

## ***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 89<sup>th</sup> East Ave, Tulsa, OK 74133

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#### **God's Mission—Advancing and Expanding!**

*[Those who read these newsletters regularly will notice subjects that are summarized and updated from issue to issue. It may be tempting to skip the updates, but I encourage you to take time to read and pray about the entire report—it will not take much of your time!]*

Although I have not been able to travel internationally for the past year, God continues to provide multiplied opportunities to serve. Looking back over the past year, it is clear that the “new normal” has opened doors for strengthening and maturing churches in many places that I could visit only infrequently before. The “new normal” has moved the gospel online as never before, sharing the Good News of Jesus through the use of technology. The vision of this ministry to facilitate the work of national Christians has been a blessing, since there is already a capable army of God's people on the ground across Latin America to facilitate the increased

number of studies, baptisms, and follow-up needs.

After a year of this “new normal,” I tend to take the new doors and new opportunities for granted. Preaching and teaching online is a part of my schedule multiple times each week. The mission has not changed, but the way the mission is accomplished has changed – perhaps forever!

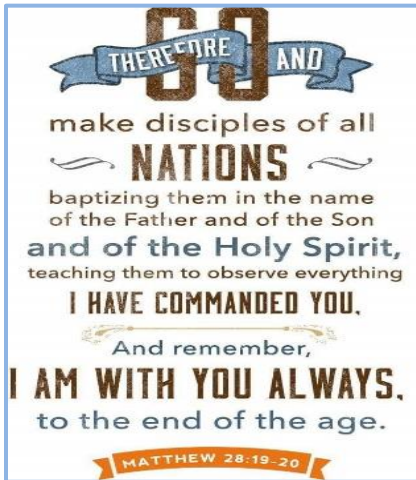
#### **The First Three Months of 2021**

These newsletters are published at least quarterly, but I sometimes publish more frequently in order to share the news when God gives blessings and opens doors. The first newsletter of 2021, published in early February provided a look back at 2020 and look forward at 2021. One purpose of the early “out of season” issue was to give a number of new subscribers an overview of the focus of this ministry. The feature article was a reminder that the goal of God's mission is seeking and saving the lost. A prayer list of special project commitments made it easier to pray about the work God is doing through this ministry. Updates from the field focused on a new evangelistic church-planting effort in Peru and progress in the Dominican Republic.

In this newsletter, I want to summarize the activities of the first three months of 2021. Sharing a list of bullet points is inadequate because an impersonal list cannot reflect the impact of the works and activities God is making possible. Nevertheless, Jan tells me that sharing the list is important, that people want to know about the ways God is using this ministry to advance the kingdom.

- Chile—Bible teaching for an online group from several nations, this group has met every day for the past year
- Colombia—preach for the anniversary conference of a church in Bogota
- Ecuador—teach a four-night Bible conference attended by Christians from multiple congregations
- El Salvador—present a four-week evangelism workshop, sponsored by the elders of a church in San Salvador
- Guatemala—preach for the national TV program
- Nicaragua—teach online for Nueva Libia, the church has had mid-week classes twice a week for the past 50 weeks
- Peru—teach online for a church in Lima
- Online meetings with a church desiring to add more elders
- Participate and teach in various online groups
- Provide online studies about Bible topics
- Continue recording Bible studies, classes, and sermons, approximately 66 videos have been added

This list represents over 100 presentations during the past three months!



## EPDLV--CUBA REPORT!

I am thrilled to report that the Spanish evangelism series, “En Pos de la Verdad,” is being used in Cuba. A brother in Christ sent me thirty pictures of baptisms that resulted from the Bible studies. (See picture at the end of this newsletter.) Please join me in prayer that God will bless this effort to share the gospel online. The videos are available on YouTube; the written studies can be downloaded for free online. Videos of invitation and introduction are available, along with an online evangelism workshop to help Christians share the gospel more effectively—12 videos of about 5 minutes each.

Do not ignore the graphic on the left! Here is our reminder of Jesus’ description of the mission! This is what the church is to be about. This is Jesus’ call to all disciples—make more disciples.

## MORE BAPTISMS!

I regularly receive reports from churches with which we network in sharing the Good News! Each month, I can count on the church in Barinas, Venezuela to have news of more people coming to know salvation through Jesus Christ!



## Updates from the field....

**Dominican Republic.** In the previous report, I described a missionary project overseen by the elders of the church in Neyba, “Hand in Hand with Jesus.” The goal is to establish and mature churches among the Haitians who live near the border.

**A Prayer Request.** In recent weeks there has been increased unrest and conflict between the Dominicans and Haitians. One of the elders at Neyba had to make an emergency visit to Guayabal—a “mission of peace.” While things have calmed a bit, **please pray** for the Haitian Christians who are being threatened, along with their places of worship (*picture right, the church at Guayabal*).

**A Prayer of Gratitude.** The Crieve Hall church in Nashville has come alongside us this work with a special one-time gift that will enable increased ministry.

**Please continue to pray for these new churches**, for the church and its leaders in Neyba, and for the plans to plant even more churches in the region.





**Cajamarca, Peru.** Cajamarca is a city in the Andes Mountains (elevation, 9022'),



with a population of about 200,000 (picture left). Yexon Manriquez and his wife Bettzy (picture right) moved to Cajamarca early this year. They left Lima just before a two-week lockdown declared by the government to help control the pandemic. Yexon and Bettzy are providing encouragement



to the house churches and the new Christians and are active in evangelism and discipleship. **Please pray for this work!**

**Hundreds of benevolent needs.** One result of the pandemic, with weak economies all across Latin America further weakened, has been increased benevolent needs within the churches. It was not be unfair to say that the churches have been confronted with hundreds of needs! In mission work, how to handle benevolent needs is a challenge. There are times “**when helping hurts.**” In the work of Latin American Leadership Development, we use a “safety net” approach to benevolence, asking that the local Christians first do all that they can. This usually means offering to provide matching funds, or finalize the last third or fourth of the needed funding.

A brother in Peru needed surgery after an accident; the cost was \$1000. I challenged the Christians in Peru to do all they could to meet the need, after which we would help with the rest of the need. When they had done all that they could, they contacted me to say that they had successfully raised all of the funds!

At the other extreme, the severity of the crisis in Venezuela makes it impossible for the local churches to meet all of the needs. Therefore, funds for benevolent needs in Venezuela are included in special projects.

I pray that God will make us wise and harmless as we empower and encourage the local mission churches while at the same time making sure that there is a “safety net” in place when the local church is overwhelmed.

### Thank you!

Thank you to all who make this work possible with your generosity. God continues to open doors, the work expands, and God’s faithful people generously 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 89<sup>th</sup> 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**

**918.470.0421 (cell)**

[bro.bobyounq@yahoo.com](mailto:bro.bobyounq@yahoo.com)



*New Christians in Cuba, some of the fruit being born by the evangelistic Bible studies, “En Pos de la Verdad.”*

*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 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.*