

A CHRONOLOGY OF PROTESTANT BEGINNINGS: CUBA

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Historical Overview of Cuba:

Became Spanish Colony:	1511
War of Independence from Spain:	1895
Spanish-American War:	1898
Independence from Spain:	1902
U.S. Protectorate:	1902-1934
Independent Republic Established:	1934
Marxist Revolution led by Fidel Castro:	1959
Number of North American agencies in 1989:	15
Number of North American agencies in 1996:	13
Indicates European missionary society*	

Significant Protestant Beginnings:

- 1837 - American Bible Society colporteur James Thompson visits Cuba.
- 1871 - *Anglican/Episcopal Church: chapel services in English.
- 1882 - American Bible Society established in Cuba by colporteur Joaquín de Palma.
- 1883 - American Bible Society colporteurs Alberto J. Díaz and Pedro Duarte (Episcopalians)
- 1883 - Alberto J. Díaz establishes the first Protestant church on Cuban soil: Iglesia Getsemaní in La Habana (initially this church was under the Episcopal bishop of Florida, later it became a Baptist church).
- 1883 - Methodist Episcopal Church (South) work begun by Cuban “preachers” Enrique B. Someillán and Aurelio Silvera; first Methodist church organized in 1888 in La Habana.
- 1884 - American Bible Society colporteur Andrew J. McKim (Presbyterian) becomes the first permanent Protestant missionary to serve in Cuba; establishes the Presbyterian Church USA.
- 1886 - Southern Baptist Convention (Home Mission Board incorporated

- independent work of Alberto J. Díaz who became an ordained Baptist minister in 1885 under William F. Wood of Key West, Florida; Iglesia Bautista Getsemaní organized in La Habana in 1886)
- 1886 - Jamaican Baptist Missionary Society: missionary F. W. Wood in Cienfuegos.
 - 1888 - American Church Missionary Society (Episcopal Church)
 - 1890 - Southern Presbyterian Church: Episcopal pastor Evaristo Collazo decides to become a Presbyterian; missionary A. T. Graybill arrives from Mexico to organize the work; missionaries John Gillespie Hall and H. B. Pratt visit Cuba.
 - 1895 - War of Independence from Spain begins: all foreign workers leave Cuba.
 - 1898-1902 - U.S. Military intervention in Cuba: Spanish-American War.
 - 1898 - The era of Mission Board-sponsored work begins in Cuba after the American occupation begins.
 - 1898 - The Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention (HMBSBC) and the American Baptist Home Mission Society (ABHMS) establish an agreement to divide their mission work in Cuba by regions: the HMBSBC will work in the western region and the ABHMS in the eastern region.
 - 1898 - Methodist Episcopal Church (South) establishes the Key West Missionary District under the supervision of Bishop Candler and makes the first pastoral appointments for Cuba.
 - 1899 - Southern Presbyterian Church sends missionary John Gillespie Hall as its representative in Cuba.
 - 1899 - Congregational Church Home Missionary Society, missionary Alfredo de Barritt; the Central Congregational Church was organized in La Habana en 1900.
 - 1899 - Christian Foreign Missionary Society of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ: missionaries L. C. McPherson and Melvin Menges.
 - 1899 - Presbyterian Church USA, Home Mission Board (Northern Presbyterians): missionary pastor Pedro Rioseco; in 1901, missionary Dr. J. Milton Green.
 - 1900 - American Friends (Quaker) Board of Foreign Missions: missionary Zenas L. Martin.
 - 1900 - African Methodist Episcopal Church Mission Society
 - 1901 - Women's Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, USA (Northern Presbyterians)
 - 1901 - Protestant Episcopal Church creates the Missionary District of Cuba,

under bishop James H. Van Buren.

- 1902 - Pentecostal Mission (Nashville, TN) begins work; this Holiness church body merged with the Church of the Nazarene in 1915.
- 1902 - Various independent Fundamentalist missionaries arrive in Cuba.
- 1903 - Board of Missions of the General Council of the Seventh-day Adventist Church: missionaries Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Hall, Miss Sterguel and Mr. Styth.
- 1904 - Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)
- 1908 - International Apostolic Holiness Union Foreign Board
- 1909 - The Board of Missions of the Congregational Church withdraws from Cuba and turns over its work to the Northern Presbyterians: Presbyterian Church, USA.
- 1912 - German Lutheran pastors begin work among immigrants from Grand Cayman; later became affiliated with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.
- 1918 - The Salvation Army begins work among Jamaican immigrants.
- 1920 - General Council of the Assemblies of God: missionary May Kelty; she was joined by Anna Sanders of Denmark in 1930; this denomination became known as the Evangelical Pentecostal Church of Cuba in 1956.
- 1928 - West Indies Mission, now World Team (USA & Canada); Bartolomé Gregorio Lavastida and Elmer V. Thompson founded the "Los Pinos Nuevos" Bible School, which later became the "Los Pinos Nuevos" Evangelical Seminary; the associated churches founded were called The Evangelical Association of Cuba; today known as "Los Pinos Nuevos" Evangelical Convention; Thompson founded the West Indies Mission in 1928.
- 1930 - Gedeon's Evangelical Band, founded by Ernest William Sellers, a businessman from Wisconsin; now known as the International Evangelical Church of the Soldiers of the Cross; a sabbatical Pentecostal denomination.
- 1930 - Church of God (Anderson, IN), missionary Etta Faith Stewart begins work among Jamaican immigrants in La Habana.
- 1935 - Church of God of Prophecy Mission; missionary C. H. Holley.
- 1937 - Open Bible Standard Missions, Inc.; exploratory work began in 1937, but the work was not officially begun until the arrival of missionary Paul Hartman in 1945.
- 1939 - African Methodist Episcopal Church begins work in English among West

