

LATIN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing Healthy Churches and Church Leaders in Latin America and Beyond

Mission and Ministry Newsletter

Bob and Jan Young, 10704 S 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133

www.bobyoungrsources.com



International travel and mission trips resume in 2023

The first week of January found me on an airplane headed for the Dominican Republic (D.R.). That I was traveling to the D.R. was significant to me because the last trip Jan and I made before the pandemic began in March 2020 was to the D.R. After two years and nine months, my international mission travels resumed as I made the same journey, anxious to evaluate firsthand the impact of the pandemic over the past 2+ years.

Other purposes were also on my heart: to visit all of the seven new churches, to evaluate the needs of the churches and to encourage the preachers, to check on the church building construction at La Descubierta, to encourage the elders in Neyba, and to consider next steps in taking the gospel to a region with high receptivity.

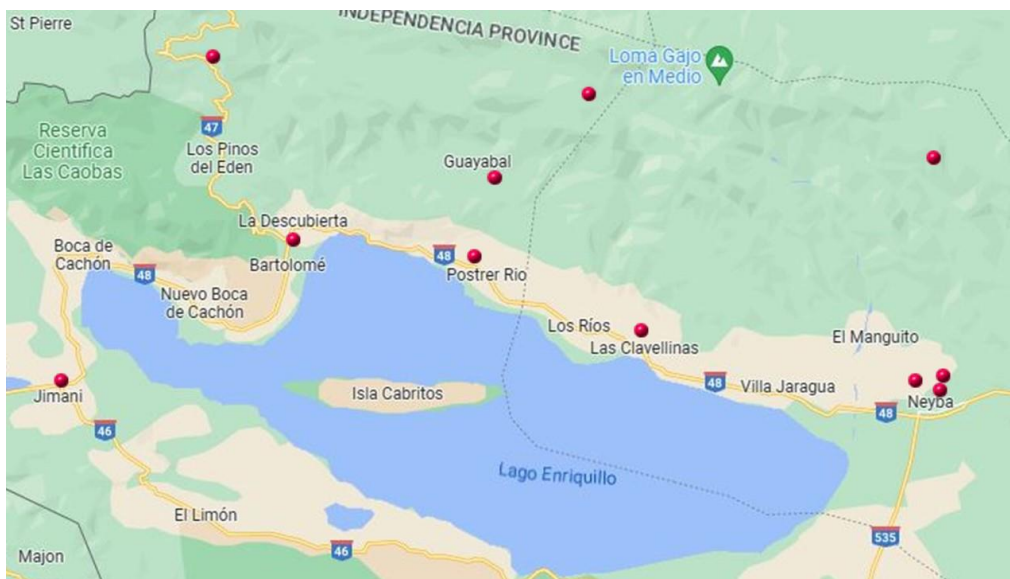
I was accompanied by **Mike Fontenot**, a brother from the Fort Gibson church. This was his first trip out of the U.S. so I wanted to orient him in the mission work being done and to make sure the trip was an encouragement to him. The picture to the right shows Mike with Maché, the preacher at La Descubierta.



Neyba, Dominican Republic, 2023

The primary purpose of this early out-of-season issue of the Mission Newsletter is to report on my first trip of 2023.

A little background information will be helpful for orientation. Over the past six years since the appointment of elders in the church in Neyba, that church has been the impetus behind the establishment of seven new congregations among the Haitians (the seven westernmost locations on the map).



They are also working with two new congregations in Neyba and another in the mountains (the four easternmost locations on the map).

I am pleased to report that with the pandemic mostly behind us, the new churches that have been planted are again growing in attendance and baptisms are frequent. On this trip there were twenty-four (24) baptized into Christ! I summarize briefly the highlights of the trip.



DAY ONE. We went to the Haitian border at Jimaní where the church meets under a mango tree in the preachers' yard. This location represents the highest priority, and perhaps the greatest opportunity. A building lot has been purchased in a good location where three streets converge in the town, promising good visibility. The church already has about 20% of the needed funds on hand so that an adequate building can be erected for about \$8000. The opportunity is doubled since the building could serve two groups--assemblies in Creole and in Spanish.

