

## ***LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT***

*Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond*

### ***Mission and Ministry Newsletter***

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#### **A Quick Overview—Looking Back**

How rapidly another year is passing! I am amazed at how frequently the target dates for these quarterly reports come around. Honoring the rhythms of the calendar and the best times to travel and visit churches, I spent December studying and writing, preparing new seminars and studies for the upcoming year. The office time invested has produced several new audios and videos, and a good number of additional web materials, both in English and Spanish. Also in December, Jan and I enjoyed visiting the **Broken Arrow church** when **Tim Pyles** provided an opportunity to share our mission focus and give a report describing this work.

The holiday season of late November and December is a traditional time for family and we enjoyed family time and visits with my stepmother, with Jan's mother and with Jan's brothers. We were together with our sons and grandkids for the holidays, and along the way found time to visit with special friends—**Judith Ann Carmical** in northwest Arkansas, and **Calvin and Linda Henry** in Aubrey, Texas.

In January, Jan and I spent a weekend in Houston, focusing on mission planning and sharing time with the **Northwest church in Houston** where we both taught classes and I preached. We also spent a weekend with the **Rolla (Missouri) church**. This is a great church with active programs and a healthy focus on missions.

February found me in Honduras, working in three different sites. [Details of that trip are included below.]

#### **ENCOURAGING WORDS**

The work of Latin American Leadership Development is reaching out to Latin American churches with a dream and practical plan for church development in a unique mission work, different from that being done by most others. Because the work is done in Spanish, it is often not highly visible in the U.S.

I only go where I am invited, but every year the invitations increase. This suggests that the needs of the churches are being met. I think you will be encouraged by the following comments that have appeared on my Facebook page in the last couple of weeks during my time in Honduras.

- *Thanks for the support, Bob Young, not just for Talanga Church, but for church of Christ in many countries of American continent. God bless you and have a good trip.*
- *Can't wait until you're here! Always doing amazing things!!!*
- *We at the Broken Arrow church of Christ enjoyed so much your presentation and visits. Come again soon!!!*
- *Hermano. Bob. Young, haga planes algun dia de visitar la congregacion de Roma sera un placer tenerle. Le apreciamos. (Make plans someday to visit the congregation of Roma. It will be a pleasure to have you, we appreciate you.—from a congregation in Honduras)*
- *Muchas bendiciones para ti hno y por todo tu trabajo en la obra q Dios te siga dando esa energia y amor por su palabra un abrazo y pronto te esperamos en chile un abrazo. (Many blessings to you, brother, for all your labor in the work. May God keep giving you energy and love for his word. A hug, we are expecting you soon in Chile. Another hug.)*
- *Wherever Bob goes things happen for the Lord!! He's God's blessing wherever he goes!*

## HONDURAS REPORT

On this trip, I spent most of the time in three sites: Talanga, Baxter Institute, and the Barrio Cabañas congregation in San Pedro Sula.

The **church in Talanga** is a new church. I have visited this church plant almost every year since its beginning in 2010. On this trip, I was asked me to present a Marriage Seminar and to share in a leadership seminar (teaching at Talanga, picture right). The goals included to lay the biblical foundations and to clarify God's plan for marriage; and to strengthen the commitments within the marriages in the church. Saturday filled with the marriage seminar and the leadership seminar for the men of the congregation on Saturday afternoon. After the seminar I met with the Guanacaste (Tegucigalpa) elders who help provide spiritual maturity for this young church.



After the morning session, a visitor had asked for a Bible study so about 5:30 we arrived for the study, even though I was scheduled to teach at a cell meeting at 6:00. A little before 7:00, we concluded the evangelistic Bible study with an agreement that she would be baptized the next morning. By 7:30 we were studying with a small group of Christians on the other side of town, and by 9:00 we were sitting at a pupusería (a place that sells pupusas, see "Interesting Stuff" below), ready for the evening meal. When we arrived at the preacher's house (where I was staying) about 10:00 PM, my day was already almost 18 hours long, but we continued talking and sharing and dreaming for much of the next hour. Such days are typical of mission trips.

When I pray for open eyes, I see study opportunities, I meet new people, I have the opportunity to listen to the local Christians, and we dream and pray and plan together. Sunday dawned bright and cool—a beautiful day for study and worship. Three were baptized into Christ (picture left, one of the three baptisms), the sermon and studies were very well received, and the day provided many opportunities to visit in

various homes and to listen to the leading members and families in the church.

I had not been on the campus at **Baxter Institute** since February 2015, so I enjoyed seeing the many physical changes. I listened to the biographical stories of the freshman couples, spoke in devotional (chapel), shared some thoughts about preaching in Steve Teel's preaching class, and shared conversations about the new Marriage and Family certificate program. This program will meet once a month for eight months, and is approximately equal to a 2-3 hour class when measured by classroom time. The practical application component is where the real strength of the program can be seen since those in the program are required to demonstrate how the principles apply in local ministries. At Baxter, I enjoyed spending a couple of evenings with the Steve and Dianna Teel as we shared lots of information and dreams.



