

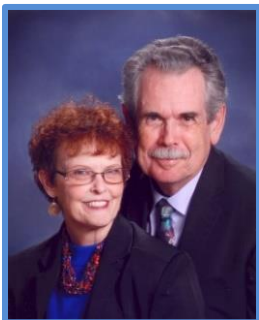
LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond

Mission and Ministry Newsletter

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Welcome to 2021—God's Mission Keeps Advancing and Expanding!

I have not been able to travel internationally since Jan and I returned from the Dominican Republic last March 12, but God's work in Latin America has marched forward – often in unimaginable ways. How great is our God!

With new subscribers to this newsletter and new mission partners, this is a good time to overview the goals, commitments and methods of this mission effort. The article below serves as a reminder of the primary goal of mission work. The list of the works in which we participate (bottom of p. 2) can also serve as a prayer guide. On p. 3, you will read about mission advances in the Dominican Republic and Peru. The gospel continues to sound forth and reach new territory even in the midst of the challenges of the pandemic.

Our Primary Mission Commitment—Sharing the Gospel

Let's talk about what we do together and why it is important. When I say "we," I refer to all who are a part of this work – financial partners in the US, prayer partners, and national Christians whose countries we call "the mission field."

Millions of people around the world live without hope. They have never heard the Good News of Jesus, they do not know the peace that comes through Jesus, they do not know the loving support of a spiritual family. They live separated from God. What they need more than anything else is the redemptive power of Jesus.



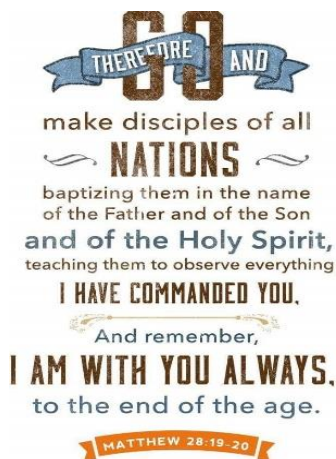
Meaningful improvement in their lives will only come when they hear and respond to the gospel of Jesus, and when they are helped to learn how to walk with Him daily. (Picture above, a conversation in Costa Rica between Bible class and worship, answering a Bible question from a Christian sister; picture left, a Bible study and invitation on the street.)

That is why the primary commitment of this mission work is sharing the gospel. That is why we help train workers, leaders, and missionaries in Honduras at Baxter Institute and in Peru at Interamerican Bible Institute. That is why we are

committed to church planting efforts that focus on new Christians and new churches. That is why we provide financial resources to workers and leaders in churches committed to evangelism and the spread of the gospel.

That is why we support evangelistic efforts and provide benevolent assistance in Venezuela, where hundreds are baptized every year, even during difficult days and the pandemic. That is why we work with churches and evangelists in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile. Not only have dozens of churches been planted, the evangelistic spirit is alive and well, as evidenced in the number of growing churches.

That is why we use the web, written materials, videos, and social media to give people around the world an opportunity to study the Bible and hear the Good News every day.



That is why we provide materials, training, and videos to encourage every Christian to become involved in evangelism. That is why we provide an online evangelism training seminar, plus written and recorded materials that effectively teach the gospel.

Written evangelism lessons. These are available for distribution through Spanish Literature Ministry or they can be downloaded and copied for free anywhere around the world.

Written Bible studies and leadership training materials. These are distributed on request without cost; they are also available online through the website.

Website materials. The website now contains over 5000 files related to ministry and mission. New articles, sermons, seminars, and workshops are added continually – both in English and in Spanish. One website tracker service estimated that the website gets 40,000 visits monthly!

Videos. New videos produced in 2020 include an evangelism training seminar in Spanish and a new series of recorded evangelistic Bible studies in Spanish (*En pos de la verdad*). The YouTube channel now has hundreds of videos that provide tools and encouragement for people to study the Bible and to become active disciples of Jesus. An important next step, thinking about the situation of many Latin Americans, will be to provide audio-only access to the studies.

Social media. Social media postings are now reaching hundreds each week. Some recent posts have attracted over 1000 viewers.

This commitment to providing written and recorded materials, available through a variety of access points, means that I spend a lot of time in my office—communicating with churches and leaders, teaching seminars and workshops, writing and recording materials (picture, right).



I want to share the gospel as effectively as possible by every means possible. As a result of these efforts, thousands have access to the Good News of Jesus Christ. Numbers for 2020 show 87,000 impressions on YouTube, almost 10,000 viewers with hundreds of hours of viewing. And the numbers available through YouTube analytics do not include videos downloaded or shared on social media or videos used in public settings. For example, one church uses the video studies for Bible classes, with hundreds watching. Also, videos of my teaching that are posted on other channels or sites are not included.

The world is waiting. People are receptive. With God's help, we must become a "Great Commission" Generation. What is needed?

First, a commitment to mission work that shares the Good News.

Second, a commitment to accountability. Those who support this ministry financially and in prayer have the right to know what is being done to help people come to Jesus, to grow churches, and to establish more churches. In turn, we expect the works we facilitate to be productive and bear fruit for our Lord.

