



Mario C. Gamez

January 19, 1929 - April 4, 2017

Former Pastor of the Visalia “La Nueva Jerusalem” Church (The New Jerusalem) of the Assemblies of God and Honorary Executive Presbyter of the Northern Pacific Latin-American Assemblies of God District (NPLAD), Rev. Mario went to be with his Heavenly Father on April 4th. In his final hours, he was surrounded by family and ministerial friends who shared memories of his life of significance. Rev. Mario’s central concerns were always his faith, family, congregation and living with fulfillment and purpose. Serving the Lord to the best of his ability was his primary lifelong passion. Born in Torreon, Coahuila Mexico, he served in the Mexican military in Mexico City as a young adult and was later awarded a scholarship to Abilene Christian College in Texas where he studied for the seminary. In a move which reflected his commitment to his childhood sweetheart, Mario relocated to Visalia, California and married Rev. Esther Melendez Gamez on December 15, 1954 by Rev. Harvey Mitchell from the First Assemblies of God Church. After deciding to dedicate his life to the Lord’s ministry, he served as the President of Youth Ministries for the Bakersfield Section of the Latin-American Assemblies of God Church in 1958 while working as a Manager at Sprague Electric. In 1959, he obeyed the Lord’s calling to Pastor the Ebenezer Mission in Corcoran, CA and later became Senior Pastor of “La Nueva Jerusalem” in Visalia where he served for 40 years from 1961 through 2001. Rev. Mario was elected Secretary of the Bakersfield Section and later served as the Sectional Presbyter for 25 years. Under his mentorship, there were twelve newly formed churches and three

restructured missions. He was granted the distinction as a “District Honorary Executive Presbyter” for life and served on the Credentials Committee for NPLAD. Rev. Mario worked for the Visalia Unified School District as a counselor for Special Education and retired in 1994 after 25 years of service. Rev. Mario also served his community as a teacher in US Government during both Amnesty Programs assisting people in preparing for their US Citizenship Exams. Although he held many positions with demanding responsibilities, his priority was always his family. He was a loving husband and father who was always present for family dinners and gatherings. He mentored his children’s academic pursuits and attended all of their musical and sporting events. Upon retirement as a Senior Pastor at the age of 72, he made the decision to move closer to his grandchildren in the Bay Area. Equally important was his time spent attending his grandchildren’s academic, musical and sporting events. He focused on supporting their goals, pursuits and passions and created a warm and close family relationship. The Lord provided the opportunity to live closer to his grandchildren in San Ramon, CA and also had other plans for him. At the age of 74, in August 2003, Rev. Mario was called back into the role as a Senior Pastor at Bethany Temple in Oakland, CA where he served for the following 10 years. During his tenure, he served as a mentor to many including several young adults who consulted with him regularly for advice, support and encouragement. His legacy was to empower people to be leaders in their families, church, community and at work. He was always passionate about supporting underprivileged youth and believed in every individual he encountered. He had faith in their ability to improve their lives and impact others. Upon his second retirement as a Senior Pastor at the age of 85, the Lord again called Rev. Mario to mentor the establishment of a new mission, “The House Christian Worship Center”, in Visalia, where he served as a counselor, Bible Studies teacher and minister with Pastor Roger Ovalle. On December 15, 2016, The Reverends Mario & Esther Gamez celebrated 62 years of marriage. In 2016, the General Council of the Assemblies of God gave recognition to Rev. Mario for 50 years as an ordained minister of his 59

½ years in the ministry. Rev. Mario fulfilled his dream to live the life of a humble and faithful servant of God. Rev. Mario is survived by his loving wife, Rev. Esther M. Gamez; his daughter, Cynthia Esther Gamez; his daughter Julie G. Lane and her family Patrick, Ryan, and Brianna of Danville, CA; his son, Mario Peter Gamez and his family, Amy, Makenzie, Caden, and Brayden of Meridian, Idaho; and brother Pedro Gamez of Dallas, Texas. You are invited to attend Visitation held at 11am–1pm on Thursday, April 20, 2017 at Salser and Dillard Funeral Chapel (127 E. Caldwell Ave. Visalia CA). Visitation will also be held at First Assembly of God (3737 S. Akers St. Visalia CA) at 5pm–6pm followed by a Celebration of Life Service at 6pm-9pm at First Assembly of God on Thursday, April 20, 2017. A Memorial Service will be held April 21, 2017 at 9:30am-12:00pm at First Assembly of God. Graveside Service will be held at Visalia District Cemetery. Reception from the 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM at The Visalia Veterans Memorial Building, 609 W. Center, Visalia, CA 93291 on April 21, 2017.

Cemetery Details

Visalia Public Cemetery

1300 W. Goshen Ave.
Visalia, CA 93291
visaliacemetery@aol.com
<http://www.visaliacem.org/>

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 20. 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM (PT)

Visalia First Assembly of God
3737 S Akers St
Visalia, CA 93277

Service

APR 20. 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM (PT)

Visalia First Assembly of God
3737 S Akers St
Visalia, CA 93277

Funeral

APR 21. 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM (PT)

Visalia First Assembly of God
3737 S Akers St
Visalia, CA 93277

Tribute Wall



“ 4 files added to the album Memories Album



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - April 25, 2017 at 11:42 AM