



# GULF STATES CONFERENCE

1870–1879

## 1885

In 1885, Charles F. Curtis and George A. King, the first Seventh-day Adventists, came as colporteurs selling Daniel and the Revelation, by Uriah Smith. This was the beginning of the work in Atlanta, Georgia. Around 1892, the first church building was erected on Fair Street, now Memorial Drive, near the corner of Cherokee Avenue.

1880–1889

## 1880

J. O. Corliss, who had been sent to visit the churches in the South, ordained J. M. Elliott to the ministry in Alabama and licensed J. R. Waite to preach.

## 1885

Peter H. Clark established himself in the Gulf City Hotel in Mobile, Alabama, opened a reading room, and carried on personal evangelism by distributing publications.

## 1885

R. B. Hewitt held a series of meetings at Beauregard, Mississippi, gathering a company of 16 believers, and organizing a Sabbath school.

1890–1899

## 1894

The second Seventh-day Adventist church in Alabama was organized in Montgomery.

## 1896

A church in Hatley, Mississippi was formed in 1898, and groups of adherents also met at Amory, Tupelo, and Burnsville, Mississippi.

1900–1909

## 1900

James Edson White and a group of workers, including W. O. Palmer and Fred Rogers, operated the river steamer Morning Star (built in 1894 by White in Allegan, Michigan) on the Mississippi River from its base at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

## 1901

The Alabama Conference, encompassing the entire state, was organized in 1901. By 1908, the territory also included seven counties in western Florida. Conference headquarters resided variously in Selma, Birmingham, Fort Payne, and Clanton, Alabama.

## 1901

The Mississippi Conference was organized at the Camp Meeting held at Hatley, Mississippi, with R. M. Kilgore presiding. There were three churches, five companies, and 182 members.

## 1902

A small school was opened in Vicksburg, Mississippi, by F. R. Rogers. A Sunday school was also begun, which drew 40-50 adults and children. In a short time, Rogers had gained 11 adult converts, with five children.

## 1904

A church was organized at Ellisville-Laurel, Mississippi.

1910–1919

## 1912

A church was organized in the state capitol of Jackson, Mississippi, with 13 charter members. More members were added the same year as the result of evangelistic meetings conducted in the conference office building by C.S. Wiest. At the



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end of 1912, the Mississippi Conference had six churches and 159 members.

1920–1929

## 1920

The Mississippi and Louisiana conferences were united as the Louisiana-Mississippi Conference, with the headquarters for the new conference remaining at Jackson, Mississippi.

1930–1939

## 1932

When the state of Louisiana was transferred to the Southwestern Union Conference, the states of Alabama and Mississippi were united into one conference, retaining the counties of northwest Florida that had previously made up a part of the Alabama Conference, and adding one more. R. I. Keate became the first president of the newly organized Alabama-Mississippi Conference. Shortly after the organization, the headquarters were moved from Jackson to Meridian, Mississippi.

1940–1949

## 1946

The Black constituency of the Alabama-Mississippi Conference separated to become part of the South Central Conference.

1950–1959

## 1955

Over the next seven years, Alabama-Mississippi Conference membership increased by 40 percent.

1960–1969

## 1961

Bass Memorial Academy was built in southern Mississippi as a result of a gift from I. H. Bass of Lumberton, Mississippi.

## 1968

The Conference acquired a 60-acre peninsula on Lake Martin, near Dadeville, Alabama, and developed Camp Alamisco.

1970–1979

## 1972

The \$1 million mark in tithe was reached.

## 1974

Alabama-Mississippi Conference membership passed 5,000 people, and headquarters were moved from Meridian, Mississippi, to Montgomery, Alabama.

## 1974

The building of a new Alabama-Mississippi Conference office, prominently located east of downtown Montgomery, was begun in the fall of 1974. The \$300,000 plant was completed in the spring of 1975.

1980–1989

## 1984

The constituency voted to rename the Alabama-Mississippi Conference the Gulf States Conference so that Florida constituents would also be included in the name.

1990–1999

## 1984

Jesus and Clara Cisneros, who had arrived in southern Mississippi in 1991, started the Spanish-speaking ministry in Gulf States Conference with a group of 40 people.

## 1984

Eván Valencia was appointed Hispanic coordinator for Gulf States Conference.



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## **1984**

The Alonzo Francisco family started a Spanish-speaking ministry in Gadsden, Alabama, about 65 miles northeast of Birmingham. Moving successively from the mothers' room in the Gadsden English Church to a classroom and then to a rented meeting place in Albertville, about 30 miles to the northwest, the group grew to about 110 people.

## 2000–2009

### **2003**

Gulf States Conference membership surpassed 8,000.

## 2010–2019

### **2014**

A larger Gulf States Conference office was constructed in Montgomery, Alabama. In addition to the increased exposure from the adjacent interstate, the new \$1.8 million office offered additional features such as new office spaces, warehousing, and a dedicated media studio. Years of saving, combined with the sale of the previous office property, allowed the Conference to construct the new office without incurring debt.

## 2020–CURRENT

### **2020**

There are presently 80 Gulf States Conference congregations and approximately 13,000 constituent members.



# GULF STATES CONFERENCE

## PRESIDENTS OF THE GULF STATES CONFERENCE TERRITORY

### **ALABAMA CONFERENCE**

W. L. McNeely, 1901-1905  
A. J. Haysmer, 1906-1909  
J. R. Bagby, 1910  
E. G. Hayes, 1911-1912  
A. L. Miller, 1912-1918  
J. F. Wright, 1918-1921  
S. G. Haughey, 1921-1922  
C. B. Stephenson, 1922-1927  
A. B. Russell, 1927-1931  
N. S. Ashton, 1931-1932

### **MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE**

Rodney S. Owen, 1901-1903  
H. G. Thurston, 1904-1905  
F. R. Shaeffer, 1906-1907  
W. S. Lowry, 1909-1912  
C. S. Wiest, 1912-1916  
C. J. Buhalts, 1916-1919  
W. R. Elliott, 1919-1920

### **LOUISIANA-MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE**

W. R. Elliott, 1920-1926  
F. H. DeVinney, 1926-1932

### **ALABAMA-MISSISSIPPI CONFERENCE**

R. I. Keate, 1932-1937  
H. W. Walker, 1937-1941  
H. J. Capman, 1941-1949  
I. M. Evans, 1949-1954  
L. J. Leiske, 1954-1962  
Wallace O. Coe, 1962-1965  
W. D. Wampler, 1965-1981  
W. A. Geary, 1981-1984

### **GULF STATES CONFERENCE**

W. A. Geary, 1984-1985

R. R. Hallock, 1985-1992  
J. O. Greek, 1992-1996  
Melvin K. Eisele, 1996-2015  
David O. Livermore, 2015-2020  
Brian Danese, 2020-