Northwest Honduras Conference

EVERT VÁSQUEZ AYESTAS

Evert Vásquez Ayestas, M.A. (Eastern University, St. Davids, Pennsylvania), serves as district pastor, area coordinator, and communications and public campus ministry director in Northwest Honduras Conference. He has worked in Central Honduras Conference and Atlantic Honduras Conference as field secretary and personal ministries director. He is married to Wendy Lizeth Reyes González.

Northwest Honduras Conference is an organization under Honduras Union Mission of Seventh-day Adventists. Its headquarters are located at “Urbanización Monte Fresco, Este, 1ra Etapa, 32 Calle “A,” Entre Avenida 13 y 14, Bloque 17, No. 3, San Pedro Sula, Cortés, Honduras.” Its activities are governed by principles based on the model constitution of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Northwest Honduras Conference’s territory is comprised of six of the 18 departments that make up the entire Honduras territory: Copan, Cortés, Lempira, Ocotepeque, Santa Barbara, and part of Yoro from Progreso to Victoria. The “Annual Statistical Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 2018” indicated that Northwest Honduras Conference had 139 organized churches, 71 companies, a membership of 19,957 and 133 active employees.

Origins and Development of Northwest Honduras Conference

The offices of the Adventist church in Honduras were first located in San Pedro Sula between 1919 and 1936. On October 16, 1997, the administrative board of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission of Continental Honduras was held in Valle de Ángeles, Francisco Morazán district, presided by President Alfredo Argueta. At the meeting, a vote was taken for Central American Union Mission to authorize the reorganization of the Seventh-day Adventist Mission of Continental Honduras into two missions.

The proposal suggested the creation of an experimental mission, which would emerge from the mother mission. This reorganization was due to the increase in membership, financial health, and above all, the imperative need to continue planting new churches. The mother field would then be known as “Central Honduras Mission,” and the experimental mission would be known as “Northwest Honduras Mission.” Both fields were to be composed of eight of...
the 16 departments that made up the Seventh-day Adventist Mission of Continental Honduras.

This project would be carried out in two stages. The first stage would be the preparation stage, which would be between October 1 and December 31, 1997. Pastor Javier Mejia was chosen as this stage’s coordinator. The second stage would be the implementation stage. Pastor Mejia was officially appointed president of the experimental mission with Minos Arias as secretary/treasurer. On January 1, 1998, the experimental mission began operations with headquarters in San Pedro Sula. Its territory comprised the departments of Cortés, Atlántida, Colón, Santa Bárbara, Copán, Lempira, Ocotepeque, and Yoro.

The mission’s offices were located in the Universidad neighborhood. A two-story house was rented and refurbished for offices. In April 1999, these offices were moved to another location in the Los Zorzales neighborhood. Then, in 2001, under the administration of Pastor Mejia and Israel Zambrano, who replaced Arias in 1999, following advice from the president of Central American Union Mission, Pastor Juan Otoniel Perla purchased a plot of land from the developer, SULA, in the east side of the Monte Fresco neighborhood. The same year, a dedication ceremony was held on the land during which the cornerstone was laid for the foundation of the building. A non-Adventist architect donated the plans, and Brother Ramón Nuñez was hired to oversee the construction, which lasted a period of ten months.

The inauguration ceremony for the new building was attended by Pastor Israel Leito, president of the Inter-American Division; Pastor Pablo Perla, president of Central American Union Mission, who replaced his brother, Juan Otoniel Perla, after the Toronto World Congress in 2000; the administrators from the mother field; district pastors; and a large number of members representing the various churches in the field. At the ceremony, Brother Pedro Sánchez and Sister Sara de Castillo were given the opportunity to speak in representation of the laity. Sister Sarita, who had come from La Ceiba, expressed her desire for a new field to operate in the Atlantic area. This wish was fulfilled a few years later with the establishment of the Atlantic experimental mission, which started operations on January 1, 2004.

On November 18, 2001, the Central American Union Mission board based in Costa Rica and led by Pastor Pablo Perla proposed that Northwest Honduras Mission be established because of an accelerated growth in membership and of the healthy finances in the experimental field. Because Pastor Mejia had been directing the project from the start, he was appointed president with Israel Zambrano as secretary/treasurer.

On July 6, 2006, the administrative board of South Central American Union Mission held its session in the city of Tegucigalpa, and the decision was made to pass on to the Inter-American Division the Northwest Honduras Mission’s request to appoint a study commission to evaluate a status change from a mission to a conference. The change of status was made on August 6-7, 2007, in the municipality of Peña Blanca, Cortés. For this session, the field was in good financial health with an operating capital of 118% and a liquidity of 112%. Along with the change of status, the quadrennial session was held, and Pastor Roberto Gutierrez was appointed president of the conference with Pastor Eddy Bonilla as secretary and Israel Zambrano as treasurer.

Institutions of Northwest Honduras Conference

Adventist Educational Center is located in the municipality of Peña Blanca, Cortés. It started as a small private school founded by Dr. J. L. De Witt and his family in 1962. In December 1962, after De Witt’s sudden death, Northwest Honduras Mission received the land and its buildings as a donation from the widow, Bertha De Witt. The center was created with the goal to equip children and youth with high moral values, responsibility, and dedication to the service of God and humanity. The large campus with extensive green areas and beautiful pine forests made it unparalleled to promote an integral education to meet students’ academic, physical, and spiritual needs. Under these principles, the center trained youth to become positive influences in their communities. Youth were also encouraged to love work and to carry out activities in various areas such as agriculture, beekeeping, cooking, and cabinetmaking.

Model Adventist School is located in Santa Barbara. It began operations in 1970. In 1972, it acquired its own building, where it currently functions. Many businessmen, doctors, and city authorities have been trained at this education center.

Adventist Bilingual Kindergarten, School, and Institute is located in the city of San Pedro Sula, Cortés. It started operations on February 1, 1976, as “Valle de Sula Adventist School.” Due to its growth, it was reorganized on February 1, 2003, as “Adventist Kindergarten and Bilingual School” under the administration of Pastor Javier Mejia, field president. In 2009, the school graduated their last sixth grade in the Spanish system, and, in 2010, the first sixth grade in the bilingual system graduated. On January 31, 2011, the secondary level began by opening a seventh grade with 11 students. Currently, the school offers kindergarten through eleventh grade with 28 teachers, a counselor, a chaplain, and support staff.

Adventist Educational Institute is located in the Fesitranh neighborhood adjacent to the Adventist church in the city of San Pedro Sula, Cortés. It began operations in 1991 in the same building as Barandillas Adventist School. In 1998, the construction of a new building began with financial support from Northwest Honduras Mission, the Adventist Institute, and Maranatha International Volunteers. The new building was ready for operations in February 2000.
Bethel Adventist School is located in the municipality of Chalmeca, Copan. It was founded by Pastor Antonio Colindres and his wife, Fanny Cruz, on February 1, 2000. It began operations in a church’s facilities in that same municipality. In 2001, due to the rapid increase in enrollment, more classrooms were built, and, in 2002, a second story was added. The Peniel Adventist School and Kindergarten is located in the municipality of Villa Nueva, Cortés. It was founded by Pastor Antonio Colindres and his wife, Fanny Cruz. It began operations in 2005 with 29 students from kindergarten through third grade. In 2006-2007, construction work was done, and fourth through sixth grades were offered in 2008.

List of Presidents

SOURCES


NOTES


4. Ibid., vote 024-97.

5. Ibid.


7. Ibid.

8. 


