

LAM

LATIN
AMERICAN
MISSIONS
NEWSLETTER

SUMMER/FALL 2020

Who will rescue the children?



Children's Home of the Americas

The Story Goes Something Like This ...

Bob and Ray's Visionary Response to Caring for the Children

2019 Financial Report

LAM has Gospel Opportunities for Everyone!

Defining Moments

Sarah Shares the Triumphant Story of "J"

COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis

Infographic Map of U.S. and Seven LAM Countries

Relying on God's Protective Providence

God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

Accomplishments and Special Needs

Highlights of how you have impacted the needs of our brethren in Latin America



LatinAmericanMissions.org

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UNDER THE OVERSIGHT OF THE ELDERS AT FORREST PARK CHURCH OF CHRIST:

Doug Daugherty, Don Garner, Robert McLeod, Barry Robinson, Donnie Swilley

WHY WE SERVE:

"For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:5-6

HOW WE SERVE:

Evangelistic Campaigns, Mobile Medical Missions, Benevolence, Native Preacher Training/Support, Print Ministry, Construction, Disaster Relief

WHERE WE SERVE:

Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Perú, Panamá

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The Story Goes Something Like This...

Ray Joyner, Evangelist, Valdosta, Georgia



During a recent Mexican lunch and fellowship with Jack Farber, I was surprised when he asked me to write a few words about the beginning of the Children's Home in Panama City, Panama. At first I was hesitant, but with a little encouragement from Jack and so many precious memories which have filled my soul and still bring tears of joy to my life, I surrendered.

One may think the beginning was when the first block was laid, or the first shovel of dirt removed to begin the foundation, or when the first three children arrived from Santiago. The reality is no one event was the beginning. I well remember the time in the early 1990s, Bob Bryson and I were flying home from Panama. Our conversation was always about the mission of the Lord's work in Latin America. Bob was sharing with me a work in Mexico called the City of Children. I asked, "Why can't we do that?" While flying at 30,000 feet, little did we know a dream had been born and would become a reality. The days passed...some would plant, others came and watered, and God surely gave the increase.

From the tropical jungles of Darien, to the dusty streets of David; over the mountains to Bocas across a bridge at Sixola; up the coast to Limon, Costa Rica over to the unbelievable central valley of San Jose; up the hill of Tilaran over to Masaya, Nicaragua and Chinandega; on to Danli and Manajaras, Honduras to San Agustin El Salvador... Thousands have been added to the Lord. Thousands have had their sick bodies healed by caring and loving hands. Thousands have been fed and clothed, and buildings have been built for worship services from steel and mortar to sticks and mud.

Our hearts were ripped apart when we saw the innocent little children eating from a garbage dump or sitting in our laps on a Medical Team coughing their lives away. Each time our campaign in Latin American came to a close, we would travel home with the image of the cold black eyes of a small child in our minds and hearts, staring at us and watching our every step, hearing but not understanding our words. We came back to the comforts of home, and they returned to their life of hunger, sickness, nakedness, and most of all not knowing the Lord.

We knew we could not care for them all. The dusty streets were filled with dirty feet and runny noses. But we could care for just a few. We could clean their bodies and remove the lice from the heads of just a few. We could destroy the worms in the stomachs and give a home to just a few. We could share Jesus with only just a few.

We began taking steps to make our dream come true. For the first three years, we battled the government of Panama in meeting after meeting, sometimes leaving on a high feeling our dream was close. Then, as quickly as the wind changed directions, we would be right back at the beginning of the vision we had for the children. Alan Lopez set up a meeting and then another. We pressed on, and then one day our dream began turning into a reality!

A judge in Santiago was told of a home built for children but sitting empty, just an empty shell with no life. We received a call from a preacher in Santiago saying, "We have three children for you. Do you want them for just a few days?" What an exciting day that was! But, who would care for them? We needed someone to love them, in other words, give them a home. Alan Lopez who had used his skill in building the first building and setting up meetings with the government said, "Here am I, send me!" Each passing day brought more challenges... schooling with tutors, meals needed to be prepared, transportation for medical needs, clothing and laundry.

There were no shortcuts in developing these young souls which had been placed in our care. The things in this life that are worth having require great effort and a lot of patience. The number of children grew, and the need for others to step up and give of themselves for the children multiplied. There is no question the Lord sent us Miguel and Esperanza as houseparents, and with them the number of children continued to grow. God surely had given us the increase! We are always faced with more children coming, but the hardest decision we ever had was telling those asking for help there was 'no more room in the inn.'

(NOTE: Your financial support is needed for this great work of caring for these children who have suffered from abuse and neglect. God's redeeming love is shared when physical, emotional, and spiritual needs are met at the Home.)



Latin American Missions 2019 Financial Report

"Sending Forth the Word"



Donna Swilley, Bookkeeper for LAM

Bible School of Americas:

2019 Income: \$266,681.33
 2019 Expenses: \$328,637.54
 Net Income/Loss: **\$(61,956.21)**

LAM General Fund:

2019 Income: \$104,387.00
 2019 Expenses: \$108,208.85
 Net Income/Loss: **\$(3,821.85)**

Children's Home of Americas:

2019 Income: \$174,977.33
 2019 Expenses: \$195,959.58
 Net Income/Loss: **\$(20,982.25)**

2019 Special support:

CH Meal Program \$ 5,386.00
 CH Christmas/Uniforms \$ 7,371.51
 CH University/Ed. \$ 5,200.00
 BSA/CH Security Fence \$80,937.00

Preacher and Congregational Needs Met:

Salaries:

Panama \$142,258.01
 Costa Rica \$ 83,368.46
 Honduras \$116,966.04
 Nicaragua \$ 86,775.00
 Peru \$ 40,788.98
 Colombia \$ 22,925.00
 El Salvador \$ 42,560.00
 Chile \$ 6,000.00
 Total salaries met \$541,641.49

Rents:

Total rents met for ALL countries:
 \$41,681.62

Benevolent needs met:

\$93,930.71

THANK YOU! Latin American Missions could not exist without the love and support of the brethren across the globe. While this work comes forth from the Forrest Park Church of Christ, in reality, it comes forth from the hearts of all of YOU, like-minded Christians, who are seeking to save the lost, serve the brethren, and provide for the children in need. Our prayer is that all the Glory will go to GOD, and we may continue to glorify him together for years to come!

