CENTER FOR FLORIDA HISTORY
ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

INTERVIEW WITH: **ARMANDO RODRIGUEZ**

INTERVIEWER: **DR. JAMES M. DENHAM**

PLACE: **LAKELAND, FLORIDA**

DATE: **June 11, 2008**

D= DR. JAMES M. DENHAM
R= ARMANDO RODRIGUEZ

D: Today is June 11th and once again we are in what we think is our last session, of oral history with Armando Rodríguez and today weôre going to talk about his role in the Methodist church in Florida from when he retired in 1990 up to, well pretty much all the way to the present. So Armando, can you go through your places that you were posted here in Florida after coming here in 1990?

R: Yes, I as told you before, when I was retired as Bishop of the Methodist church in Cuba, I decided not to remain in Cuba because I donôt lik

and then one wonderful lay woman who was a member in the first church I was appointed after my seminary study in *Báguanos, Oriente*, this lady, a great Christian, a great lay leader, Lydia Rodríguez, she had one independent congregation in Miami and she visited me and asked what will you do, Bishop, now that you are here in Florida. I explained to her that the Methodist church already had made all the appointments for the new conference year and I was unable to have any job. Then she invited me to help her in the independent congregation in Miami, and she was great because they gave me some housing allowance, they paid my rent and they gave me a pretty good salary for that time, they gave me $250 every week and they gave to me everything for my apartment and so, and I worked with her all this year from 1990 until May 1991. I visited Bishop Hughes in Lakeland in that occasion and I asked him for some appointment for some work and he was very kind with me and in the next annual conference, in May 1991, he appointed me to Peace Hispanic congregation in south Miami, very near to Perrine. This was a great blessing for me because even when I had the salary and housing allowance with this great Christian leader, but she was in an independent congregation and I felt as a Methodist pastor and I was very happy to work inside the United Methodist organization here in Florida. Then I was appointed in May 1991 to Peace Hispanic United Methodist Church south Miami, and this was a good experience for me, even when one year later, in August of 1992, we had in the region where my congregation was, the main damage from the

R: Without anything in Honduras.

to the rural areas where other medical brigades didnôt go because they had medical group

And then the mayor in one town told me that he must intervene in that conflict and then

R: I am not sure that they, the other pastors in the Assembly of God and the independent pastors, the main motive was to have more money, but the reality was that they knew perfectly that they will have some support, some contribution in a limited time, but they must be able to produce é

D: In other words, you are arguing that