

Historic Significance

*"There's an opportune time to do things,
a right time for everything on the earth."*
—Ecclesiastes 3:1, The Message

Most of us want our life to count for something, to leave our mark. People and events that have impacted our lives inspire us to do the same. It's easy to look back and see the things that have influenced us. If it's true (and it most certainly is!) that "there's an opportune time to do things," we must be people of faith and vision, applying God's wisdom in order to do the right thing at the right time, quite often waiting for God's intervention. When we do, with God's help we can set some significant historical markers that will be guideposts for those that follow.

We feel like we are at one of those points right now. Several years ago the Lord spoke to us about the need to build a ministry complex in Panama City for the Latin America Resource and Training Center. Following the principle that there are opportune times to do things, it was wise and prudent to wait to launch the project. One year ago the Lord spoke to us that it was time to begin again. We started looking for property near the airport in Panama City. About nine months ago we found a good candidate and began our investigation, sought the Lord and knocked on funding doors. We met with the owner two months ago to make an offer, only to find out that he had received a better one.

No sale has been finalized. There is still a possibility that we can secure this property. But we are now asking all who read this to join us in earnest prayer that God would lead us to find the right property and that He would direct negotiation and give us faith to believe that He will provide what is needed in His time. We believe that this is one of those moments of historic significance! Please take some time to look through the LARTC website (www.LARTC.net).

2013 EDUCATORS DIALOGUE

We believe we had another one of those "moments" a few weeks ago at the 2013 International Educational Leaders Dialogue, held in Panama City. The Dialogues, conducted in February or March during odd years, are 48-hour intensive strategy and troubleshooting sessions. We bring together the national Christian education directors, international educational leaders and some of our missionaries to consider the state of ministerial training in the 20 Spanish-speaking countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region. It is our opportunity to "listen" to the needs represented by the countries and leaders present. We're going into some detail on this meeting to help you gain some context of its historic significance.

We had extra work preparing for this year's Dialogue. Several changes were made to the constitution of Servicio de Educacion Cristiana (Christian Education Services), the organization that coordinates the Christian Education program and teaching plan used by hundreds of Bible schools in the region. We added three new "specializations" to the Bible School program: Christian Education, Children's Ministries and Church Planting. We published the new Plan Basico (Basic Plan), a 600-page book that includes guidelines for each educational level from the local church to the master's level, support ministries and the Bible School course catalogue.

This was our largest Dialogue yet! We were very pleased to have 35 attend from 15 countries, including 12 national directors, our highest ever, and several international leaders. The Dialogue is divided into two related segments. The first day is dedicated to working through the Dialogue process. Each country gives a brief annual report that provides context. Country directors share their major need or weakness, then international leaders share their assessments of



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www.Boyds.org

Panorama@Boyds.org • www.Boyds.org • [Field Address](#) Apartado 0818-00792, Panama, PANAMA

[Stateside Address](#) 21004 28th Ave. West, Lynnwood, WA 98036 • AGWM Account 2392710



Historic Significance... continued

the state of ministerial training. Each of these areas are included in the master list of nominations on the board. Areas are consolidated a small group is assigned to each major area for study and recommendations. Each small group makes a presentation to the large group.

Four areas were chosen for study this year:

- Expand and strengthen the training program for professors
- Strengthen and implement a pervasive Pentecostal and ministerial philosophy
- Develop and implement an effective national education plan
- Consider the use of the Global University program and improve relationship

The second day the group started its work as the Bible School Advisory Commission. Our ministry, called the Latin America Resource and Training Center, serves over 1,000 Bible schools, extensions and ministry training centers in the region. We look to this group for advice and support! We added a new segment to this year's Dialogue as a transition from the first day to the meeting of the commission. We called it the Follow-up Forum. We listed all of the areas that have been considered in the 8 Dialogues that have been conducted since 2001, paying close attention to areas that have been repeated. We then asked ourselves some important questions: What have we done to improve these areas? Have we seen improvement? What else can be done? This morning session really helped us to put everything in historical context. We were reminded that together we have achieved some pretty amazing things!

We concluded our time together looking forward to the three Educators Summits on the schedule for 2013-2014. The Summits are the large events that is our chance to talk to hundreds of educators. The content of the Summits is based upon areas discussed in the Dialogue. We were able to share what God has put on our hearts for these Summits. Our theme will be "Lift Up Your

PRAYER NEEDS & PRAISE REPORTS

- Please pray with us for the finalization of land acquisition for the Latin America Resource and Training Center.
- Please pray for our 35 Good Shepherd Schools in Panama. The new school year began the first week of March. Pray especially for the two Indian schools at Duima and Soloy. Pray for those schools that still have classroom construction needs.
- Praise the Lord for the impact of the recently conducted 2013 Educators Dialogue. 35 national and international leaders from 15 countries helped set the course for ministerial training in the Spanish-speaking Latin America and Caribbean region. record at the 2012 Educators Summits held in San Jose, Costa Rica in April and in Lima, Peru in September.
- Please pray for Randy and Lynne Forsyth as they finish their time in language school in Costa Rica. They will arrive to Panama on May 12th to coordinate construction and bless our schools!
- Please pray for the planning of three Educators Summits coming up in Mexico (Aug. 2013), El Salvador (March 2014) and Uruguay (Sept. 2014). Also, please pray for the national PROCEPA Seminars (teacher certification) that will take place this year in El Salvador, Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Uruguay and Panama.



"Yes!" We shared the three major themes:

- God is calling us to develop new ministries to address the complex problems in our world, many of which are right at the door step of local church.
- God is calling us to train new ministers. Our definition of ministry must be broader to allow for the new ministers that God is calling to meet the needs of the new ministries.
- God is calling us to extend to new frontiers. There are two big things that God is doing right now in Latin America: Education and Missions. As we are in step with the Spirit we will train and we will send. These are the two steps that the church is constantly taking.

And then the Spirit fell! What a beautiful time of breaking and prayer!

As the Dialogue came to a close we were reminded of the great privilege we have to be in a place where we are influencing the education and training ministry in Latin America. We have seen such growth in the caliber of educational leaders. Looking out over the group and considering our time together, without a doubt the 2013 Dialogue was historically significant!

We chose to provide a bit more detail about the 2013 Dialogue so that you could capture how strategically important events like these Dialogues are for the future of the church in Latin America. And thank you so much for standing with us. Your faithful prayer and financial support makes us partners as we raise up Christian leaders in Latin America who will shake our world with the gospel!