"One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered."

Proverbs 11:24-25

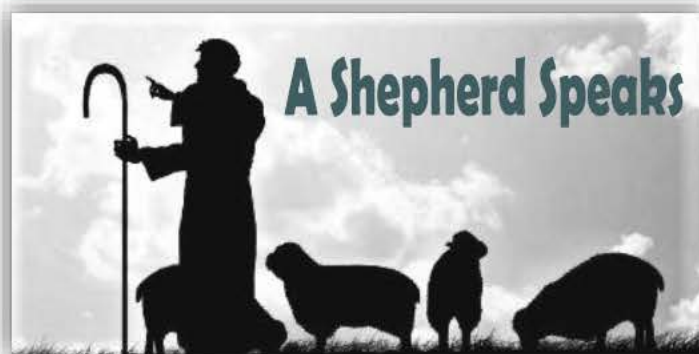
"We are God's Fellow Workers..."

Don Garner, Elder
Forrest Park Church of Christ

The sheer number of people touched by LAM is mind boggling. Hundreds of congregations established and the thousands of converts transformed to look like Jesus is readily evident. Hundreds of men have been trained in the Bible to go back to their native countries and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and touch people daily with the power of God's Word. But, we would be amiss not to mention the thousands of members of the Lord's Body impacted directly or indirectly as they personally travelled on mission trips, supported others who travelled, and/or supported the native preachers in the mission fields of Latin America. The spiritual blessings in their lives, as a supporter of LAM and going "into all the world" with the Gospel, have been immense and profound.

My first observation regarding the successes of LAM as we "GO" with the Gospel into Latin America is **"We are God's fellow workers!"** In 1 Corinthians 3:9, we find the Corinthian converts actually being in a rivalry with each other over who had taught and baptized them into Christ. Paul points out *"neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."* (vs 6) We are God's fellow workers! May we never be mistaken from whom our successes come. When we partner together to fulfil His commission to save the lost, God will bless the work!

Three focus points of LAM, as we "GO" with the Gospel and provide **Gospel Opportunities** for others, are to **TEACH...TRAIN...and TEAM**. A team can only exist if we are unified in our understanding of why we exist and our purpose as the Body of Christ. Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus gives us all of these and why we are unified in our purpose. May we always remember, **The success of LAM is because of God.**



The second purpose of this article is to say, **"Thank You!"** for being God's fellow worker. Considering the scope of the work in taking the Gospel to eight Latin American countries and training faithful men to mature the congregations in those countries, one congregation could not supply the workers or the funds to accomplish these things. GOD has truly blessed us with **YOU** and your partnership with us in the Great Commission. There have been times it would be easy to lose heart, but **YOU** have always been an answer to our prayers. May GOD be glorified in your commitment to Him and His Gospel.

My third purpose is to ask those not already a part of this **Gospel Opportunity** to please become God's fellow worker in Latin American Missions. We not only want you to partner with us, but **WE NEED YOU TO PARTNER WITH US!** We want to share numerous opportunities with you by phone, FaceTime, or a personal visit.

Unity in the Body of Christ

Ephesians 1, 2, 3; 4:1-7

"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call - one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."

"Defining Moments"

Sarah Dutton, Educational Coordinator
Children's Home of the Americas

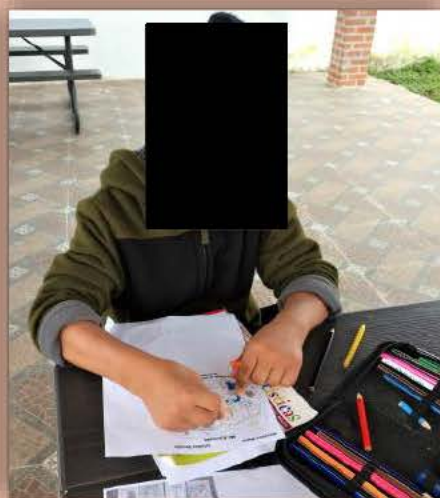


Chances are you have heard of "J." Maybe you have read about him in a LAM Newsletter or in some of my posts on Facebook last Fall, or perhaps you have met him personally. In April of 2016, days before turning nine years old, "J" was brought to the Children's Home. I have

never seen a child in worse condition because of the abuse, neglect, and rejection suffered at the hands of family who were entrusted to love and care for him. However, "J's" life changed dramatically on that day in April. That unloved, scared, malnourished, dirty little boy found and began to experience God's love. **It was a defining moment in his life.**

He began first grade in March of 2017 and loved it! I'm not sure we have another child at the Home who is as social as "J." Everyone in the school knows him although he spends most of the day in one classroom with his small group of classmates.

He enters the school like he owns the place! We learned in that first year "J" learns and remembers information better if it's in the form of a song. He loves to sing.



The 2017 LAM campaign brought Carol Lyn Rhymes on a brief tour of the Children's Home where she saw "J" and said, "We can fix his leg." I knew nothing of this woman, where she was from, what she did, how she could "fix his leg;" but, she was confident and persistent to help "J" have a better quality of life. What a blessing she and her family have been to "J" (and to me).

He missed the third trimester of school last year because he and I went to Shreveport, LA to the Shriners' Hospital where they "fixed his leg."

