduled to open in early 1973.<sup>61</sup>

Canvassing<sup>62</sup> was also another tool used by Bahia Sergipe Mission to reach people. At the initiative of the Mission and with the help of resources from East Brazil Union Mission and Brazil Publishing House, an affiliate of the Adventist Canvassing Institute began to operate in Salvador. The initial idea was that the building served as an accommodation for canvassers who were temporarily working in Bahia capital. However, the initial objective was expanded, and in 1974, with the completion of the building's works, a course for canvassers was held there that was offered elsewhere in Brazil and in the Bahia Sergipe Mission itself. Its purpose was to provide quality service to people who received canvassers and evangelistic materials.<sup>63</sup>

Three years later in 1977, the Bahia Sergipe Mission leadership began to study the establishment of an Adventist boarding school in that region. At first, the location chosen and studied by the leadership was the region of the city of Eunápolis in southern Bahia.<sup>64</sup> However, after several meetings, the place chosen for the establishment of the boarding school was an area of 340 hectares in the rural region of the city of Cachoeira in Bahia. The plan was that, from 1979, the Adventist Theology Seminary of Northeast Brazil College (Educandário Nordestino Adventista or ENA) would move to the new College. Currently, in the chosen location, Bahia Adventist College (Faculdade Adventista de Bahia or FADBA), one of the regional headquarters of the Latin American Adventist Theology Seminary (Seminário Adventista Latino-Americano de Teologia or SALT) operates.<sup>65</sup>

However, one of the Mission's needs was to establish a model school in Salvador both for the society and for the Church. In order to try to remedy this problem, still in 1977, the field leadership sought out the governor of Bahia to request the donation of a piece of land. In addition to the establishment of the school, the objective was that the land would also host a medical and dental clinic.<sup>66</sup> Meanwhile, Teófilo Berger Adventist Academy (current Salvador Adventist Academy) began operating in June 1978 in makeshift rooms in the basement of Central Salvador Church located in the central region of the capital.<sup>67</sup> Ten years later, the Bahia Conference managed to buy an area at 21 Ladeira do Hospital in the Nazaré neighborhood for the amount of Cz\$ 340,000.00 (US\$ 4,741.12). There, Salvador Adventist Academy started to operate, and it began offering Early Childhood Education as well as Elementary and Middle School education and the first two years of High School.<sup>68</sup>

In the following year (1979), five Adventist schools were under the administration of Bahia Sergipe Mission, including two in Salvador: Teófilo Berger Adventist Academy, which offered elementary and middle school; and Itapagipe Adventist Academy, which offered to the 7th grade of Middle School. In addition to these, the Mission managed Jequié Adventist Academy, which provided up to the 5th grade of Elementary School; Getúlio Vargas Adventist Academy, in the city of Itabuna; and Eunapolitana Adventist Academy, in the city of Eunápolis.<sup>69</sup>

During the 1970s, the entire missionary field of East Brazil Union Mission experienced growth in the most diverse areas both in education and in the evangelistic area, which led the Union's leadership to promote a complete reorganization in its missionary fields. After this reorganization, Bahia Mission ceased to bear the name of the state of Sergipe when it became part of the Northeast Brazil Mission.<sup>70</sup> With the geographical change of the field, Bahia Sergipe Mission was renamed the Bahia Mission, and it became responsible for the entire territory of the state of Bahia including the far south, which was until then under the scope of East Conference (currently the Espirito Santo Conference).<sup>71</sup> When Bahia Mission was reorganized, it had 55 organized churches where 21,877 Adventists gathered.<sup>72</sup>

Salvador Adventist Hospital (Hospital Adventista de Salvador or HASa) opened in 1984<sup>73</sup> and it was also located in Bahia's Mission territory. The hospital unit was acquired in 1982 by Golden Cross insurance company and operated in a nine-story building at 10 Caetano Moura Street in the Federação neighborhood. When it opened, HASa had 120 beds and a general emergency room, X-ray room, laboratories, ambulatory, obstetric center, nursery, five operating rooms, and an Intensive Care Center in addition to a panoramic room with a 360° view to the city of Salvador. However, the hospital ended its activities in the early 1990s.<sup>74</sup>

