

## **LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Mission and Ministry Newsletter**

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#### **The pandemic years of 2020-2022 have helped advance the gospel**

As we in the future look back on 2022, I believe that the “pandemic years” of 2020 to 2022 will be seen as a time when changes were made that served to advance God’s mission to save the world through Jesus.

For over two years, significant travel restrictions made it harder for outside resource persons to be physically present with the Latin American churches. Local churches were forced to accept responsibility for evangelism, discipleship, leadership, and church planting; **they glorified God by accomplishing as much as or more than before with baptisms, involvement, and church planting.** Consulting and mentoring that had previously been done in person moved online. Teaching, preaching, seminars and conferences also moved online, often with the participation of more people than in the previous model of personal visits and regional seminars. **Many national churches discovered that they could do God’s work with minimal outside assistance.**

In 2022, I maintained contacts across Latin America with online teaching and preaching – encouraging Christians and churches in Uruguay, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, and Venezuela; Mexico, El Salvador, and Nicaragua; and the Dominican Republic. Online activities included weekend evangelism campaigns, teaching in Bible institutes, preaching and teaching, conferences and seminars. **The word multiplied and the churches grew!**

In addition, Jan and I resumed stateside travel and were able to visit and spend time with several congregations.

#### **What your generosity made possible in 2022**

As mentioned in a previous report, one of the advantages of limiting international travel has been the opportunity to redirect travel-work funds to special projects, assisting mission churches with things they could not do by themselves. In this end-of-year report, I highlight five primary regions where we have focused resources in 2022: **Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, Peru, and the Dominican Republic.** (While it is hard to summarize a work in just a picture or two, I have limited the number of pictures in this report.)

#### **Venezuela Evangelism and Benevolence**

Working with Bob Brown and L.A.M.B., and also with the Northwest church in Houston, assistance was provided for evangelistic outreach and much-needed food and medicines for elderly members. Venezuela continues to suffer from lack of basic necessities resulting in extremely high costs. *(Pictures, baptisms in Barinas, food and medicine distribution in Maracaibo)*



## Southern Colombia and Northern Ecuador -- Evangelism and Church-Planting

Jairo and Andrea continue to work with the local church in Túquerres while also training and encouraging a network of churches in southern Colombia and northern Ecuador. The church renewal and replanting in La Hormiga has continued to advance and become stronger during the pandemic. *(Pictures, top right, another baptism, bottom right, some of the members)*



## Nicaragua Evangelism and Leadership

Just before the pandemic began, I began assisting the Nueva Libia church in Managua with support for an elder and evangelist, a “bridging” commitment that was to be temporary. The difficult economic situation that existed in many Latin American countries during the pandemic made it difficult to find a time to cut back. The church is doing well and this support will be ending in 2023. The **Lapeer (Michigan) church** has come on board to help with some continuing needs. *(Picture below, responses and prayers at Nueva Libia)*



## Dominican Republic Evangelism and Church-Planting

As the impact of the pandemic gradually lessens, the new churches that have been planted over the past six years are again growing in attendance and baptisms are frequent. *(Picture below left, attendance at a recent campaign; picture below right, the new church building in La Descubierta is nearing completion)*





## Cajamarca, Peru Evangelism and Church-Planting



Yexon, Bettzy, and their family will complete two years in Cajamarca in February 2023. This work truly has been a “pandemic church plant.” A recent three-day “Christian Living” conference counted an attendance of 120. (pictures, above left and below right).

The pastor, co-pastor, and secretary of a nearby religious group have asked for Bible studies with Yexon (picture, above right). Outreach has begun in a new community a short distance from the rented building, with 40 adults and 50 children present for a recent activity. Opportunities to share the Word in other religious groups are increasing. In addition, Yexon is constantly looking for ways to strengthen existing churches and to teach and plant new house churches. May the gospel go into all the world, penetrating hearts, with confidence that the power is from the gospel and not from us.



LALD is committed to a minimum of three years in this evangelistic church planting project, believing that stabilization will allow for systematic withdrawal and transfer of the work to the local church – self-sustaining, self-governing, self-duplicating.



### Update on the video series: Who Do You Say Jesus Is?

Work continues on editing and production, with plans to release the series by summer 2023.

### 2023 and Beyond

In 2023, I will resume limited travel. I currently have four international trips planned for 2023, and one trip already scheduled for 2024. Pray for Jan and me as we develop our future plans, that we will understand clearly how God wants to use us in expanding the kingdom, advancing the gospel to his glory.

### Prayer Requests

Please include in your prayers the works mentioned above: **Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, Dominican Republic, and Peru.**

Pray for Bible Institutes that are training Latin American teachers and preachers for evangelism and ministry: **Baxter Institute** (Honduras), **Tijuana School of Preaching** (Mexico), **Interamericano Bible Institute** (Peru). [The schools listed are those with which I have a relationship. Plus, there are many other Bible institutes across Latin America.]

Pray for **Spanish Literature Ministry** and the new initiative to print materials in the countries and regions where the materials will be distributed and used. Pray for the continued impact of the evangelistic studies, “**En Pos de la Verdad.**”

## Thank you for your passion, your prayers, and your partnership!

Please keep praying for God's mission, his eternal purpose to save the lost, and for us. We appreciate your prayers, encouragement, and support. With the generosity of Christians and churches, the work done in 2023 almost doubled from previous years, primarily due to the building construction in Dominican Republic. Over \$50,000 was invested in Latin American outreach. Activities and projects extended to twelve nations where Spanish is spoken. I share a list of the major works you helped make possible (dollar totals are rounded).

\$ 6000	Venezuela evangelism and benevolence in multiple locations
\$15000	Peru church planting (includes purchase of a moto to facilitate the work)
\$25000	Church building in Dominican Republic
\$ 3000	Travel and work funds for eight bi-vocational preachers in the new church plants in D.R.
\$ 3000	Partial support for evangelist and elder in Nicaragua
\$ 4000	Evangelist and church plant-renewal in Colombia

Through my host congregation (Main and Oklahoma, McAlester, OK), you can make tax-deductible gifts payable to "Church of Christ," memo line "Latin American Leadership Development" [or LALD]. **ALL CONTRIBUTIONS SHOULD BE MAILED TO THE TULSA ADDRESS (10704 S 89<sup>th</sup> East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133).**

*Dios les bendiga (God bless you),*  
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*The full moon rising reminds me of the brilliance of the sun, even when its light. I marvel that the moonlight is brighter than the multiplied city lights below it.*

*Jesus is the light of the world; he describes his followers as the light of the world. I can only think that we can be light only when we clearly reflect his light. May we never forget the urgency of the task. Multitudes are receptive to the gospel. Many people hunger and thirst for the word of God. God's people want encouragement and training in evangelism, discipleship, and effective church leadership.*

*When the gospel is preached, the light of the gospel enters hearts and a new day is made possible in the lives of believers. 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.***