That was an experience that neither of us will soon forget! I believe this was also a defining moment in "J's" life. While we were in the hospital, the Lord's people from throughout the U.S. and Panama covered



us with love. "J" received so many care packages and cards the ladies at the front desk took notice. He received frequent messages from his "papá" (a former housefather at the Home), videos of devotionals at the Home, many visits and gifts from the local church, and visits from friends and brethren who came from Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Can you believe a sister from Texas left her own son and came to spend the night in the hospital with "J," a child she did not even know, to give me a night off!?! (That woman was a Godsend!) I cared for "J" much like you would a baby or toddler, bathing him, brushing his teeth, etc., something I imagine he'd never experienced. (That wasn't my plan, but I think it worked out for the

best for him.) **He was important to everyone:** The nurses, aides, radiographer, etc. stopped to eat his pretend hamburgers and soda while he rode around on the tricycle from physical therapy. The physical therapists barked, meowed, mooed, and clucked back at him during therapy. **He laughed and played.** Just before returning to Panama, we were at Carol Lyn's home. She prepared a delicious supper, of which he cleaned his plate, twice! Then, "J" had a nerf gun fight with Jason, Carol Lyn's husband, and her youngest son, Cole. He completely forgot about his crutches as he moved about shooting them and laughing contagiously. **He was loved.**

The year 2020 has brought so much growth to "J," which I believe has come, in large part, as a result of our trip to the United States. Physically, he has grown about an inch and a half since we returned in December. He's actively working on growing a big belly to be like Santa Claus and is disappointed that he's not able to grow a white beard yet! (He was awestruck by Santa.) Recently, while practicing writing numbers, he informed me that "5" is his favorite number because "5" has a "big belly" like Santa Claus. (When I told him how to write it, I said, "You put his hat on, then you draw his chest, and finally make a big round belly.")

His mind is open, and he remembers information more rapidly. At the beginning of the quarantine, I read *Peter Pan* to the children, and although I did not think he was paying attention, he proved he was. A couple of months later, he will tell me his name is *Peter Pan*. "J" is frustrated that he can't read and has the desire to learn. He enjoys doing word searches and can quickly circle the vowels. He has learned the English Alphabet song and sings it with gusto!



His attitude has changed, and "J" is more responsible. He recognizes that he doesn't like to be told what to do and is trying to do things before being directed. Instead of having to be obligated to do therapy with "Coach" (a wonderful 17-year old in the Home), he asks "Coach" to do therapy with him daily. It amazes me to see him so alert and his ability to reason, grow, and develop.

From my point of view, "J" has had several defining moments in his life so far: the cruel treatment and neglect he endured during the first nine years of his life, his arrival at the Children's Home, and his trip to the United States. Thanks be to God and His people that the last is better than the first! My hope has always been that the Children's Home would make an enormous impact in the lives of the children and teens for whom we care. Principally, I hope the impact is an eternal one. Secondly, I believe it is important to seek to make this earthly life the best it can be and one that gives glory to God. "J" certainly gives glory to God through his innocence and joy. Perhaps unwittingly, "J" has chosen to let the love of God that he found at the Children's Home define his life. May God be glorified through this child!



A New Oven! ... Then, Quarantine!

We joyfully received the new oven for the **CASA HOGAR LAS AMERICAS** in Panama. This gives the children and cooks healthier meals, quicker food preparation, homemade bread, roasted chicken, and other prepared food items that bring smiles on the children's faces. Thank you to all who made this possible! God bless you. ❤️ ~Agenor Rudas~

On March 20th a mandatory quarantine was declared in the Republic of Panama due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. Since then, **Cook Lisbeth Castillo** has made all grocery purchases for the Children's Home every Friday using a special pass given by the Ministry of Health. She is allowed only two hours to be at the supermarket and purchase food items for the next week. Only those top priority items are bought. The remaining



needed products are bought on the days assigned by the government to **Cook Feliciano Mendoza**. Upon returning to campus, he disinfects everything before it goes into the kitchen of the Children's Home. We used to make those purchases at ease with more time to buy groceries, but now it is very different. One takes a health risk when going to the supermarket, but we follow the rules to physically distance ourselves. We are extremely grateful for the new oven that is now in the kitchen at the Children's Home. It is a blessing because now the children eat healthier foods. The sacrifices you have made, showing your unconditional love for the children at the Children's Home of the Americas, is greatly appreciated. ❤️ ~The Cooks at Casa Hogar~

Farm Life on the Bible School Campus

Juan Martinez, First Year Student @ the Bible School of the Americas

Life at the Bible School is fascinating due to meeting new people with different backgrounds. For those of us who grew up in cities, campus life is completely new. Due to the difficult situation of a pandemic, most of us are gardening because we need to be resourceful, and it is a distraction and good therapy to fight stress.

Most of us know nothing about farming, but Jaime Montejo, a college graduate in agriculture, and Roger Gonzalez, an experienced farmer who lived all his life in the countryside, can get good results when they cultivate the fields. (Both are EBA students on campus now.) Almost all the Bible students helped prepare small plots of soil at the back of their homes. We dug and mixed a fertilizer of ashes from burnt trees to make it softer. Products that have a quicker harvest like tomato, spicy and sweet pepper, cantaloupe, watermelon, and pumpkin were planted. Jaime plants melons, tomato, and corn. He is both a farmer and great brother who assists anyone who asks for help. He has transplanted many plants to the gardens of other brethren. Jaime says fertilizers help with better yields. For example, his melons, once he plants them (without fertilizer), start to give fruit three months later. At times, he can get three or four harvests per year. But with fertilizer, he can get five or six fruits every time and with better quality. Roger is the most active student in the Bible School's agriculture life and is willing to share his knowledge with the brethren. Our instructors, Simión and Francisco, also have some experience in farming. Each has a tomato garden behind their homes. They are not only teachers of the word of God, but also of how to plant edible gardens.

