

The district leaders are the engine of missions in Latin America. The district leader is often the most productive and effective Free Methodist pastor in their country. They are ordained FM elders appointed to lead an emerging mission district or elected to superintend a provisional annual conference supervised by the Latin America Area Director. District leaders often are planting a church (or two), while simultaneously coaching a network of church planters and pastors.

The Engine

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Latin American team – key national leaders

They are involved in direct evangelism and church planting, developing training for pastors, helping churches to grow, forming appropriate structures for a multiplying ministry, and creating a contextualized, indigenous, identity of the FMC in their country.

We want to introduce you to a few of the effective district leaders in Latin America. Currently in Mexico City, Hector Pérez is a fruitful pastor. Formerly superintendent of the Northern Mexico Conference, he left that role and took a salary cut to become the Director of Central Mexico Mission District.

Ricardo Guerrero planted and led one of the largest Free Methodist churches in South America, the mother church for a growing district of 10 churches. Based out of Buenos Aires, Argentina, he is now providing leadership to both the Argentina and Uruguay Mission Districts. He is also working with a leadership team developing beginning groups in Buenos Aires.

The pastor of the largest church in the Peru Mission District, Miguel Algorta, is also the district leader. He is planting a new church – the

second church plant in Lima, the capital and a very influential city.

Libni Gasca pastors a large and growing mother church in Bogotá, Colombia, which is giving birth to several satellite congregations. He is also the district leader for Colombia and Ecuador.

It's important to note that several of these leaders are ministering cross-culturally, and in most cases, husbands and wives are partners in ministering, functioning as co-pastors whether both are ordained or not. District leaders face many of the issues North American missionaries face – financial hardship, ministry impact on family life and sacrifice for the cause of Christ. Therefore, we must mobilize resources to support them – consistent and equitable funding, coaching and leadership development, and systems to undergird their ministry with prayer.

Leaders sharpen other leaders; leaders who are in similar situations or kinds of ministry benefit greatly from hearing each other's experiences, sharing best practices and developing peer accountability. There is great power in gathering cohort groups around common challenges and opportunities, such as church planting, supervision and coaching, leading larger churches, or developing urban strategies.