

CHRISTIAN LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HONDURAS - ICHL

Year Started and Brief History

The first attempts at pastoral mission of the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras (ICLH), can be traced back to the year 1950, when the evangelist Miguel García came from Puerto Barrios in Guatemala to visit several settlements on the northern coast of Honduras in the department of Cortes. Likewise, the itinerant Bible salesman, Aldrich Forbes, commissioned by the reverend Gussick, undertook various attempts at evangelization in the country, among others in La Ceiba and Puerto Castilla in the North, in Choluteca in the South. But the regular contacts were only established with the emigration of the Salvadoreans from Pasaquina, who sought free farming lands in Honduras and who were regularly visited by the pastors Ciro Mejía and Gerhrad Kempff. When more families moved to the Honduras capital Tegucigalpa, Gerhrad Kempff was sent to Honduras in 1964 and received the commission to form a church. In June of 1965 there was information of an active congregational work with two families, of which one of them was his. Aside from this he continued visiting members who lived in the northeast province of Olancho.

In 1968 the congregation in San Nicolas called itself the Christian Lutheran Church "Cristo Liberador [Liberating Christ]" and built the first temple or chapel. Kempff remained in the country only until the year 1971, when he had to return to the United States, due to the lack of perspectives for the congregational work and the continuing budget cuts in the Council of Lutheran Churches in Central America and Panama (CONCAP). The pastor, Bonifacio Romero, continued working in Olancho for a few more years. But CONCAP was not able to invest in greater efforts in the seventies in Honduras. Only in the eighties, when CONCAP had more financial resources, was it able to begin, in 1980, a new mission initiative with the sending of the pastors Eduardo Cabrerías to Tegucigalpa and Guillermo Flores to San Pedro Sula.

These two pastors, together with congregational members, founded, in 1981, the Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras which was officially recognized by the Honduran State in 1984.

Church Leader

The Pastor President is Martin Giron. The new leadership of the ICLH is young, very dynamic, and in spite of the difficulties which it is confronting, it is developing and capacitating the leadership of the congregations and of the office work team. Basically, in the congregations, the leadership is manifested through the pastoral teams.

Membership

The members of each one of the congregations of the ICLH are part of the membership of the Lutheran Church of Honduras which approaches the number of: 1,200.00

Organisational Structure

The organizational structure of the ICLH is organized in the following manner:

a) Assembly

b) National Church Council

c) Work areas: Development of Faith Congregations or Communities (DECOFE), DIACONILLA, Administration and Accounting, Women's Ministry, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Health for Life, Institutional Strengthening.

Main Areas of Work

In the area of Diakonia various projects are developed, the main ones being:

Organization and coordination of programs which promote human rights, full human development, agriculture, Kinder, Infant Nutrition, Environment.

In the area of Women: Micro businesses, organizational strengthening in gender and worker's rights, Constitutional Right, Strengthening of the denouncement process of violence against women, rereading of the Bible from the gender perspective.

In the area of health: preventive health care, HIV-AIDS, Prevention for health (water, basic sanitation, hygiene and nutrition).

In the area of DECOFE: enlivenment of the worship life of the congregations, library development in the faith congregations of the ICLH, sharing material elements for theological and psycho pastoral formation.

Activities regarding overcoming of violence

In the long run the work with the kínder is a contribution to improve the quality of the education of the children, since the lack of access to education of the majority is a factor which feeds into violence. We also work with capacity building of many people on various important themes of life so as to raise awareness about the situation of violence in which the country finds itself.

All the activities described in 'Main Areas of Work' contribute to prevent violence.

Special Challenges

Numerical growth of the membership, development of pastoral calls, development of gifts and talents, being a sustainable church.

Involvement in Networks or International Operations

Through the action of the fraternal relations of the ICLH it is integrated in the international society.

Full member of the Lutheran World Federation.