Due to the expansion of the church in several aspects, in 1986, the status of Bahia Mission was changed to Bahia Conference, which it remains at to this day.<sup>75</sup> When that took place, there was a population of 12,454,346 people in its territory. There were 108 churches under its responsibility and 26,491 members<sup>76</sup> served by 29 ordained pastors and 24 licensed pastors. In addition to the pastors, there were 29 certified canvassers and many other licensed canvassers spreading the message in the field through publishing.<sup>77</sup>

In the 1990s, the Bahia Conference, through the support of Adventist businessmen and the Silvestre Adventist Hospital in Rio de Janeiro, acquired a house for the operation of a medical clinic under the direction of doctor Carlos Gama Michel.<sup>78</sup> However, the clinic's activities ended in the year 2000.<sup>79</sup> In that same period, AB was the maintainer of a Mobile Clinic based in Salvador. With the mobile clinic, Adventist Social Assistance [Seventh-day Adventist Welfare Service] (currently the Adventist Development and Relief Agency International or ADRA) served the population in Bahia countryside through an agreement with Funrural.<sup>80</sup>

From 1992 to 1998, due to its growth, the mission field of Bahia Conference was reorganized into new administrative regions with the objective of facilitating ecclesiastical administration. The cities of Alagoinhas, Cachoeira, Feira de Santana, Itabuna, Vitória da Conquista, and Salvador were the headquarters of these regions. During this period, the state of Bahia left the area covered by UEB, being under the responsibility of Northeast Brazil Union Mission (União Nordeste Brasileira or UNeB) which was created in 1996.<sup>81</sup>

In the 1990s, the expansion of the Adventist Church in Bahia was constant. This can be confirmed by its numbers at the time: 500 congregations, 47,500 Adventists, 43 schools, and two New Time Radio stations--one in Salvador and the other in Ilhéus.<sup>82</sup> For this reason, in 1999, the Northeast Union decided to divide Bahia Conference. With this division, an administrative unit was created: South Bahia Conference (currently the South Central Bahia Conference - Associação Bahia Centro-Sul or ABCS) headquartered in Itabuna.<sup>83</sup> Bahia Conference leadership provided financial assistance in the creation of ABCS by purchasing and renovating a property for the headquarters of this new administrative unit.<sup>84</sup>

With its creation, ABCS started to serve a mission field with 123 cities that were previously within the scope of Bahia Conference such as Ilhéus, Itabuna, Eunápolis, and Teixeira de Freitas, among others. After that, a total of 200 organized churches and 41,900 members among a population of 8,844,581 inhabitants remained under the leadership of the Bahia Conference.<sup>85</sup> In 2004, the field underwent another reorganization. This time, the administrative unit formed was Central Bahia Mission (now Central Bahia Conference- AbaC) headquartered in the city of Feira de Santana.<sup>86</sup>

In 2009, with a new relocation of the fields of Bahia administrative units, Southwest Bahia Mission (Missão Bahia do Sudoeste or MBSO) was established, with their office located in the city of Vitória da Conquista. Bahia Conference assigned Bahia's bay region to ABaC with the objective of composing the territory of that new mission. Since then, the AB area corresponds to the metropolitan region and the island of Itaparica. That has been its last change of territory. After the last division, AB began serving 32,541 Adventists.<sup>87</sup> Currently, Bahia Conference leads a total of 43,203 members, which shows that the division of the field contributed to the Church's success in pastoral service for Adventists in the metropolitan region of Salvador and are reaching more people with the Gospel message.<sup>88</sup>

However, the region has undergone further changes. At the end of 2011, UNeB had a total of 346,341 Adventists, of whom more than 170 thousand were in the states of Bahia and Sergipe. In this context, during the



meeting of its Executive Board in May 2012, the SAD leadership authorized the creation of East Brazil Union Mission (União Leste Brasileira or ULB), which covers the states of Bahia and Sergipe.<sup>89</sup> The ULB currently operates in the city of Lauro de Freitas in the metropolitan region of Salvador in the Bahia Conference area.<sup>90</sup>

Since its founding, Bahia Conference has had its headquarters at the following addresses: Tira Street, Salvador Historic Center;<sup>91</sup> 50 Travasso Street;<sup>92</sup> 56 Imperatriz Street;<sup>93</sup> 1 Alegrete da Gamboa de Cima Street;<sup>94</sup> 1st floor, 10 São João Street, in Tororó neighborhood;<sup>95</sup> 26 Conselheiro Saraiva Street, in Comércio neighborhood;<sup>96</sup> and 333 Frederico Pontes Street, in Cidade Baixa region.<sup>97</sup> In the 1940s, Central Salvador Church was built in one of the most promising squares in Cidade Alta: Campo da Pólvora square. For this reason, the Mission moved to the Central Church building at 58 Álvaro Tibério Street (currently Carro Street) and remained there until 1996.<sup>98</sup> In 1997, Bahia Conference headquarters moved to 28 Professor Hugo Baltazar da Silveira Street in the Jardim Baiano neighborhood in the city of Salvador, where it is currently located.<sup>99</sup>

