



Ricardo Gómez

Bishop Nominee Interview

 [Watch the full interview](#)

Ricardo Gómez grew up in Columbia where he served in the army as a young follower of Jesus Christ. While beginning duty one day at 3 a.m., he pondered his difficult circumstances as a soldier and prayed, “Lord, whatever You want for me, I want to serve You.”

In a new episode of “The Light + Life Podcast,” Gómez said that he sensed “the conviction that God was saying, ‘I want to provide you educational tools, and I want to use you to my service.’”

“In that moment, I knew that God will lead me and provide for me,” said Gómez, now the Latin America area director for Free Methodist World Missions and one of three nominees for the March 17 election to succeed retiring Bishop Kenny Martin. “Early in the morning that day there, I knew the Lord has a path for me. I knew if I’m obedient enough, He will provide, and He will lead.”

Humility and Confidence

FMCUSA Communications Director Brett Heintzman asked Gómez what excites him about the thought of being elected as a bishop in the FMCUSA.

“What excites me is knowing that God is still leading my path. This has never been about an office for me. It’s about continuing to serve the Lord and His people, wherever He calls,” Gómez said. “I accept the nomination because I sense God’s inviting me to trust Him once again. That has been the story of my life — trusting God in every circumstance and every direction and in every role.”

Gómez said that if the Lord wants him to be bishop, “I will serve with humility and confidence, not because of my abilities.” If elected, Gómez said he would accept

the assignment in obedience while “walking with God wherever He leads me.”

Challenges

When asked about the greatest challenge facing the denomination, Gómez noted “the polarization in our culture making its way into the church. Nationalism and misplaced loyalty are deeply divisive and are often used for political gain. As followers of Jesus, we should know better.”

He reflected on the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37: “The bones were dry because they were disconnected. There was nobody holding them together. This image reminds us why unity matters so deeply. Unity is the testimony that we belong to Jesus. ... When the churches divide, we become a valley of dry bones, and the enemy understands this well and works constantly to create disunity, but God is able to breathe life again.”

When asked about personal leadership challenges, Gómez said that a leader must daily choose surrender over selfishness. Another challenge is earning trust.

“In Latin America, many leaders’ models are authoritarian, but that is not Christian leadership. I believe that leadership is about building community, bringing people from different gifts and perspectives together, and creating a space where they can learn from each other,” Gómez said. “Trusting is building by inviting people into conversation, addressing brokenness, and choosing collaboration over competition. And I have seen that work in Latin America. Diverse teams, when led with humility and trust, can function like a symphony ... many instruments, one beautiful song.”

Movement

Gómez said that Spirit-fueled movement “must begin with dependence on the Holy Spirit. He is the key for any movement. We must be sure that, first as an individual and then as a community, we are discerning God’s will in everything we do, and I believe that is where the current Board of Bishops is leading.”

He noted the Wesleyan movement’s emphasis on laity rather than depending primarily on “pastors or a few who are called. It is a calling to all. So our pastors and leaders must help their congregation to move from the comfort of the pews into the mission of God.”

“A prayer-shaped lay movement” has begun in Latin America, and Gómez said he believes “God is ready to lead the same fire here in the USA. To see a spiritual movement to catalyze the multiplication of disciples, leaders, and churches, everyone from bishops to laity must commit to radical dependence on the Holy Spirit, an unwavering commitment to God’s mission.”

Change and Awakening

Heintzman noted that the denomination is “in a season of change, with annual conferences realigning and changes in our denominational structures,” and he asked about Gómez’s familiarity with the changes and how his leadership would help goals be met by 2029.

Gómez said the realignment envisions a network of conferences “that are better aligned and resourced with the goal of fostering holy innovation through low control and high accountability.” While meeting regularly with bishops and superintendents as an area director, “I have participated in some of the conversations about the realignment, and I see strong similarities with what we are experiencing in Latin America. So to use a sport analogy, I will not come into the game cold. What I bring is a life shaped by daily spiritual practice along with experience working with 18 countries in Latin America as they came into alignment under one shared vision and mission. I will enter this role first as a listener. I believe deeply in teamwork, collaboration, and interdependency.”

He added that “realignment might mean that we all must sacrifice a little because movements are organic, like breathing,” with “seasonal expansion and contractions, and this is a season of contractions to better facilitate the expansion.”

He also sees this as “a moment of awakening. Our society and our church are reaching places of deep desperation, and that is often the soil for a great awakening. The church itself is becoming hungry for something new, and this season gives us an opportunity to provide a unified spirit, to feel a response that will bring transformation if we remain faithful.”

The FMCUSA’s Future

Gómez said he believes the best is yet to come for the Free Methodist Church.

“I don’t believe God is finished with us. He can still do amazing work through His church and, more specifically, through this church. I see God’s bringing together people from every cultural background, men and women, young and old with a sense of awakening and renewal,” he said. “I see a church willing to make changes for the sake of God’s mission — willing to open the door to those who are different and willing to serve as agents of transformation in society.”

Vision and Calling

Heintzman asked if God had given Gómez “any visions, dreams or words regarding your call to say yes to being considered as a nominee for the church.”

“I don’t know that God has given me a specific vision or word for the role of bishop, but He has given me a very clear vision for my calling,” replied Gómez, who added that God’s call “has remained the same since I was 14 years old. He has confirmed it repeatedly when I was in the army, at the seminary, when I was first introduced to the Free Methodist Church, when we became missionaries, and in many other moments along the way. Each time the message has been clear: ‘Go, and I will be with you,’ and I’m grateful that He has given me the privilege of seeing His fruit of the faithfulness on several

occasions. In that sense, my whole life is a testimony of God's goodness, His call and His faithfulness."

Prayer for the Church

When asked how he is praying for the Free Methodist Church, Gómez expressed concern that "we have spoiled our spiritual appetites, because we are too distracted by our own desires, and we have lost our appetites for the Lord, for His presence and for His holiness in our lives. I'm praying that we will reach a place of desperation where we recognize that something is missing and return to the Lord, to the Scripture, and to the spiritual practices that shape us."

Along with praying for spiritual hunger for every pastor, superintendent, and lay person, Gómez said he also prays "for unity of the body ... where every part is respected, heard, celebrated, and welcomed to participate."

He also said he prays for awakening and "that our church will truly become God's hands and God's voice in a world that so desperately needs Him."

The podcast concluded with Gómez praying for the church and asking the Holy Spirit to "revive us again and help us to depend on You with all ourselves."+