Mango is a fruit that abounds on campus, and it has a long growing season. Our 15 mango trees are ready for harvest in April. One just walks around campus to pick mango as needed. Other fruit and plants we enjoy cultivating and harvesting are bananas, avocado, coconut, beans, and yuca. Everyone on the Bible School campus benefits from the sharing of produced crops.





Smiles Came Through the Door

Carol Lyn Rhymes, Bossier City, LA
Carriage Oaks Church of Christ

One of the hardest things about coming home from a YES II LAM trip is trying to put the experience into words. There is just no way possible for me to do it. I went on my first YES II trip in 2014, and only my son's summer wedding and a pandemic have kept me from going every summer. Every year when you try to raise support for the next trip, people ask why we want to go back. Why spend that money going to a foreign country when there's so much good work to be done in our own back yard? This past year our congregation began to understand.



While on a campaign in 2017 to Panama, my family wanted to visit the Bible School and Children's Home. There on the campus I met Sarah Dutton and a child named "J" who had a severe leg length discrepancy. I work for Shriners' Hospitals for Children back home. LONG story short, it took three years and endless hours of calls and emails, but "J" came to my hospital for major surgery. It was the time he and Sarah spent with our church family that finally gave them a glimpse into the unspeakable rewards and blessings associated with LAM.

Even before "J" and Sarah arrived, the church began to pray for their safe arrival. When those dimples and that smile came through our doors, our congregation fell in love. It was much like our Latin American brothers and sisters greeting us with open arms and hugs and kisses. They love us just because we belong to God's family. And, "J" loved everyone he saw. He learned to say, "I love you," in English, and he meant it.

Sarah, too, came in shining the light of Jesus' love to everyone. Her impact on our congregation was amazing because of her contagious and eager spirit to serve God and do whatever it took to worship with His family. She hauled

crutches and wheelchairs and blankets and a sometimes not so cooperative patient back and forth and never missed an assembly while she was in town. Sarah's dedication to "J" and the children at the Children's Home is a perfect portrait of living to serve and not to be served.

I asked our congregation to share what impacted them the most about Sarah and "J's" time here. One repeated theme was how the children welcomed Joshua into class with open arms. They didn't speak the same language, but the smiles and laughter were contagious. A living representation of Matthew 18:3 with the pure and innocent hearts of children. Sarah and "J" also put a face to our words and reports of the wonderful work LAM is doing for the Kingdom. It was a great reminder of how truly blessed we are here in America and the importance of helping to continue the work of LAM. When our congregation learned of the children's home falling short on the budget this year, I didn't have to ask twice for help. They were eager to help Sarah and all of the children at the Home in Panama. The impact of their time here will be a lasting and loving memory for all.