During its journey, AB was directly involved with the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was in its missionary field that the “Mission Calebe” [“Caleb Mission”] project began<sup>100</sup> as an example of that. The project started in 1999 when its predecessors carried it out in the region of the city of Guanambi. At the end of the project, a girl named Nora Ney was converted,<sup>101</sup> and in the following year as an initiative of the Youth department, she changed the development of Caleb Mission. SAD adopted this change, and the project became an official youth program for its entire territory. The project is currently adopted worldwide in all countries covered by the SDA Church.<sup>102</sup>

Another project that AB’s staff adopted was “Impacto Esperança” [“Hope Impact”]<sup>103</sup>, which has been distributing books since it started. In 2007, they distributed 50,000 units of the book “Os Dez Mandamentos” [“The Ten Commandments”]; in 2008, 50,000 of the book “Esperança Para Viver” [“Hope To Live”]; in 2009, 100,000 copies of the book “Sinais de Esperança” [“Signs of Hope”]; in 2010, 200,000 copies of “Tempo de Esperança” [“Time of Hope”]; in 2011, 250,000 copies of “Ainda Existe Esperança” [“There Is Still Hope”]; in 2012 and 2013, 715,500 copies of “A Grande Esperança” [“The Great Hope”]; in 2014, 454,000 books “A Única Esperança” [“The Only Hope”]; and, in 2015/2016, 500,000 copies of “Esperança Viva” [“Living Hope”]<sup>104</sup>. In 2019, approximately 380,000 copies of the book “Esperança Para a Família” [“Hope for the Family”] were handed out in the region.<sup>105</sup>

With 100 years of existence, AB remains committed to succeed, now working with the Communion-Relationship-Mission support tripod. In line with the goals of the SDA Church, its leaders work focused on fulfilling the mission of preaching the Gospel. As of 2018, the leadership of Bahia Conference started projects to make the SDA Church into a church for everyone in its territory. In other words, a church with people who are receptive, welcoming, and without prejudice. To achieve this objective, five projects were established: “Reparando Brechas” [“Fixing Gaps”], a program that helps Christian families to live by worshiping God; “Crescendo em Graça” [“Growing in Grace”], a program with a strong emphasis on Christian Stewardship that aims to influence the Christian to put God first; “Projeto Maná” [“Manna Project”], a project that encourages each member of the

church to subscribe to the Sabbath School lesson and purchase devotional materials; “Igreja Intercessora” [“Intercessory Church”], a project that mobilizes church people to pray more and more; and “Igreja Acolhedora” [“Welcoming Church”] that encourages members to welcome visitors with joy.<sup>106</sup>

In addition to these, AB promotes other projects, such as: *Ações de Compaixão* [Compassionate Actions], making the faithful sympathize with the community; and *Projeto Novo Tempo* [Hope Channel Project], which aims to make each pastoral district headquarters an appropriate place to receive students from courses promoted by the Internet, New Time radio, and Hope Channel Brazil. Among other projects carried out by the field, there are “Novas Gerações” [“New Generations”], which seeks to train 25 young people in Adventist colleges so that, after graduation, they can work in the field; “Jovens em Missão” [“Youth in Mission”], in which young people from Bahia Conference are trained and sent to preach the Gospel in other countries within a year; and “Projeto Mexa-se / Feira de Saúde” [“Move it Project / Health Fair”] that has an emphasis on preventive health and physical exercise.<sup>107</sup>

When analyzing the history of SDA Church in the state of Bahia, its members believe that God has always been leading in the work of evangelization. The growth in the number of members in the regions of the state confirms that. After the creation of ABaC, another AB division has already been planned, adding another field in the metropolitan region in the near future. The administration of this Conference is committed to increase the number of the SDA Church members and finish preaching the Gospel throughout the state of Bahia. Over more than 100 years of Adventist presence in Brazil and Bahia, Adventists have extracted useful lessons, including realizing the importance of having motivating and inspiring leaders to convey the Advent message. In addition, church members and families have sought to engage in the evangelic mission, striving to positively influence the community in which they operate. Such an attitude must last until the mission given by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20 is fulfilled.<sup>108</sup>

