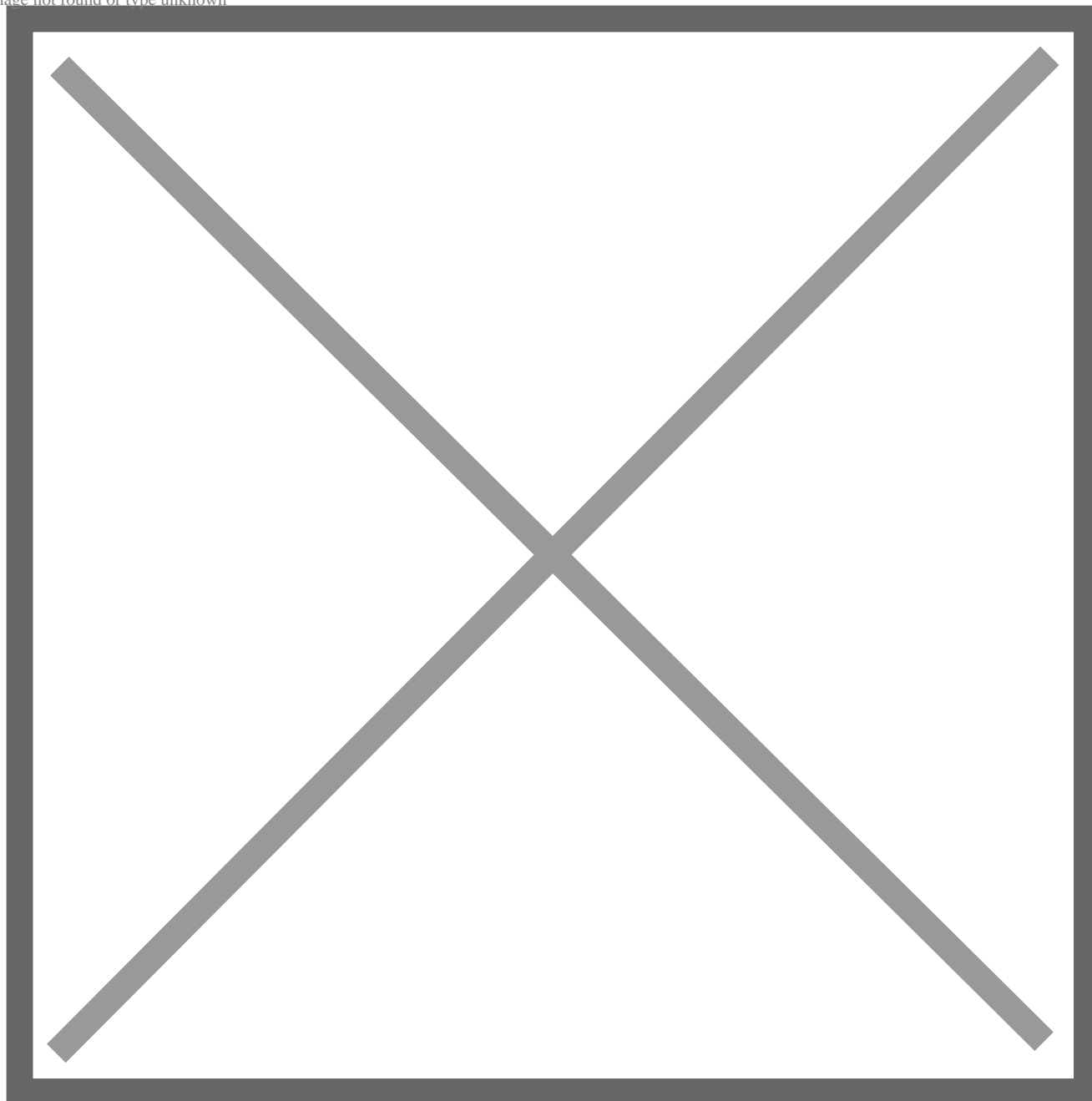


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## Alpine Mission

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### **SAMUEL HERNÁNDEZ HERNÁNDEZ**

Samuel Hernández Hernández, M.A. (Universidad de Montemorelos, Montemorelos, NL, México), has served the church for 34 years as a district pastor. He is married to Haydee Gapi Gil and has two children.

