

North Puerto Rico Conference

FRANCISCO J. VEGA

Francisco J. Vega, D.Min. (McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Illinois), is a retired minister who has served the church in Puerto Rico as president of West Puerto Rico Conference and North Puerto Rico Mission. He has also served as department director for personal ministries, education, and communications; district pastor; manager of *Radio Paraíso*; and, most recently, associate professor of Antillean Adventist University. He is married to Milca Sánchez Vargas and has three adult children.

North Puerto Rico Conference is a part of Puerto Rican Union Conference in the Inter-America Division of Seventh-day Adventists. It was organized in 2000 and reorganized in 2010. Its headquarters is in Manati, Puerto Rico.

Territory and Statistics

The territory of the North Puerto Rico Conference comprises the municipalities of: Arecibo, Barceloneta, Camuy, Ciales, Corozal, Dorado, Florida, Hatillo, Manati, Morovis, Naranjito, Orocovis, Quebradilla, Toa Alta, Toa Baja, Utuado, Vega Alta, and Vega Baja.

As of June 2020, the North Puerto Rico Conference had 49 churches with a membership of 5,340¹. It has 16 ordained ministers, 15 licensed workers, and a total of 17 teachers.

Origins

In 1904, as a result of the distribution of the magazine *El Centinela*, people in many parts of Puerto Rico became interested in the Adventist faith. The following year, eight people were baptized in the city of Arecibo².

Colporteur Carlos Moulton led the group of new believers. Another group of people was baptized in September 1906, giving rise to the organization of the second group of Adventist members on the island.

In 1928, another group was established with the Rosado family in the Esperanza neighborhood of Arecibo. The patriarch of the family, Manuel Rosado, found a copy of the magazine *El Centinela*; soon after, a colporteur sold him the book *El Rey que viene* (The Coming King). Moved by the new teachings, Rosado visited the Puerto Rico Adventist mission office in Santurce. The mission office commissioned Pastor Manuel Méndez to study the biblical doctrines with Rosado and his family, and soon eight people were baptized in September 1929³.

Organizational History

In the 1990s, lay leaders from the northern region in Puerto Rico asked the church organization to consider opening a mission in that part of the country. Responding to their need, the Puerto Rican Union Conference appointed an evaluation committee, which first met on April 10, 1997. The following year, the Puerto Rican Union Conference convened the leaders to a summit where the conditions for the new church administrative unit were established. The work continued to progress, and, on April 20, 1999, the board of directors of the Puerto Rican Union Conference requested the Inter-American Division to establish a mission in the northern part of the island. After evaluating the request and approving it, the Puerto Rican Union Conference held a congress on November 26, 2000, and the North Puerto Rico Mission was organized.⁴ In 2010, the mission was reorganized as the North Puerto Rico Conference.⁵

Lists of Presidents

Francisco J. Vega (2000-2002); Joel Almaguel (2002-2018); Rubén Padilla (2018-).

SOURCES

Connerly, Lillian S. "Porto Rico." *ARH*, August 3, 1905.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/>.

Vega, Francisco J. *Génesis de un Movimiento*. Mayagüez, Puerto Rico: Antillian College Press, 1993.

NOTES

1. "North Puerto Rico Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Online Yearbook*, accessed April 2, 2021, <https://www.adventistyearbook.org/entity?EntityID=20207>.
2. Lillian S. Connerly, "Porto Rico," *ARH*, August 3, 1905, 18.
3. Francisco J. Vega, *Génesis de un Movimiento* (Mayagüez, Puerto Rico: Antillian College Press, 1993), 135.
4. "North Puerto Rico Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2002), 164.
5. "North Puerto Rico Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011), 160.

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