



RCA
**Global
Mission**

2020 Year in Review



Andrew and Amy Fields – Colombia

Our main goal as Seminario Bíblico de Colombia (Biblical Seminary of Colombia) is to provide high-quality theological formation for men and women who will serve the church and society with the good news of the gospel. As with many organizations in 2020, our main goals had to be reoriented to address the challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through Andrew's roles as a professor, head of the Internship Program, and chaplain for the single guys, he was able to collaborate in maintaining the high quality of pastoral formation for our students during prolonged quarantines and other COVID-related challenges.

Blessings of 2020

One of the most exciting outcomes of this past year was that, through the generous support of individuals and RCA congregations, we were able to provide scholarships for 98 students to study in the second half of 2020. In our monthly update, we shared an interview with one of those students, Carlos. (<https://youtu.be/r-TfjhgSUyo>) Even though he had to drop out of school at a young age, the Lord has called him to be a pastor with a heart for the next generation. We are honored as a Seminary to be able to contribute to the theological and pastoral formation of students like Carlos, despite the financial difficulties brought about by COVID-19.

Challenges of 2020

In addition to the financial challenges mentioned above, we had to face the challenges of online learning, much like schools all over the world. When Colombia began quarantine measures in early March, we had to move all of our residential education programs online. Thankfully, the seminary has had a virtual program for some time, but the change was still difficult for many of our students and faculty. Teaching and learning over poor internet connections while locked in our homes, we all had to learn how to make the best of a difficult situation. Andrew had to rethink how he taught his classes to make them work in an online environment, and he had to address the many changes to internships that came with churches moving to online ministry.



On a more personal level, our family faced some significant difficulties in the process to renew our visas. After working hard for almost six months to renew our visa, we decided to return to the U.S. in November to avoid considerable fines from the government. We had not been expecting this trip, so it made for a very chaotic couple of weeks for our family. Thankfully, at the end of December, we received our visas and we returned to Colombia in mid-January to continue our ministry.

Learnings in 2020

One thing that has impressed us over the past year is how seminary leadership has prioritized love over fear in decision making. In numerous meetings related to our response to COVID-19, our President told us that the love

of God and not “Mammon” is what had to guide our decisions. Many times, whether we are churches in the U.S. or Colombia, we are tempted to make decisions based more on our fears about the future (especially for us North American Christians fear about financial reserves), than in faithful response to the call of God to self-giving love.

Hopes for 2021

Our main goal for this year is for Andrew to transition well into his new role as Dean. In addition to the normal functions of a Dean, he is making it a priority to strengthen our pastoral ministry courses, encourage habits of clear communication, and set the foundation for opening a Master’s program in Biblical Interpretation for 2022.

As our son gets older this year, we are also hoping Amy can be more involved in the seminary library and the mentoring of students.

How We Can Pray

There are two big areas of prayer needed for our ministry. First, this year the Seminary will be going through a leadership transition. Starting in March, we will have a new President. He has asked Andrew to take on a new role as the Dean of the seminary. In this new role, Andrew will supervise our professors and our academic programs. We are honored that Andrew has been asked to take on this important leadership role, and we ask for prayer as he and the seminary community adjust to these changes in leadership.

We also pray for God’s abundant provision for our students. Because of the economic effects of COVID-19, many students, families, and churches are facing significant financial challenges. Also, the seminary has had to invest in all of the measures needed to provide a safe and secure environment for our students and workers during the pandemic. As we are saying around here, we are in the years of the lean cows. Pray that God would give us the wisdom to be good stewards of our resources and that He would provide abundantly so our students can continue their studies as they seek to grow as pastors and ministry leaders.

Additional Needs

Scholarships are always much needed in our communities, as many of our students come from families or regions with limited economic resources. We rejoice in the funds that the RCA has been able to provide for student scholarships, and we pray God would continue to provide through the generosity of His people in Colombia and around the world. Also, we are specifically needing financial help to provide food assistance to our community. To mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread in our seminary, we have had to make changes to how we can help feed our students, especially our single students. These changes, including having a cafeteria for our single students, mean that we are in more need of funds to help feed our students this year.



Thank You

In addition to scholarship and food aid this past year, we are grateful for the way that one of our supporting churches gave to a project to repair roofs on our seminary campus. Medellín is called the “City of Eternal Spring,” but that means that we can get a lot of rain. As a cash-strapped school, we cannot often afford to do the necessary repairs on our roofs, so a generous grant from one of our supporting churches allowed us to do much-needed repairs so we could have a safe and healthy campus.

Serving together,
Andrew and Amy