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The Alpine Mission is located in the center of the High Plains of Mexico, or Central Plateau of Mexico, which extends to the Neovolcanic axis to the south. Its eastern and western limits are marked by the Sierra Madre Oriental and the

Sierra Madre Occidental.<sup>1</sup>

The Alpine Mission's territory includes Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, and a small region of Morelos. These states are rich in culture and tradition as a result of the diverse ethnic groups that inhabit them: the Nahuas, who live in the region of Puebla, Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, and Morelos; the Totonac, who are found in Puebla, Tlaxcala, and Hidalgo; the Mazatec, who are found in Tehuacán and Sierra Negra; and the Popoloca, who are found in the Mixteca Region of Puebla, Sierra Negra, and Tehuacán. The indigenous languages spoken in these states are Náhuatl, Totonaco, Otomí, Popoloca, Mixtec, Mazatec, and Tepehua. Spanish is predominantly the official language.<sup>2</sup>

The Alpine Mission is composed of 113 churches where 15,629 members congregate. The population of the region is 9,837,863. The mission headquarters is located on 21 Reales Street, Real del Monte Section, Puebla, Puebla, Mexico, 72062. The ministerial body is composed of 14 ordained ministers and five licensed ministers. The Alpine Mission forms part of the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Conference, which is in the territory of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

## Institutions of Alpine Mission

Carmen Serdán School is located on 755 Hermanos Serdán Boulevard, West San Rafael Colony, Puebla, Puebla, Mexico, 72020. It has preschool, elementary, secondary, and preparatory levels. The staff consists of 17 teachers, four administrators, and one supervisor.

Niños Héroe de Chapultepec School is located on 1116 Barberán and Cuéllar Street, San Martín Colony, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, Mexico, 90300. It offers preschool, elementary, and secondary levels. Its staff consists of 12 teachers and two administrators.

Agustín Melgar School is located on 6 Mérida Street, Central Colony, Ixtilco del Grande, Morelos, Mexico, 62960. It has preschool and elementary levels. Its staff consists of five teachers and two administrators.

John N. Andrews School is located on 155 Manuel Gutierrez Street, Rojo Gómez Colony, Pachuca de Soto, Hidalgo, Mexico. It offers preschool, elementary, and secondary levels. Its staff consists of 14 teachers, two administrators, and one supervisor.

## Origins of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Alpine Mission Territory

In 1907, the head postmaster in Puebla was converted to the teachings of the Adventist Church by reading the magazine, *El Mensajero de la Verdad* ("The Messenger of Truth"). In a letter to Pastor Caviness, the new convert expressed his fear of losing his job because of his new faith, especially because of keeping the Sabbath. Nevertheless, in the following year, he managed to sell over 50 subscriptions to "The Messenger of Truth" and set himself a goal to sell 100 more.<sup>3</sup>

In a meeting on December 19-20, 1907, the Mexican Mission leaders made a far-reaching decision to divide the Mexican territory into six districts: South District, Central District, West District, East District, North District, and Northeast District.

On May 21, 1924, the Aztec Mission Union had its first meeting in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, where it voted to organize five missions, among which was Tehuantepec Mission, the territory where Alpine Mission is currently located.<sup>4</sup> Tehuantepec Mission's territory included the states of Oaxaca, Chiapas, and Tabasco and the southern part of Veracruz.<sup>5</sup> In 1933, Puebla, Yucatán, Campeche, and the Quintana Roo territory were added to Tehuantepec Mission.<sup>6</sup>

In 1943, Yucatán Mission was organized with 12 churches and 1,030 members. Its territory included the states of Yucatán, Campeche, and Tabasco and the Quintana Roo territory. With this territory adjustment, Tehuantepec Mission comprised the states of Oaxaca and Chiapas, the southern half of Veracruz, and the eastern part of Puebla.

In 1944, Chiapas Mission was organized with 25 churches and 1,422 members. Its territory was the state of Chiapas. With this new adjustment of territory, Tehuantepec Mission was reduced to the state of Oaxaca, the southern part of Veracruz, and the eastern part of Puebla. Tehuantepec Mission had 21 churches and 1,237 members. Its offices were located on 1702 West 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Central Colony, Puebla, Puebla, in the rooms that are currently used for the children and youth of Central Puebla Church.<sup>7</sup> On December 15, 1951, Central Puebla Church was dedicated. Some leaders of the General Conference and the Inter-American Division were present.