After lunch, we stopped briefly at the Iguana Park



before we visited with the preachers and saw the meeting locations in Postrer Rio and Las Clavellinas (pictured at

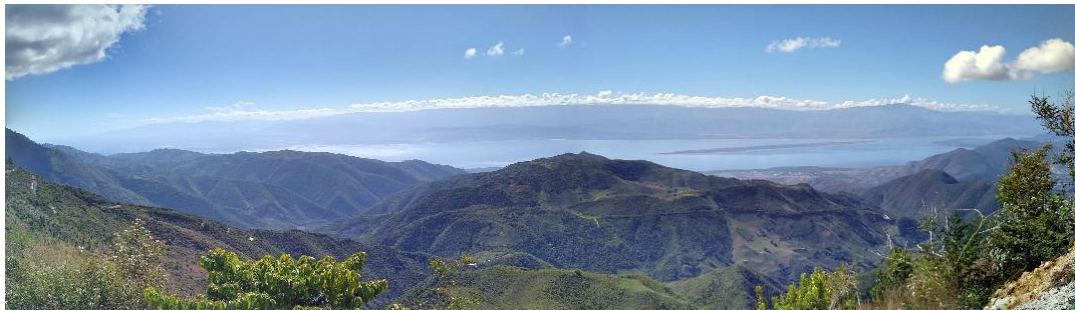
right are Nené, a brother who helps with the ministry in Las Clavellinas, the preacher Ticoco and his wife Marianne, Mike, and our host Manuel Aquino).



DAY TWO. We visited the church in Guayabal in the morning where we met with the preacher, Básico, and a group of 12-13 ministry leaders (below left). We returned to Postrer Rio to have lunch with the preacher, Bené and his wife Irma (below right, Manuel and Bené).



DAY THREE. This day was devoted to visiting a church in the mountains, Higo de la Cruz. The first order of the day was to meet up with our driver--the trip would require a four-wheel drive vehicle as we climbed from about 150' elevation to over 4500' in 12 miles of steep curves and switchbacks (picture, panoramic overview of Lake Enriquillo).





The second order of the day was to meet members of the church at a pool where water flows out of the mountains (picture, left). Sixteen were baptized, many teens and several adults.

When we arrived on the mountain, the sun shone brightly but the wind was

almost cold due to the elevation. Mike got a closeup view of coffee plants with the cherries growing along the stems, and banana trees with blossoms and fruit.

Sister Anita is a Dominicana who has been very helpful in the establishment of the church (picture, above right). I enjoyed visiting with her about the history of the church. The afternoon consisted of eating together, singing, preaching, and a meeting with about 10 leaders of the church. Two major needs are to close in the building against the cold and to put in a concrete floor (picture of church building, above right).



DAY FOUR. On Sunday we visited the mountain church in Ángel Felix, and then went to La Descubierta for late afternoon worship and the first service in the new, soon-to-be finished building.

The road to Ángel Felix was 75 minutes of rocks, steep inclines, and precipitous dropoffs. After all the church members had all arrived, the first matter was to walk about a half mile to a cattle tank that would serve as a baptismal pool, where six adults were baptized into Christ. After worship (picture, right), we walked to the land that has been purchased for a church building and shared a devotional with singing and Scripture, thanking God for his blessings (picture, left).



In La Descubierta, the building lacks only the floor, plumbing hookups, and electrical hookups. Pictured at right are some of those present, with a good number of visitors.

Saturday and Sunday were very long days but very rewarding.



DAYS FIVE AND SIX. These days were devoted to the churches around Neyba—with visits to the elders, to the Vista al Lago church building, and a tour to see some of the activities of the churches. But the first order of the morning on Day Five was two more baptisms. And of course, on our last day before departure, a visit to the coffee distributor!

TRAVEL DAY. We returned to the US on the day of the computer snafu. We arrived in Tulsa about midnight, one more of the many blessings we had received.



Anxious to see what God will do in 2023

As I resume international mission travels in 2023, answering invitations and attempting to accomplish as much as possible, I rejoice as I anticipate seeing God already at work in the places where he calls us to join him for the harvest. I already have one trip already scheduled for 2024. Pray for Jan and me as we develop plans, that we will understand clearly how God wants to use us in expanding the kingdom and advancing the gospel to his glory.

In addition to my travels, I continue to teach online regularly. I am also scheduled to teach a course at Tijuana School of Preaching in February and March.

In the local churches, I continue to assist with a Wednesday Early Bird class at Park in Tulsa and I am currently teaching a Sunday morning class at Fort Gibson, in addition to assisting with various mission projects.

If you or your congregation would like to know more about the mission works being facilitated through this ministry, I am available to meet, teach, or preach. May God's people take as their purpose the eternal purpose of God to save souls!

Prayer Requests

Please include in your prayers: **Venezuela** and **Peru** where there is much suffering and unrest. Pray for the church planting and evangelism works with which we are involved in **Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Nicaragua**, and the **Dominican Republic**.

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 89th East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133).**

Dios les bendiga (God bless you),

Bob and Jan Young

918.470.0421 (cell)

bro.bobyoun@gmail.com



Jan and I constantly seek to understand the history and background of those places we visit. Understanding history and culture is a step toward understanding how to share the Good News – the life-changing Gospel.

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 and penetrates hearts, a new day is made possible in the lives of believers. Thank you for helping 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. Our goal is that through evangelism, discipleship, and leadership training, spiritually healthy and mature Christians and churches will be 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 serve as bridges to carry the gospel to their own nations.