Indian immigrants.

- 1939 - Christian Church and Churches of Christ: José Ricardo Jiménez.
- 1939 - Free Brethren or Plymouth Brethren, supported by Christian Missions in Many Lands; known in Cuba as Gospel Halls ("Salas Evangélicas").
- 1941 - Free Will Baptist Church, missionary Thomas Willey (National Association of Free Will Baptist Churches in the USA)
- 1941 - Cuban Council of Evangelical Churches formed.
- 1942 - Church of God World Missions (Cleveland, TN)
- 1944 - Bethel Evangelical Church, founded by Sixto M. López, affiliated with Elim Fellowship or Elim Missionary Assemblies (Latter Rain tradition) in New York.
- 1944 - Christian Reformed Church, founded by Vicente Izqueirido.
- 1944 - United World Mission, missionaries Ralph and Stella Correll.
- 1945 - Church of the Nazarene reopens its work in Cuba; missionaries Mr. & Mrs. Lyle Prescott.
- 1945 - Berean Mission, missionaries Ruby Miller and Lucille Kerrigan.
- 1946 - Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod begins work on the Isla de Pinos.
- 1949 - Fellowship of Evangelical Bible Churches
- 1951 - Pentecostal Church of God
- 1952 - Pentecostal Holiness Church: missionaries James Williams and Elvin Thornton.
- 1954 - Franconia Mennonite Conference
- 1954 - Brethren in Christ World Missions
- 1955 - Baptist Bible Fellowship International
- 1955 - Congregational Pentecostal Church: missionary Hugh B. Skelton.
- 1956 - Pentecostal Christian Church of Cuba founded by Luis M. Ortiz, formerly of the Assemblies of God.
- 1957 - Conservative Baptist Church, Home Mission Society; missionary José A. Colmenero.
- 1950s - International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Church of God in Christ, the Church of Christ of the Apostolic Faith, the United Pentecostal Church, the Missionary Church of God, the Damascus Christian Church, the Missionary Church of Christ, Defenders of the Faith, and the Worldwide Missionary Movement (Movimiento Misionero Mundial) all began work in Cuba.
- 1970s - Founded during this period were the following Pentecostal denominations: Good News Pentecostal Church, Agrarian Christian

Brotherhood of Cuba, National Apostolic Movement of Churches of God in Christ Jesus, and the Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ (Uni-pentecostal).

- 1989 - Every Home for Christ
- 1994 - STEM Ministries
- 1995 - Baptist Mid-Missions
- 1995 - Partners International
- 1995 - Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
- 1995 - Mennonite Economic Development
- 1996 - Baptist International Missions

Date of Origin Unknown:

African Orthodox Church
Christian Aid Mission
Churches of the Apostolic Faith
Evangelical Free Church
Evangelical League of Cuba
Free Church of Jesus Christ
Getsemani Evangelical Church
Light of the World Evangelical Pentecostal Church
Mount Sinai Church
Orthodox Church of God
The New Jerusalem Church
United Brethren in Christ
World-Wide Missions



NOTES:

- (1) Dates listed indicate the earliest ministry or in case of discrepancies, the date most frequently indicated by the sources.
- (2) North American Agencies include U.S. and Canadian.

SOURCES:

- (1) Daryl L. Platt, "Who Represents the Evangelical Churches in Latin America? A Study of the Evangelical Fellowship Organizations." Pasadena, CA: an unpublished Doctor of Missiology Dissertation, School of World Mission, Fuller Theological Seminary, June 1991. Used by permission of the author.
- (2) José Antonio Ramos, *Panorama del Protestantismo en Cuba* (Editorial Caribe, 1986).
- (3) PROLADES (Latin American Socio-religious Studies Program), international headquarters in San José, Costa Rica: <http://www.prolades.com/>, prolades@racsa.co.cr

- (4) Dayton Roberts and John Siewert, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1989).
- (5) John A. Siewert and Edna G. Valdez, editors: ***Mission Handbook of U.S. and Canadian Christian Ministries Overseas*** (MARC 1997).
- (6) Jean-Jacques Bauswein and Lukas Vischer, ***The Reformed Family Worldwide*** (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999).