The organization of Chiapas Mission separated from Tehuantepec Mission did not last long. In 1948, the territory was reorganized under the name, "South Corporation," whose territory included the states of Chiapas and Oaxaca. It had 33 churches and 2,215 members. The mission's central offices were on 58-A North 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas.<sup>8</sup> With this new adjustment of territory, Tehuantepec Mission's territory was included in the South Corporation, and the mission was dissolved.

On January 22, 1948, the Mexican Union Board voted to change the name of Tehuantepec Mission to the Inter-Oceanic Mission. The territory of the new Inter-Oceanic Mission included the states of Guerrero, Morelos, Puebla, and Tlaxcala and part of Veracruz, from Laguna de Tamiahua in the north to the regions of San Andrés Tuxtla and Juan Díaz Covarrubias in the south.<sup>9</sup>

In the beginning, Tehuantepec Mission included in its territory the state of Puebla, which is now a vital part of the Alpine Mission. For this reason, it is considered as the womb from which the Alpine Mission was born. Due to growth and administrative needs, there were many changes in the emergence and readjustments of territory of the mission of the south, of the Inter-Oceanic Mission, of Hidalgo Veracruz Mission, of the South Pacific Mission, and of others, which all later became conferences.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, on June 11-13, 2013, at the Plenary Session of the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Conference, it was voted to organize the Alpine Mission and to name its administrators, César Efrén González Robledo as president and Accountant Arturo Dominguez Sánchez as secretary-treasurer.

On August 22-24, 2013, at the Quadrennial Session of South Pacific Conference at the Oaxtepec Vocational Center, the constituents accepted the formation of the Alpine Mission in the presence of Pastor Israel Leito, president of Inter-American Division, with the administrators of the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Conference. On August 24, 2013, the Alpine Mission was founded. Its territory was established as: the state of Hidalgo except for the counties of Huejutla de Reyes, Atlapexco, Huazalingo, Huahutla, Jaltocan, San Felipe Orizantla, Xochiatipán, and Yahualica; the states of Tlaxcala and Puebla except for the counties of Francisco Z. Mena, Venustiano Carranza, Jalpan, Xicotepec de Juárez, Huauchinango, Naupán, Pautlán, Tlacuilotepec, Juan Galindo Zihuateutla, Tlaolapa, and Taxco; and four counties of Morelos – Axochiapan, Tepalcingo, Jantetelco, and Jonacatepec. It began with 113 churches and 15,629 members. The headquarters was established in the city of Puebla, Puebla.

On August 16-17, 2016, the Quadrennial Session of the Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Conference was held in the city of Puebla, where the nominating committee for the union named two administrators of the Alpine Mission for the 2016-2021 term: José Antonio Gil Messano as president and Accountant Martín Aramburo Escobar as secretary-treasurer.

## The Alpine Mission will try to Fulfill its Mission by Proposing the Following Objectives

That pastors and members experience revival and reformation through the Holy Spirit in the Latter Rain, which will enable us to finish preaching the gospel.

To train and equip the membership to become involved in missionary work.

That, together, we reach every part of our assigned territory, for the challenge is great.

That the different departments come together for the fulfillment of the mission, involving colporteurs, students, centers of influence with their programs of health, etc. so as to establish an Adventist presence in new places.

To strengthen the membership in the fundamentals of our beliefs and doctrines.

To continue with the plan of evangelism in the large cities, which has been a great blessing for the preaching of the gospel.

## Recent Happenings in the Alpine Mission

The Alpine Mission is located on the Neovolcanic axis and the Ring of Fire in the Pacific. For this reason, it is vulnerable to earthquakes and the possible eruption of the volcano, Popocatepetl. On September 19, 2017, an earthquake that registered 7.1 on the Richter scale damaged some churches in the mission's territory. The districts that were affected were Axochiapan, Tepalcingo, Atencingo, and Izúcar de Matamoros. Many families were affected, and emergency measures were taken, such as setting up food pantries; distributing building materials, clothing, and food; and helping to rebuild churches. Little by little, circumstances have improved, but much is still left to be done.

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#### NOTES

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