Third, a commitment to "every member" evangelism and mission work. Most of the churches we work with do not have full-time ministers who receive financial support. Our commitment is to provide resources for regional evangelism and travel expenses.

Finally, let's use the tools God has placed in our hands to fulfill the Great Commission!

A Brief Prayer Guide – Funding Plans for 2021

With the uncertainties of the pandemic, it seems inappropriate to withdraw support from any of the works we helped in 2020, even those that were receiving "bridging funding." In 2021, funding is committed as follows.

- Dominican Republic, eight Haitian church plants, overseen by the elders in Neyba, we help with transportation funds for training and evangelism transportation
- Colombia, assistance for an evangelist who works with a group of churches near the southern border
- Colombia, La Hormiga church renewal, transportation funding for ministry visits and evangelism
- Colombia, Santa Marta, we participate with the Fort Gibson church for a worker on northern coast

- Venezuela, funding for evangelistic efforts and benevolent help
- Nicaragua, funding for an elder-evangelist in Managua, in conjunction with Lapeer, MI church
- Honduras, Baxter Institute, assistance with training of national missionaries, workers, and leaders
- Spanish Literature Ministry, funds for materials and evangelism lessons

In addition, interested Christians have committed funds to help with special requests, one-time needs, and bridging funding.

Lowered international travel costs have made it possible to add a new work. A full-time worker is now in place in Cajamarca, Peru. (See report below.) This work has been initiated over the past two years with periodic visits from workers from Lima—from IBI and the Los Pinos church. We have made a two-year bridging commitment to this evangelistic work, seeking to stabilize the groups that are meeting in homes, to facilitate additional outreach and evangelism, and to strengthen congregations in the region around the city.

Updates from the field....



Cajamarca, Peru.

Cajamarca is an Andean city with a population of about 200,000 (picture left). Yexon Manriquez and his wife Bettzy (picture upper right) have moved to Cajamarca, arriving January 30. They



were able to leave Lima just before a two-week lockdown that was put in place to help control the pandemic. Yexon and Bettzy will visit the house churches and immediately begin evangelistic efforts. As they made arrangements for housing, their landlady asked them to visit her for prayer (picture middle right).



Dominican Republic. The church in Neyba, with the leadership of three elders, oversees a missionary project they call, “Hand in Hand with Jesus.” The project is committed to establishing and maturing churches among the Haitians who live in the area near the border (picture left, leaders of the Haitian churches). Here are excerpts from a recent report.



“Dear brothers, the year 2020 was very difficult for the work with these congregations, but we continue forward

anyway. For 2021, we are developing a new teaching system in which we will personally present Bible studies to the churches, with our deacon Lucas Feliz serving as translator. (Note: the Haitian churches speak Creole.) We have



already visited the churches in Clavellinas and Guayabal to teach Bible studies. Yaqui Piers was baptized at Guayabal; he is 35 years old. Please pray for the churches, and for us. Thank you for your support. May God keep blessing this work.” (Bottom pictures: left, the church at Guayabal; right, the baptism of our new brother Yaqui.)



God guides, God blesses, God is in control

Jan and I are amazed at the ways in which God is enabling us to share in His mission in this world. I feel blessed to be able to serve in this ministry without remuneration; Jan and I receive a double blessing because we are able to support the work financially. We receive a triple blessing when we see the power of the gospel displayed in the hundreds of souls being brought to Jesus by encouraging and helping national Christians.

I continue to pray for the resumption of international travel in 2021, so that trips that were cancelled by the pandemic can be rescheduled and new invitations can be accepted.

Thank you!

I am especially grateful for the **four churches** who support this work – **Main and Oklahoma in McAlester (OK), Fort Gibson (OK), North Side in Mena (AR), and Holmes Road in Lansing (MI).**

I am also grateful for an ever-expanding network of individuals who make this work possible through their generosity. God continues to open doors, the work expands, and God's faithful people generously and sacrificially respond. Thank you for your interest, support, love, involvement and prayers. This work would not be possible without your partnership.

Through my host congregation (Main and Oklahoma, McAlester, OK), you can make tax-deductible gifts (checks payable to "Church of Christ," memo line "Latin American Leadership Development" [LALD]). **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO MY ADDRESS** (10704 S 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133) since I am responsible for all deposits, acknowledgements, and accounting.

Dios les bendiga (God bless you),

Bob and Jan Young

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[An elder in the Dominican Republic teaches a small group Bible study in the backyard of a member. Plans call for a church plant in this sector. There were about 30 members, friends, and neighbors present for the study.]

Will you pray for the churches in Latin America that they can effectively share the glorious gospel of the Son of God who is the light of the world.

Multitudes are receptive to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Christians hunger and thirst for the word of God and want encouragement and training in evangelism, discipleship, healthy church development and effective church leadership. Thank you for helping us make that happen as we seek to fulfill God's purpose in this world – to save as many as possible!

When you support Latin America Leadership Development, you are part of a network of Christians committed to taking the gospel to Latin America. Through evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training, spiritually healthy and mature Christians and churches are developed, capable of reproducing themselves. A primary goal is training those who will train others (2 Tim. 2:2), recognizing that the most effective kingdom workers are national Christians who understand the culture and language, are known and trusted, and easily develop friendships and relationships that carry the gospel to their own nations.