

Jesse Miranda, 'Godfather' of the Hispanic-Latino Evangelical Movement, Dies at 81

Jesse Miranda, chairman emeritus of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference (NHCLC), died Friday night from late-stage liver cancer at 81. In a statement, Pastor Samuel Rodriguez, president of NHCLC, called Miranda the "godfather of the Hispanic/Latino evangelical movement that changed the world."

In 1992, Miranda founded the Latino Evangelical Alliance, which later morphed and re-emerged as the NHCLC. Miranda led the way in providing holistic national leadership to the emerging demographic of Hispanic/Latino Christians.

"His commitment to Christ—real. His prophetic voice—renewing. His love for the marginalized—relentless," Rodriguez said. "On behalf of the NHCLC family, we express our condolences to the entire Miranda family. We love you, Brother Jesse. You changed our lives."

Miranda, referred to by some as the "granddaddy of U.S. Latino Protestantism," was a consultant to three U.S. presidents on Hispanic affairs.

He earned a doctor of ministry degree from Fuller Theological Seminary. Miranda served as the Assemblies of God supervisor of the Pacific District from 1984 to 1992, overseeing 400 Latino churches. He also served as an executive presbyter with the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Miranda was also the founder and director of the Jesse Miranda Center for Hispanic Leadership at Vanguard University in Costa

Mesa, California, and is widely regarded as the “driving force behind uniting disparate U.S. Hispanic evangelicals on issues such as theological education, social ethics and racial reconciliation,” according to the Assemblies of God official website.

Miranda began preaching at 19. He is the author of *The Christian Church in Ministry*, published in 1980 and translated into 10 languages, as well as *Liderazgo y Amistad* (*Leadership and Friendship*). Miranda also served as an instructor at the Latin American Bible Institute from 1959 to 1978. In all, he served as an AG general presbyter for 41 years.

At a reception in August 2017 for Miranda, Pastor Wilfredo “Choco” DeJesus, one of three Hispanics on the AG Executive Presbytery, told Miranda, “You have left a tremendous legacy for us to follow.”

Miranda grew up in Albuquerque, New Mexico, the son of a Mexican lumber mill worker and Spanish-descent mother with a third-grade education, according to the AG website. He and his wife, Susan, were married more than 60 years and had three children—Jack, Michael and Cindy. {eoa}