Pandemic Crisis 2020

HONDURAS

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

49,042

Confirmed Deaths

1,542

Mortality Risk

3.1%

EL SALVADOR

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

21,993

Confirmed Deaths

584

Mortality Risk

2.7%

PERU

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

507,996

Confirmed Deaths

25,648

Mortality Risk

5.0%

CHILE

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases

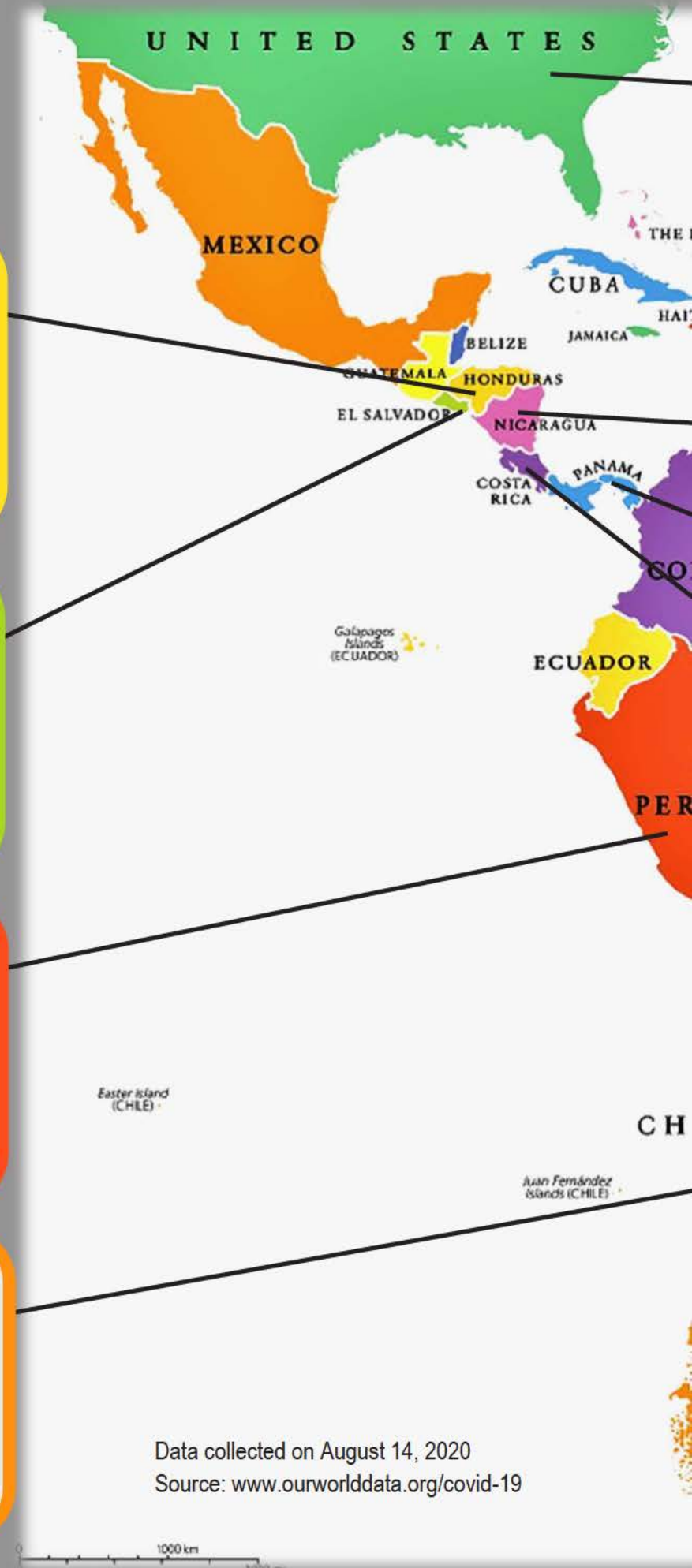
380,034

Confirmed Deaths

10,229

Mortality Risk

2.7%





Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
5,250,000
Confirmed Deaths
167,110
Mortality Risk
3.2%

UNITED STATES

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
4,115
Confirmed Deaths
128
Mortality Risk
3.1%

NICARAGUA

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
78,446
Confirmed Deaths
1,722
Mortality Risk
2.2%

PANAMA

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases
26,129
Confirmed Deaths
272
Mortality Risk
1.0%

COSTA RICA

LAM conducts Mission Campaigns in the seven Latin American countries shown.

NEW NORMAL ON CAMPUS

Agenor Rudas, Sub-Director @ Bible School of the Americas



The arrival of COVID-19 has turned our activities upside down. Activities that have to do with spreading the Gospel through teaching of the word of God at the Bible School have been drastically affected. Today, that change has been called by our society and the media as the “new normal.” We will be subject to these changes for an indefinite time, and most of all, doing things in ways we had never envisioned. To stop the contagion that increases daily, a quarantine has been established. It has been five months already, and no clear horizon can be seen. The government has established that women can go out on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Men can go out on Tuesday and Thursday. Everyone has only a window of two hours to purchase food.

The growing contagion of the virus has brought us to establish behavioral norms to continue our labors. We have had to invest in a conference room to bring the classes



to the students on the internet. We have to cover our faces with masks and wear gloves when out shopping. This is done hurriedly within two

hours. Otherwise, one will face penalties or be assigned to community work. When returning to campus, they must disinfect shoes, clothing, and groceries...ending with a shower before entering their homes to protect their family from the virus.

The brethren guarding the gate of the Bible School have been provided with disinfectants to sanitize the vehicles coming on campus. They use a special liquid to clean shoes and hands, and every person’s temperature is taken before entering the campus. Among other changes, we are housing several workers at the Bible School and the Children’s Home so they are not exposed to COVID-19 while commuting on public transportation. Implementing this action was of the utmost importance because the children need the support of their tutors in the study room. The children are not attending

school in person. They receive their instruction through modules and on the internet. This makes the tutors’ tasks even more important.

At the end of each day, we meditate about the difficult circumstances we are experiencing. We remember the first Christians who appealed to God when suffering. Today, we have something in common with them. They were threatened by the prohibition to preach; we are threatened by a virus lurking everywhere. We pray for strength to continue doing the work of preaching and the powerful hand of God to heal our land. (Acts 4:29-30) We pray for the students who have left their countries for two years and come to learn at the Bible School. We pray for the children under our care at the Children’s Home. They depend on wise decisions to protect them from the virus. We pray for our families to breathe peacefully when another day goes by and we have not been infected.



Regarding the churches in Panama, we still cannot gather in person. A date had been stipulated for the reopening of assemblies. However, because of the upswing in virus transmission, that possibility now looks farther away. So, we have quickly learned to use social media in order to reach our brethren in their homes. The Church of Christ in Vista Hermosa has not suffered any infection of the brethren, but we have members who have lost their jobs and have no food for their families. We are giving support to these families according to our abilities and capacities. Other



congregations now have some infected members. Companies are dismissing their workers and hunger increases. Hospitals are at maximum capacity with no medical supplies and little medical personnel. We ask

that each of you who reads this report will pray for us. May we continue to always say, “*In God there is Hope.*”

Asking for Your Prayers of Protection



I worship with the Margarita Church of Christ on the Atlantic side of Panama with about 80 members. Despite being a small country, COVID-19 spread rapidly with over 78,000 cases and 1,700 deaths. The government took extreme measures to avoid massive deaths. Men and women were assigned days of the week to leave their homes and buy necessary food, and no one is allowed to travel beyond 30 miles from home. Weekends are completely quarantined, so as of March 16th we have not been able to worship in person at the building. If you get caught by the police, you go to prison. Rather, we worship via Zoom on the internet.

All flights in and out of Panama were canceled, and all companies were closed by the government. Many brethren lost their jobs, so there was no money for internet service to connect to online worship services. When the quarantine was declared, people had to stay where they were. Once we were able to locate everyone, we started paying internet service for them so they could connect to Zoom worship services. The brethren wanted a time for kids' Bible classes. The sisters prepared interactive classes on Zoom every Sunday for the children, and the result has been awesome...sometimes having more kids than before quarantine.



The Church prepared grocery baskets and school supplies for all the brethren and others in need. Seeing people desperate for food and health services was sad. At Margarita we had eight confirmed cases of COVID-19. Thankfully, all are sound at home. We pray for these conditions to improve quickly and hope to worship together at the building as soon as the Ministry of Health gives us approval to do so. We ask for your prayers that our situation improves and God protects us from getting this virus.

~ Bernabe Rodriguez ~

Effects of Covid-19 in Costa Rica

When our first case was reported on March 6th, there were many faces of concern and fear among the brotherhood. As a preacher I prepared sermons of encouragement so the faith of the Church would not fail. False teachers said we were in the final days and it was a punishment from God. Many were preaching apocalyptic messages in order to profit from the calamity. The leaders in the Lord's Church in Sarchi could see our brethren were in danger of being deceived by Satan.

