



Palawan Adventist Mission

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Palawan Mission is an administrative unit of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Philippines. It is part of the North Philippine Union Conference of the Southern-Asia Pacific Division. Its headquarters is located at 44 Manalo Extension, 5300 Puerto Princesa City, Palawan. It was organized as Palawan Attached District in 2002, reorganized as Palawan Adventist Mission in 2009, and renamed as Palawan Mission in 2019.¹ Its territory covers the whole province of Palawan, which has a land area of over 14,000 km² and a population of almost 850,000 (2015 census).² As of this writing, the mission has 75 employees, 160 churches, ten elementary schools, two academies (one boarding and one non-boarding), and a membership of 32,296.

Origin of Seventh-day Adventist Work

Early Adventist pioneers and leaders in the Philippines expressed interest in taking the gospel message to the islands of Palawan.^{3 4} The plan to sow the seed to these islands was through the printed page.⁵

In 1919 several colporteurs volunteered to enter Palawan,⁶ though no reports were recorded as to whether they did so. In 1928, two colporteurs ventured to sell the Tagalog-language *The Great Controversy* in Cuyo, Palawan. Their arrival to the place aroused the interest of the villagers.^{7 8} In 1933, West Visayan Mission reported that several colporteurs were already working in Palawan.⁹

Before World War II, Dominador Tamares, Sr. worked in Palawan as a district pastor. Together with his family, he gave Bible studies and conducted evangelistic meetings. But the work ceased when war II broke out.¹⁰

In the middle of 1940, Teodulo Mingua, from Romblon, previously a mission worker, volunteered to be a pioneer missionary in Cuyo. Central Luzon Mission sent him, and he sold the book *Tuberculosis* in the Panayan language.¹¹ Mingua spent a portion of his time canvassing, and the rest preaching God's Word. While sharing the gospel, Teodulo came across a man who had the book *The Great Controversy* in Tagalog. The encounter prompted a series of Bible studies which bore fruit to the conversion of the man, his family, and his neighbors. By May 1941, 20 people were already gathering for worship. They conducted their Sabbath services in Teodulo's boarding house while a church building was not yet erected. The landlord donated a piece of land for a church building.¹² Eventually, 12 people were baptized, making up the nucleus of what will be known as Cuyo Central Seventh-day Adventist Church, the first Adventist Church in Palawan.¹³

Teodulo continued his missionary endeavors to nearby barrios within Cuyo. He pioneered the establishment of a church in Balaguin. Mike Bautista, one of the converts of Teodulo's endeavors, became the first elder of the church.¹⁴ In 1944, Teodulo baptized 10 people who became the pioneering members of Magsaysay church. He started the work in Roxas, resulting in the baptism of 10 people making up the members of the Roxas Adventist Church.¹⁵ He later labored in Coron, leading to the establishment of a church there in 1947. He also pioneered the work in Puerto Princesa, which led to the conversion of 12 people who made up the pioneering members of Puerto Princesa Central Church, which was organized in 1955.¹⁶

As years went by, Central Luzon Mission saw the greater need for the work in Palawan, so they sent Pastor Lorenzo Yutuc to conduct an evangelistic meeting in North Palawan. Mike Bautista volunteered to join him. Their efforts led to the conversion of 18 people. Eventually, a church in Danleg was organized in 1956.¹⁷

Lorenzo Batul, one of the first 12 converts in Cuyo, moved to Panacan with his family. He started the work in the Southern part of Palawan. Batul conducted Bible studies and evangelistic efforts, leading to the establishment of Adventist churches in Panacan and Narra in 1962.¹⁸

In 1964 Pastors Narciso Peñaflores and Conrado Liwag held an evangelistic campaign in Brooks Point, leading to the establishment of a church there.¹⁹

The message of truth continued spreading out in South Palawan when the Batul clan transferred to barrio Aramaywan. The children of Lorenzo Batul followed the footsteps of their father in the proclamation of God's Word. In 1965 a church was established in Aramaywan.²⁰

The work continued to see more frontiers pushed. Evangelistic campaigns were conducted and churches were organized. By 1967, there were 600 members and 17 churches in Palawan, led by Pastor Balbino O. David.²¹

Organizational History

In 1933 Palawan was listed as one of the territories of West Visayan Mission.²² In 1942 Central Luzon Mission assumed leadership over the territory.²³

As the work continued to progress, Central Luzon Mission started sending field secretaries to lead the work in Palawan. Pastor Pedrito Magallanes was the first field secretary, sent in 1982. Three other field secretaries succeeded him before the leadership was transferred to a vice president of Central Luzon Conference.²⁴ This was after a resolution during the triennial conference session in 1993. Pastor Eliezer Lagabon was the first to be elected in that capacity.²⁵

In December 2001 another milestone was achieved. North Philippine Union Mission, during its year-end council meeting, made Palawan an attached district in preparation for a full-fledged mission status. The idea can be traced back to 1996, when it was recommended by Central Luzon Mission during its constituency meeting.²⁶ Pastor Florante Andres was installed as the first director for Palawan affairs in January 2002.²⁷

The journey toward a mission status was a rough and rugged road, finance being on top of the concerns. But the leaders remained undaunted.²⁸ In early 2005 Palawan Attached District experienced insurmountable pressures and economic uncertainty. In July 2005 it was declared under financial crisis management. But the leaders never released their grip of the reign. The work continued, and the Lord made it flourish.²⁹

In 2009 the North Philippine Union Conference recommended that the Palawan Attached District rise to the status of a mission. On August 7, 2009, the Southern Asia Pacific Division evaluated the necessary documents and requirements for its application for a mission status. And that same day, at 2:15 in the afternoon, Pastor Alberto Gulfan, Jr. announced that the district had passed the evaluation. On November 5, 2009, the Southern Asia-Pacific Division officially approved and declared Palawan Attached District as a full-fledged mission.³⁰ The first constituency meeting was held December 2-4, 2009.³¹

In May 2019, during the North Philippine Union Conference Executive Committee meeting, Palawan Adventist Mission was changed to Palawan Mission of Seventh-day Adventists to conform to General Conference nomenclature.³²

Outlook

The change in name in 2019 stirred further the enthusiasm of Palawan Mission for future developments in the areas of evangelism, pastoral care, education, building renovations and new constructions, land properties management, and transport units acquisition. These future goals include the church membership to reach 25,000 (currently at 14,708)³³ and add six more districts of pastoral care to cover the entire island province,³⁴ to renovate seven and build ten new pastoral houses; construction of a convention hall and guest rooms adjacent to the headquarters; landscape improvements of campsite; expansion of school facilities; and procurement of land and water transport for mobile health services delivery.³⁵ Palawan Mission hopes that these baby steps will eventually lead them towards attaining a conference status in the near future, in God's own perfect time.

List of Administrators

Field Secretaries: Pedrito Magallanes (1982–1984); Rodolfo Bautista (1984–1986); Moises de Ocampo (1987–1990); Darwin Faigao (1990–1993).

Presidents: Israel P. Andoy (2010–2015); Daniel A. Malabad (2016–present)

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