The last few days of my time were spent at **Barrio Cabañas in San Pedro Sula**. My flight from Tegucigalpa to San Pedro Sula was cancelled due to weather, and the only other direct flight was late afternoon and did not arrive in time for the scheduled evening activity. Therefore, I selected to option of flying through San Salvador in order to arrive earlier. All went well, immigration (reentering Honduras) and customs were slow, and I was finally at the home of my host by 5 PM, just in time to leave for the 6 PM activity at the church.



The rest of my time was less hurried, with visits during the days and seminar each evening on Friday and Saturday. On Sunday I assisted with the naming of the first two deacons in the church, following up on the appointment of a third elder two years ago. The elders and deacons represent major steps toward biblical organization and the development of a vital work force in the local church (picture above, myself, three elders, and Jacobo Chalco). The church has a great program that feeds 75-100 children each Sunday morning with Bible study to follow. They are in the process of purchasing their own building—I hope to see that reality when I go again next year.

### INTERESTING STUFF

International travel is filled with unexpected and unusual things. I mentioned above my unexpected, brief visit to the San Salvador airport. When I checked in on Facebook from San Salvador, I immediately received a suggestion to go to Pollo Campero (thanks, Lori Lalli!). Since that required paperwork and leaving the secured area, I settled for a good cup of coffee.



Foods are different in every place. Hondurans enjoy their baleadas (picture right), although pupusas (from El Salvador) are also popular. Baleadas are tortillas, most often filled with

beans, cheese, and cream. You might think of soft tacos, but with less filling. Each country has its own version of corn cakes. Pupusas and arepas are similar, corn cakes cooked on a griddle, but each is a specialty of a different country with distinct characteristics. Arepas are popular in Venezuela and Colombia, made with a special cornmeal called masarepa, often split and stuffed with fillings like cheese, shredded beef, or chicken. Pupusas are larger and flatter than arepas, also filled with things like cheese, beans, or ground pork.



In Honduras, rambutan (picture left) is a strange looking fruit—known by other names in other places. When the hard red covering with the spiny look is removed, the edible fruit with a fairly large center seed is left. What a delicious late night snack after a couple of hours of seminar teaching and preaching!

### A Quick Overview—looking forward, things to pray about

As always, the calendar is full, and I continue to cram more stuff in where I can find a little space. Here are some things to pray about, especially for the churches in other countries that I am serving in this effort.

- March-April-May, teach **Park Plaza** Wednesday Bible class; mission reports in various U.S. churches
- April, seminars with Hispanic churches in Kentucky and Tennessee. Pray for spiritual growth, leaders, stability, and evangelism.



- May, mission trip to Peru. Teach in Bible Institute, teacher/speaker at national conference in Lima, churches in Trujillo and Chiclayo, seminar in Huamachuco with a group of regional churches. Pray for the ability to go beyond what has become comfortable, for new students in the Institute, for the churches and leaders across Peru, for leadership in the churches, for greater commitment among the Christians, and for the newly planted churches that I will visit.
- August, seminars with churches in Kentucky and Tennessee.
- August, teacher and speaker at national conference of Spanish preachers. Pray that these leaders might dream a new dream for what is possible in their churches, maintaining a strong commitment to God's Word.
- August-September, Ecuador and Colombia. Pray for these churches that are establishing new churches around them, to continue without growing weary, for my visits that I can help with the specific needs that are most pressing.
- September-October, Dominican Republic. Pray for the unity of the churches, for leaders, for the Christians there, and for the evangelism efforts to reach new Christians.
- October-November, Uruguay. Pray for this secular society that is hard to reach, pray for the small church in Montevideo that it can be encouraged and more effective in reaching more souls.
- November, Chile. Pray for the infant church in La Serena, for the churches that are committed to growth and evangelism, for the seminars and retreats that will be shared.
- December, Honduras. Pray for Baxter Institute, pray for students, evangelism, teachers, and especially for families that can be assisted with the new Marriage and Family program.

#### **WHEN YOU HELP, YOU ARE MAKING A BIG DIFFERENCE**

Part of this work focuses on special needs and one-time special projects. In southern Colombia, the church building in Cumbal is nearing completion; the building at Túquerres has additional weatherized space for activities when it is cold (and it is almost always cold!). You have helped with funds for evangelism, printing evangelistic studies, and support for evangelists (not local ministers) in Guatemala, Nicaragua (2), and Venezuela. Support was also provided for purchasing a church building in Bogota.

I hope you know that you make a big difference when you pray. That is one reason I provide a fresh and updated prayer list.

Jan and I are thankful for the churches and Christians who help this work with work and travel funding, and with funding for special evangelism and outreach projects in Latin America. Through our host congregation (Main and Oklahoma in McAlester, Oklahoma), we can accept tax-deductible gifts (checks made payable to "Church of Christ" with the memo line, "Latin American Leadership").

Note that **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO MY TULSA ADDRESS** (10704 S 89<sup>th</sup> East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133), so that I can handle deposits, gift acknowledgements, and accounting. If funds are for a specific need or project, please include that information with your gift.

*Que Dios le bendiga (may God bless you),*  
**Bob and Jan Young**  
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***[In the great cities of Latin America many people are receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ and Christians hunger and thirst for the word of God and encouragement toward healthy church development and effective leadership]***