In early April the government took strong measures to prevent mass contagion. Among these measures was the closure of religious buildings, and some brothers felt it was a blow to our constitutional rights. We preachers clarified it as simply a temporary health measure, and not a religious persecution like the first century Christians. We kept the spirits of the brethren up by developing sermons and Bible classes online. We filled the internet with material from the Church of Christ that began to spread among friends and family members who are not members of the church. The Lord blessed us with the means of evangelism and teaching God's Truth to many people.



The government recently announced the opening of religious places with instructions: 1) Wear masks. 2) No bodily contact. 3) No singing because saliva travels farther. The question arose, how do we worship our God without singing to Him? Again, some saw it as persecution on Christian worship, while others saw only a measure of protection. Some congregations reopened with great enthusiasm, while others remained closed. When the number of confirmed infections and deaths increased, the government reversed the reopening. Today we are waiting for the government to once again reopen worship gatherings. This pandemic has allowed the Church to awaken to personal evangelism and the development of material now available to the brotherhood. Also, brethren are more willing to share their material goods to those in need. Blessed be God who allows us the strength to overcome the evils of this world.

~ Roldan Chinchilla Nunez ~



God's Protective Providence

Jesse Richardson, Cleveland, TN

Jesse shares his story of God's unfathomable providence toward LAM workers during the week of March 8-14, especially Thursday through Saturday. For those three days they faced each obstacle and relied on these words of encouragement, **"We are not God. God Is God. And, He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine!"**

On March 2nd I traveled to El Salvador with several other Christian brothers and sisters to prepare for a two week LAM Medical Campaign. The small town of San Rafael Cedros was our destination. On March 4th I shared a post by Latin American Missions that no Coronavirus cases had been reported in the Central American countries in which LAM operates. That was 100% accurate at the time of posting. However, on March 9th, we heard rumors that there were reported cases in Honduras and Panama, and the next day we heard there was a confirmed case in El Salvador. On March 11th El Salvador President Nayib Bukele announced the government was sealing off all borders to ground traffic. We had our flights back home scheduled for March 14th, so ground closures didn't seem to be a concern for us. The following day our mission team finished clinic work for the week. We had seen nearly 1,000 patients, completed several hundred personal Bible studies, and baptized thirteen precious souls into Christ who now live in hope of Heaven. The entire community and local government in San Rafael Cedros, El Salvador now welcomes future partnership with churches of Christ and is supportive of the new local congregation of the Church there.



Our very blessed campaign makes the rest of my story 100% worth the risks we were about to go through. Almost as soon as we finished shutting down the clinic and served lunch to everyone, our team was informed by an email from United



Airlines that all flights to and from El Salvador had been canceled, effective immediately, due to Coronavirus concerns. Delta Air Lines was still flying. American Airlines was still flying. But, United Airlines stranded brethren in our group in a third world country with sealed borders, during a worldwide pandemic, while other airlines were still honoring their commitments. When we finally got someone from United Airlines on the phone, we were told they could fly us home...if we could make it to Guatemala City, Guatemala which was a 3.5 hour drive to the north across a closed international border. I had originally flown down with the group that helps prepare for the campaign week, and our return flights on Delta were still on schedule. Our first group flew Saturday morning on their return flight going straight to Atlanta. This was the flight I was originally scheduled for, but as a result of United Airlines' unfortunate decision, my wife, Lauren, who has a well-managed but lifelong lung condition, would be stuck in El Salvador for a 21 day forced quarantine. She did not have enough prescription to last until the borders were reopened. The gymnasium that had been our medical clinic site for the week became HQ for an extraction operation as our leaders scrambled to come up with a viable plan to get everyone home ASAP. We came up with three different ideas and went to work.

Dr. John Adams worked on possible alternative commercial air transport. Jon White worked on the possibility of a private plane to get us out. I worked with the local mayor on arranging immediate bus transport to the Guatemala border, then changing buses to continue on to Guatemala City in time for our United Airlines flights. David Minton quarterbacked the whole team, making calls and decisions as information came in. Everything about this situation was "fluid", and the rules and information seemed to change about every ten minutes. But, the fact is...God

provided for us in ways we couldn't envision before we even realized what was happening. **"We are not God. God is God. And, He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."** As the events unfolded, I witnessed God use Dr. Adams, Jon, and David as instruments of His will. These men are all humble leaders, and I have never felt more thankful for a group of brothers in my life.

This is a story of the power of God's providence in protecting His people. So here we go...John and Jack Farber provided advice from the US and kept up with us as we went through each step and communicated with our travel agent who went above and beyond to help us find a commercial flight. Dr. Adam's wife mentioned to him that he should contact a friend...who put us in touch with the office of Senator Rand Paul. By the same token, John got in touch with Congressman Jim Cooper. Later, I heard they involved Mitch McConnell's office, and collectively they brought us to the attention of the US State Department which tracked us and intervened for us behind the scenes all the way back to the States. **"We are not God. God is God. And, He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."**

Jon White also worked connections and arranged a private plane to fly everyone out, which would have been an expensive option, but God amazingly provided benefactors willing to cover the cost if that had been the only option open to us. Jon also navigated hotel arrangements for everyone in Guatemala City. David Minton provided calm leadership as he directed efforts across all fronts and communicated with everyone. On Friday morning as we were riding in our bus toward the San Salvador Airport, David got a call from the Secretary of State's office. He gave them all our itinerary info, and they said they would make sure we got to Guatemala and had everything necessary to make our connecting flights back to the U.S. Later, we learned that



Guatemala had waited to officially close its borders to foreigners less than two hours after we had arrived. We went through several health checkpoints upon arrival, but were amazed when we pretty much waltzed through Customs and Immigration with barely a glance from the Guatemalan officials. **"We are not God. God is God. And, God is able to do immeasurably more**

than all we ask or imagine." God placed these brothers and connections where they needed to be in order to provide a path in the midst of uncertainty.

