

# “ESPERANZA ETERNA”

*Bringing Hope for Eternity to Latin America and Beyond*

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**Eternal Hope Newsletter**

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This initial report of 2009 gives us an opportunity to celebrate the joy and good news of 2008. The year was filled with incredible opportunities and unforeseen possibilities. The eight weeks we spent in Latin America included four campaigns; many opportunities to teach, preach, and share individual studies; a mission conference; a tour of newly-planted churches; and the annual board meeting and graduation at Baxter Institute in Honduras. I am thankful to God for the opportunities and open doors, to the leaders and members of the McAlester church for their generosity in allowing me time away, and to brothers and sisters who support our work both in prayer and financially. Thank you for reading our newsletter and for caring about the people and churches that give us encouragement and make our lives exciting. In this report, I focus on some high points from 2008. (I am retelling some stories from previous newsletters for those who are new readers.) You probably know that some of the best news occurs in the little, seemingly insignificant events and contacts that occur on the sidelines, and I have tried to communicate some of the flavor of those special moments as well.

I spent two weeks in Honduras in July. Renewing friendships in Christ is a special blessing, and the first days of this visit afforded many such opportunities. We stayed with Noe and Gloria Perez, immensely enjoying the opportunity to renew friendships and to “catch up” on the details of our lives. Noe was one of the first men appointed an elder in Honduras and now serves as an elder in the Guanacaste church. He is a forester by training. In June, he left employment at Baxter Institute to return to his occupation. He still serves as vice-president of the Association that oversees the works at Baxter and the JMA Clinic. On Sunday morning, we worshiped with the Guanacaste church, and on Sunday evening attended the La Vega church, where we also shared in a retirement celebration for Luis Garcia. I renewed acquaintances with brothers and sisters from all across Honduras as well as from Nicaragua, Luis’s home country.

Monday morning I spent on the Baxter campus sharing time with the students and faculty. Monday noon, I met my next campaign group and we traveled to Catacamas, Olancho in eastern Honduras. The journey requires about four hours by bus and is always tiring. We are glad to see a bed at the hotel when evening comes. I had two purposes in Catacamas. One was to assist with an evaluation which was part of a strategic planning initiative at Predisan. The second was to help with teaching and preaching in the campaign at Las Casitas. I completed the evaluation work at Predisan in a day and a half (10 hours on Tuesday and a little over 4 hours on Friday). The campaign on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday yielded excellent results. This was the first campaign ever at Las Casitas—there were 9 baptisms and several restorations. The church was strengthened and encouraged, especially Brother Visitation. (He was named from the Bible, in that his parents considered his birth a “visitation” from the Lord.) Rather interesting to go visiting on behalf of the kingdom of God with a brother named Visitation. He has a number of family members and relatives in the community. We were well received in the community as we canvassed and knocked doors, with numerous opportunities to study the Bible. The church usually

has only 30-40 in attendance, but we were blessed by overflow crowds, people standing under the tarp and outside the tarp in the rain to hear the gospel. Including children, we may have had near 200 at the evening sessions despite the rain. I couldn't help but marvel at how few would be present in the States if they had to walk through the mud and rain and stand in the rain to hear the gospel!

A highlight of the week for me as came one morning when Dixiana, a young lady of about 15 years, came to the hotel one morning ready to help with the campaign. I recognized her immediately. Someone asked her, "Do you know Brother Bob?" She replied, "He baptized me two years ago." It is a joy to see the fruits of our labors bearing additional fruit, faithful brothers and sisters who are working to insure additional fruits from our labors.

Last month (December 2008), I traveled to Honduras. The time spent was very productive. I shared some time with Dean Sutphin who plays a vital role in the partnership between the JMA Clinic and Virginia College of Medicine (VCOM). Dean Sutphin shared story after story of the difference our partnership is making. I met and visited also with Dwight and Joanne Tompkins who operate Mission Point Resource Center in Catacamas. This work is providing needed materials for churches in eastern Honduras. I enjoyed time with Calvin Henry. In his work with Continent of Great Cities, he is recruiting Latin American mission teams, many of them composed of Baxter graduates. Along the way I met new folks and renewed other friendships—German from the Kennedy congregation in Tegucigalpa, Pete Shaw and Francisco Davila from Park Plaza in Tulsa, Roberto Alvarez from Los Pinares in Guatemala City, and many others. The contacts I mention by name all resulted in invitations to speak and share the good news of what God is doing. I was blessed on this trip to have Larry Atchley from the Northside church in Mena, Arkansas accompanying me. Larry commented again and again on the positive things he saw in the work and the tremendous possibilities for the future. At the annual meeting of the board of directors of the Association Amicus, I was elected chairman for the next three years. We solicit your prayers as we strive to make a difference in Latin America and around the world.

Thank you for your prayers and concern. Thank you for your heart for missions and evangelism. Thank you for your generosity in helping us to follow our God and our heart as we strengthen the cause of Christ around the world. I believe these kinds of efforts pay great dividends at home as well, and the opportunity to connect with people around the world makes us more aware of the great blessing of being part of the worldwide family of God.

We invite you to join us as we share "Eternal Hope". We would be honored to visit your congregation and share more of the good news of what God is doing. Every person or congregation who asks receives regular reports and updates concerning this work. In the task of taking the previous gospel to the world, there is always more to be done--invitations to be accepted, trips to be made, and needs to be met for the churches we work with. We appreciate your financial support. In these difficult economic times, some struggle to continue to help. Perhaps others can answer the call and contribute more as needs are presented. We appreciate those who provide financial support regularly. Checks may be made payable to Main and Oklahoma Church of Christ and marked for "Bob and Jan Young Missions" and sent to **PO Box 1004, McAlester, OK 74502**.

As always, we are thankful for your continuing interest and support in what God is doing through us in the kingdom.

Que Dios le bendiga (may God bless you),  
Bob and Jan