For the fulfillment of the mission, the main challenges to be faced in the field of AB are: the high price of the properties where the evangelistic works begin; the rapid increase in population in the metropolitan region due to the migration of people from other regions of northeastern Brazil in search of jobs; and the increase in misery and poverty, which is also causing challenges in social integration. In response, AB’s leadership is committed to working so that members seek God more and are more understanding of the less favored classes. The expansion plans include improvement in churches structures, making them more accessible and cozier; opening of 10 pastoral districts to better serve church members and neighbors; and the construction of an educational unit in the city of Camaçari. These plans also include the creation of a new administrative unit for the Adventist Church in the northern coastline of the state, which in the future might be called East Bahia Mission.<sup>109</sup>

## Chronology of Administrative Leaders<sup>110</sup>

Presidents: Frank S. Chollar (1919); L.B. Halliwell (1922-1927); L.G. Jorgensen (1929); Juan Meier (1930-1932); Germano Streithorst (1937-1939); A.C. Harder (1941); G.F. Ebinger (1942-1947); Manoel Ost (1948-1952); N. Schwantes (1953); Ary Raffo (1954-1957); Rodolfo Belz (1958); Modesto Marques de Oliveira (1959-1960); G.M. Kretschmar (1961-1968); J.C. Viera (1969-1970); José Bellesi (1971-1973); Robert L. Heisler (1974-1975); João Isídio da Costa (1976-1977); Alfredo O. Holtz (1978-1982); Germano Boell (1983-1984); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1986-1988); Helder Roger Cavalcanti Silva (1989-1995); Carlos Alberto Rosa de Oliveira (1996-2003); Jair Garcia Gois (2004-2007); André Henrique de S. Dantas (2008-2010); José Wilson da Silva Barbosa (2012-Present).

Secretaries: Ayres Ferreira Paes (1919); Cyriaco Pereira Leite (1923-1924); G.E. Hartman (1925); U. Wissner (1926-1928); Otto Keppke (1929); Guilherme Itin (1930-1932); Otto M. Groeschel (1937-1949); F. Vegele (1950-1953); Jorge Frederico Walting (1954-1956); A.M. Vianna (1957); A.M. Vianna (1958-1967); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1968); M.N. Soto (1969-1970); L.H. Perestrelo (1971); Zilton Kruger (1972-1982); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1983-1985); Ronaldi Neves Batista (1986-1987); Gustavo Pires da Silva (1988); Clovis Ferreira Bunzen Jr. (1989-1996); Jorge Luis Souza de Oliveira (1996-1998); Ronaldo Barreto Sales (1999-2000); Jorge Luis de Oliveira Sousa (2001); Paulo Cezar Chagas Ferreira (2002-2003); Jesuino Gomes da Silva Filho (2004-2008); Willian Wenceslau de Oliveira (2009-2013); Murilo de Sousa Andrade (2014-2015); Nadilson Lemos Santos (2016-2018); Manoel Rodrigues dos Santos (2018); Anderson Rocha Santana (2018-Present).

Treasurers: F.C. Varney (1924); G.E. Hartman; (1925); U. Wissner (1926-1929); Otto Keppk (1929); Guilherme Itin (1930-1932); O.M. Groeschel (1937-1949); F. Vegele (1950-1953); J.F. Waiting (1954-1956); A.M. Vianna (1957); A.M. Vianna (1958-1967); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1968); M.N. Soto (1969-1970); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1971); Zilton Kruger (1972-1982); Luiz Henrique Perestrelo (1983-1985); Gustavo Pires da Silva (1986-1988); Clovis Ferreira Bunzen Jr. (1989); Carlos Alberto Rosa de Oliveira (1990-1995); Salomão Sarmiento de Souza (1996-1998); Jorge Luis de Oliveira Sousa (1999-2001); Joel Gonsioroski da Silva (2002-2005); Celso Aparecido dos Santos (2006-2008); Antonio Hélio da S. Santiago (2009-2012); Avelino Martins da Conceição Neto (2013-2014); Wilian Carvalho Ferreira (2015-2018); Danilo Carvalho dos Santos (2018-Present).<sup>111</sup>