Thankfully, Plan A was what worked out when we were finally able to confirm all new flights for everyone to get from El Salvador to Guatemala City on Avianca Airlines. The incredible generosity of the brothers that stepped up in an unbelievable way to cover the costs of paying whatever was necessary to get everyone safely home blew my mind. The plan was to fly everyone to Guatemala City on that afternoon, and then we would split up into two groups and get everyone on the available United Airlines flights. I was incredibly thankful to be allowed to switch my Delta flights and travel back with Lauren and the rest of the main group. I am beyond words to express my gratitude to God that the only two N95 masks we could find were delivered just before leaving for El Salvador, so we had them available to reduce the risk of exposure to Lauren as we navigated through the airports. I had a lump in my throat as I swallowed back tears of gratitude for God's providence when brother Jon came up to us in the San Salvador airport and said, "You wanna hear some good news? You guys are together on the same flights and will be on the first flight out of Guatemala and the first flight out of Houston tomorrow!" I was extremely apprehensive by the prospect of navigating through a sea of people through four airports, three flights, over a course of 48 hours to make it back home. I love my wife, and as blessed as she has felt for coming down to meet our Salvadoran brothers and sisters and work with us this last week, I felt terrible for putting her in a position of high risk, even if it was due to the unprecedented circumstances of a global pandemic. **"We are not God. God is God. And, He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."**

As Lauren and I safely arrived home and unloaded our baggage, we saw that Group #2 had also made it back. We grabbed a quick bite and crashed in bed. We couldn't believe we had awoken in Guatemala, and now 12 hours later were back in our own bed. I am absolutely inspired by the brethren of Mt. Juliet Church of Christ who went with us to make our campaign a reality, even though their own community and homes had been hit by an F4 tornado less than a week before leaving. I am thankful for their willingness to come and reach the souls that were ministered to, studied with, and that gave their lives to Christ. No amount of adversity we face in this world can offset the blessing and privilege of our call to build up the Kingdom of Heaven. **"We are not God. God is God. And, He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine."**

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

“Hindsight is 2020!” – How many times have we heard or thought about this phrase this year? 2020 has most certainly been a year full of challenges and obstacles, but it is also a year to look back and see the blessings and opportunities that have been presented to us. In looking back at our last fiscal year’s finances (December ‘18 to November ‘19), LAM has certainly had many challenges presented to us. Some of them seemed overwhelming at times, but through prayer and the sacrificial hearts of likeminded Christians, we have been blessed to continue in our efforts to broaden the Kingdom and bring glory to GOD our Father from whom all blessings flow! To keep all of our supporters informed, we are providing our 2019 Financial Report. In addition to the numbers, below are some highlights of how each of you have impacted the needs of our brethren in Latin America, as well as some current and continual needs.

Children of America’s Christmas:

Our annual Christmas shopping is one of the most anticipated events of the year! So much joy can be seen both from the giving side and the receiving side. Your generous 2019 giving was \$7,371.51! We do not know what the Christmas will look like this year as far as the shopping trip goes, but with your continued support we will still be having Christmas for the kids!

Please mark your support as
“Christmas for the Kids”.

Fund Raising Plea 2020

As reflected in the financial numbers for 2019, we found ourselves in a crunch this year. The campaigns unfortunately had to be cancelled, therefore our missionaries found themselves having some extra time to address our money issues. Phone calls and personal visits were made, and we have been able to raise \$125,214.31 to cover the deficit and help us through 2020. We would be remiss if we did not stop and recognize the faithful brethren who “dug deep” into their pockets to cover the deficits.

Children’s Home Meals

In addition to the \$5,386.00 raised during the 2019 financial period, we sent out a special plea in March of this year to help with food for the Children’s Home. From this plea alone, \$18,020.16 has been sent in! Can we all say “Amen”! The monthly food budget for the CH averages \$3,500/month. Having dedicated funds to cover the meals not only helps out with food costs but also helps to offset the overall monthly budget. Please mark your support as
“CH Meals”.

New Oven for Children’s Home

A new industrial sized oven was needed for the CH kitchen at a total cost of \$3,250.00. The stove was purchased and paid for in full by donations received in November, 2019. Thank you!

Gracias!

Security Fence for the Campus

(Bible School of Americas and Children’s Home)
In June of 2019, we sent out a letter expressing the security issues that have been experienced on campus with a request to help raise \$160,000.00 to install a security fence and road around the campus. We have received \$107,168.84 to date (\$80,937.00 for the 2019 fiscal year). We have consulted with the builders on ways to reduce the parameters and cost of the security fence from the initial estimate. We were set to begin the site work about the time the shutdown began due to COVID-19. Currently, we are on hold but have plans to start as soon as the government permits.

SPECIFIC NEEDS

Bible School of Americas Student Scholarships

The Bible School of the Americas (BSA) is the foundation of Latin American Missions. We currently have 15 students at the school for the two year program. A very conservative cost per student is \$1,500.00/month. Realistically, the cost is higher. Student tuitions cover the cost of the schooling, instructors, housing, transportation.

The need for student scholarships and support of the BSA is enormous!

We want to urge our brethren to speak to their local Eldership about supporting one student at the school. We will be happy to supply your congregation with a specific student's name so you may be praying for him and his family if he is a married student. Also, we can send reports to keep you updated on his progress.

Please mark your support as "Student Scholarship". If you would like a specific student to support, please let us know and we will make this happen!

