

About The History of the Christian and Missionary Alliance

When Alliance founder A. B. Simpson left a lucrative pastorate in New York City, he had a call from God to reach the lost masses both in New York and around the world. Prostitutes, longshoremen, and the homeless received the reconciliation message that all people are eligible for Christ's amazing grace. He established the New York Gospel Tabernacle to bring likeminded people together into an organization that could facilitate outreach ministries. And he set up the Missionary Training Institute (MTI) to provide training and resources for men and women God was calling to take the gospel to the world.

During that time, Simpson's group sent out the first team of missionaries to the Congo in 1884. Since then, thousands of people have followed God's call to serve Him through The Alliance in the United States and abroad. In 1974, The Christian and Missionary (C&MA) officially became a denomination, but it still had at its core a heart for overseas missions. Past Alliance president Dr. L. L. King said of the C&MA that it "was not established as a mission divorced from the normal activity of a church, but a church which had within it the life and function of a mission.... The mission came first and the church grew out of a mission."

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) is an evangelical denomination with a major emphasis on world evangelization. It maintains a "big tent" stance in reference to many doctrinal matters, encouraging believers of diverse backgrounds and theological traditions to unite in an alliance to know and exalt Jesus Christ and to complete His Great Commission.

All of this began more than 100 years ago when Albert B. Simpson, a Presbyterian minister from Canada, was moved by God to reach the masses of unsaved people he saw about him and throughout the world.

In 1882 he plunged into a ministry among New York's masses. His Gospel Tabernacle became a center for evangelism and physical healing. He also launched an illustrated magazine promoting Christian life and missions which later became the Alliance Life. To publish his magazine and his sermons, he began in 1883 the Christian Alliance Publishing Company now Christian Publications. That same year he founded his missionary Training College, the first North American Bible College to prepare men and women for missionary service. It is now Nyack (New York) College.

The International Missionary Alliance came into being in 1887. A second organization, the Christian Alliance, was founded as well to promote what Simpson called "deeper life" teaching. By deeper life, Simpson meant the filling of the Holy Spirit as the Christian makes a total surrender to God. Ten years later, in 1897, these two organizations merged to become The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

It was not Simpson's intention to begin a new denomination. His objective was an interdenominational fellowship to promote foreign missions and deeper life teaching. After the turn of the century, liberal trends in the mainline denominations caused many Bible-believing Christians to leave their churches and group together in congregations loyal to the Word of God. Many of these affiliated with The Christian and Missionary Alliance. In 1912, these congregations became Alliance churches. By the mid-1970's, it became clear that the Alliance was a denomination in all but name, so with revised bylaws and constitution, that reality was formalized in 1974. Today, the C&MA focuses on planting churches in the United States and overseas. More than 800 missionaries and workers minister in 50-plus countries planting churches and training national church leaders, providing relief and development assistance, medical and dental care, and microenterprise projects.

As of January 1, 2011, there was recorded more than 2,000 U.S. churches with a combined membership of more than 430,000 regularly gather to celebrate Jesus in multiple languages, according to the C&MA website.