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2. Ibid.
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4. The Adventurers Club is a specific program for children from 6 to 9 years old, created by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, in 1972. At the meetings, children carry out activities with a focus on physical, mental, and spiritual development. *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil) website*, "Aventureiros" ["Adventurers"], accessed February 4, 2020, <https://www.adventistas.org/pt/aventureiros/sobre-nos/>.
5. The Pathfinders Club is made up of "boys and girls aged 10 to 15 years old, from different social classes, color, religion. They meet, in general, once a week to learn to develop talents, skills, perceptions and a taste for nature." These boys and girls "are thrilled with outdoor activities. They like camping, hiking, climbing, exploring the woods and caves. They know how to cook outdoors, making a fire without matches." Besides, they demonstrate "skill with discipline through drill commands and have their creativity awakened by manual arts. They also fight the use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil) website*, "Quem somos" ["Who we are"], accessed February 4, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2FDRqTh>.
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14. Geraldo da Costa Leal, *Salvador dos Contos, Cantos e Encantos* [*Salvador of Tales, Songs, and Charms*] (Salvador, BA: Santa Helena Printing Office, 2000), 15.
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17. *Ibid.*, 13.
18. Floyd Greenleaf, *Terra de Esperança: o crescimento da Igreja Adventista na América do Sul* [*Land of Hope: Adventist Church growth in South America*] (Tatuí, SP: Brazilian Publishing House, 2016), 95-96.
19. Arnaldo Christianini, "A Luz Vem do Oriente: Pequena História de um Grande Campo" ["The light comes from the east: a short story of a large field"], *Revista Adventista* 63, no. 9 (September 1969): 13.
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22. "East Brazil Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1911), 126.
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25. Bahia Sergipe Mission Minutes, no. 13, November 6, 1968, vote no. 68/120.
26. Santos and Silva, *Contando Nossa História 110 anos da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia no Estado da Bahia* [*Telling Our Story, 110 years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the State of Bahia*], 78.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Arnaldo Christianini, "A Luz Vem do Oriente: Pequena História de um Grande Campo" ["The light comes from the east: a short story of a large field"], *Revista Adventista* 63, no. 9 (September 1969): 13; F. W. Spies, "Missão Norte Brasileira" ["North Brazil Mission"], *Revista Adventista* 9, no. 8 (August 1914), 3.

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31. "Bahia Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1920), 187.
32. "Pernambuco Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1920), 188.
33. "East Brazil Union," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1921), 120.
34. Santos and Silva, *Contando Nossa História, 110 anos da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia no Estado da Bahia* [*Telling Our Story, 110 years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the State of Bahia*], 78; C. E. Schofield, "Distribuição de trabalho" ["Work distribution"], *Revista Adventista* 15, no. 12 (December 1920): 5. "Bahia Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1920), 187.
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39. F. W. Spies, "Em Viagem" [Traveling], *Revista Mensal* [*Monthly Review*] 20, no. 12 (December 1925): 6.
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54. "Bahia and Sergipe Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook*, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1959), 154; Bahia Sergipe Mission Minutes, no. 209, February 22, 1954, vote no. 075/54.
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64. José Carlos Ramos, "Notícias da União Este" ["East Union Notes"], *Revista Adventista* 72, no. 5 (May 1977): 23.
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99. Santos and Silva, *Contando Nossa História, 110 anos da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia no Estado da Bahia* [*Telling Our Story, 110 years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the State of Bahia*], 284; Associação Bahia da Igreja Adventista do Sétimo Dia [*Bahia Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church*], "Home," accessed December 18, 2017, <http://ab.adventistas.org/>.
100. "Caleb Mission project is a volunteer program, social service, and a witnessing that challenges the Adventist youth to dedicate their vacations to evangelism in places where there's no Adventist presence, to strengthen the small congregations and gain new people for the kingdom of God." *Seventh-day Adventist Church (Brazil) website*, "Missão Calebe 2020" ["Caleb Mission 2020"], accessed February 4, 2020, <http://bit.ly/2HRpvRi>.
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102. Heron Santana, "Missão Calebe" ["Caleb Mission"], *Revista Adventista* 102, no. 1187 (April 2007): 22-23.
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104. Sérgio França (head of the Information Technology sector at AB), interviewed by Nésias Joaquim dos Santos, Salvador, Bahia, November 30, 2016.
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111. For more information about Bahia Conference access the website: <http://ab.adventistas.org>, or the social media Facebook/ Youtube: Adventistas Bahia [Adventists Bahia].

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