Children's Home of the Americas

"...Children are a heritage from the LORD..." Psalm 127:3 Most certainly the children in the Home are held in the hearts of so many. This year has been a very difficult year as they struggle through all the changes that have come with COVID-19. While their struggles may not have been much different than what we experience here in the States, the support is also not the same. Do not misunderstand, there is much love and devotion at the Home, but there is a difference in a few kids in a family unit being supported versus 22 children with house parents and support staff.

We are so blessed to be given the opportunity to help each and every child that comes to us. A conservative cost per child is \$800.00-\$1,000.00/month. Please mark your support as "Children's Home".

WHERE CAN YOU HELP?

The two main areas where we need support are the Bible School of Americas and Children's Home of Americas.

Bible School of Americas ... \$1,500/month student scholarship

Children of Americas ... \$800-\$1,000/month child scholarship

Please consider helping your brethren, your family, with a monthly contribution of any amount.

As members of the Lord's body, HIS church, we are a very blessed people. We have been taught through the scriptures of the privilege and obligation to spread the Gospel and care for the less fortunate. Please consider joining us in this mission work. Speak to your congregation about a collective effort to support LAM. Please speak to your friends and family about becoming *Fellow Workers with God*. Please continue to keep this work, as well as all others that are being done in HIS name, in your prayers.

**Let us never forget
that as we serve others
and bring others to Him,
we ourselves will be
brought closer to Him
and become more like
Him every day.**

May GOD Bless!

Honors & Memorials

January - July 2020

In Honor of...

Ray Pugh

M/M Don Pugh

Trina Floyd

Paule Hendrickson

In Memory of...

Katie Craig

Julie Wood

Tommy Bradford

M/M Bill Ward

Fran Bagley

M/M Donnie Wisenbaker

Stephen Greene

Eunice Priester

Gwen Knight

Ruth Hale

Steve Wilson

Ruth Hale

Tally Wisenbaker III

M/M Donnie Wisenbaker

Irene Sapp

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Carl Law

M/M Paul Swanson

Bernell Smith

M/M Paul Swanson

Gilbert Blackmer

M/M Paul Swanson

Lawanna Batten

M/M Bill Ward

Sue Warren

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Matt Lindsey

M/M Paul Swanson

Bobby Harred

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Margaret Dickerson

M/M Bill Ward

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Phil McAllister

Andrea McAllister

Al Murray

Andrea McAllister

Mose Calvin Griffin IV

M/M Paul Swanson

Jane Blankenship

David Blankenship

Martha Derrick

Clarissa Derrick

Dave Huffman

Libby Brown

Lena Bosch

M/M Paul Swanson

M/M Bill Ward

Lawanna Batten

M/M Leonard Dorminey

Victoria Dorminey

M/M Donnie Wisenbaker

Jack Tarpley

M/M Paul Swanson

M/M Bill Ward

Lawanna Batten

Essie Mae Head

M/M Paul Swanson

Agnes Hagin

Lawanna Batten

M/M Richard Futch

M/M Donnie Wisenbaker

M/M Paul Swanson

M/M Bill Ward

Hagin Family

Tom Boyette

Lawanna Batten

M/M Ken Collins

M/M Josh Collins

M/M Paul Swanson

M/M Bill Ward

Marie Gibson

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Marianne Register

M/M Donnie Wisenbaker

M/M Paul Swanson

M/M Bill Ward

Robert Blair

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Shirlee Carroll

Susan Giddens

Steven Sainz

Lawanna Batten

M/M Bill Ward

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Ted Okolichaney

Jo Walker

M/M Paul Swanson

Lawanna Batten

Bob Davis

M/M Paul Swanson

Lawanna Batten

Joanna House

Tana Heaton

M/M Jonathan Sampson

Jim Burgman

M/M Paul Swanson

Steve Watts

Ralph & Lynn Parrish

Chuck & Antha Watkins

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Caroline Smith

Reed & Gretchen Davis

Raphael Graham

David Sims

Juliann Balla

M/M Clint Joyner

April Adams

M/M Jo Sowell

Marian Boyd

M/M Thomas Edging Jr

Joe Satterfield

Volume Transportation

M/M Alan Roberts

M/M Lyn Oakley

Mary Moore

Forest Park Church

M/M Randy Kea

Liz Jones

Lawanna Batten

M/M Paul Swanson

Todd & Chelsea Mullins

M/M Paul Swanson

Arthur Dinkins

M/M Paul Swanson

C. L. Harris

M/M Paul Swanson

About HONORS & MEMORIALS

You may "HONOR" a special person or group of people by making a donation of any amount to LAM.

You may also make a "MEMORIAL" donation to LAM in memory of a loved one who is deceased.

Please use the printed form on the back page of this newsletter when sending your donation to the LAM office.

Servants in Need of Financial Support!

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Students & Recent Graduates

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Elio Quiroz
Alonso Racine
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Agenor Rudas

HONDURAS:

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Javier Flores
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CHILE:

Wilson Vilorio

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Being a Fellow Worker in LAM is a

Gospel Opportunity

*for YOU to help carry the Gospel Story of
Jesus into eight Latin American countries.
Contact LAM today!*

Please consider supporting one or more of these Godly men and their families. Your support of \$25, \$50, \$100, or more per month has a tremendous impact on the lives of these faithful ministers.



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Please fill in and enclose this form when making your charitable contributions.

AREAS WHERE YOU CAN HELP!

MY DONATION IS FOR:

- Where most needed
- Bible School of the Americas
- Preacher in need (Please write in name)

- Printing Ministry
- Benevolence / Disaster Relief
- Children's Home of the Americas

MY DONATION IS:

- one time gift
- monthly giving of: \$ _____

IN MEMORY OF:

IN HONOR OF:

Given by: _____

Address: _____

City, St. ZIP: _____

SEND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

Name: _____

Address: _____

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