



October 2023

Dear co-laborers, partners in Christ's mission,

It is a joy for me to report what the Holy Spirit is doing through your generous personal, prayer, and financial support of this ministry. Jean and I want to invite you to celebrate and give thanks with us for the last 20 years. God has raised new leaders in the growing Christian communities in Latin America, and Jean and I have been blessed to witness what God has done through your faithful generosity.

We need your prayers! We are planning to host a gathering in Panama City, Panama, of all of the graduates and some faculty of our Latin American Doctoral Program in Theology (LADPT) from March 12 through March 15, 2024.

Because the program is a distance-learning system spread over the entire continent, most graduates know only a few of the other graduates. This event will be a celebration to honor our graduates and create a space for them to meet one another, network, and share stories of God's goodness from their respective parts of Latin America. This 3-day consultation will offer an opportunity to consider issues of leadership formation, church and mission mobilization, and theological reflection on the continent.

As of today, we have 41 graduates with Ph.D. degrees, and we hope to see 9 others defend their dissertations by the end of 2024. That would make a total of 50 significant leaders of churches, denominations, seminaries, and mission organizations in ministry who lead more than 20 denominations in many nations throughout Latin America. We estimate the total attending will be between 70 and 75 persons.



Pictured left with me is Rev. Dr. Nestor Moreno, our LADPT graduate who worked for many years in banking in Panama, pastors a church in the Panama Canal Zone, and has founded a Center for Theological Reflection in Panama. He is helping us coordinate the logistics for this gathering. Please pray for Nestor.

We need your help. The reality is that most of our graduates are unable to financially afford to travel out of their home countries. You have helped raise over 40 graduates in 16 countries in Latin America. Praise God! We hope that your enthusiasm for this program may include supporting a graduate to attend this celebration.

Would you like to receive these updates digitally? Please email Kelli at kgilmore@rca.org to be added to the email list. You will receive more timely updates from the missionary you support and help us be good stewards of our resources.

Will you now join us in celebrating them through support for this event? [Your gift of \\$1,000](https://www.rca.org/give/LALDP-graduate-gathering/) will cover the cost of one leader to travel to attend this celebration of their hard work. Please consider how you can help sponsor a graduate to attend the celebration in March. You can contribute here: <https://www.rca.org/give/LALDP-graduate-gathering/>

Thank you again for your prayers and your personal and financial support of this ministry!

Love in Jesus,
Chuck and Jean

Thank you for your prayers

- Oct 23 — Jean is processing the registrations from our graduates attending the gathering in Panama in March 2024. We have a multitude of details we are working on.
- Nov — Thanksgiving with our 2 children and families in Toledo, OH
- Dec 25 to Jan 4 — Christmas and New Year with our daughter Amy and family in Tacoma, WA.
- Jan — with Chuck's sisters Betty and Bee and brother-in-law Ramon in Miami, FL.
- Feb — Final arrangements for the March gathering in Panama
- March 12-15 — LADPT graduates gather in Panama.
- March 20 — Jean flies home.
- March 20-28 — Chuck is in Londrina, Brazil, to teach at a consultation of pastors and church planters.

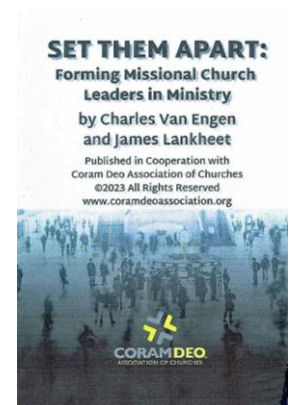
Praise God for Publications

Thank you so much for your prayers! During the summer, I was able to complete a book on forming missional church leaders in ministry in partnership with Dr. James Lankheet of the Coram Deo Association of Churches. The thesis of this book is that *"The formation of missional church leaders is an integral component and essential responsibility of the local church. In this book, we describe six facets of a wholistic approach to the in-ministry formation of leaders in the local church.* I am always happy to see a publication make the light of day. By popular request, I'm now working on updating, expanding, and rewriting my book ***God's Missionary People***.

The fruit of your support of this doctoral program is seen in the lives of the leaders who are formed in it. During the coming decades, our graduates will influence hundreds of other leaders all over Latin America. As an illustration of this wonderful dynamic blessed by God, we thought you would like to know more about one of our graduates, Dr. Irma Espinoza, a career cross-cultural missionary in Peru. With her permission, I share with you excerpts from her recent prayer letter. Having her Ph.D. degree has greatly increased her circles of influence.

Facilitating Cross-Cultural Missions:

In April, like many years past, I participated in Mission on Board, a trip for a week on the Ucayali River, the main headstream of the Amazon River in Peru. I am one of the facilitators on the topic of Cross-cultural Missions. Additionally, I guide participants in addressing cultural and social challenges when interacting with local communities.





Strengthening Indigenous Leaders:

In July, I traveled to Pucallpa, Peru, responding to an invitation from an organization called Haggai International to accompany them in their Bible teaching ministry. For the first time, this training was directed to indigenous leaders from different ethnic groups along with their wives. This experience was enriching! On the one hand, it allowed me to respond to the questions and concerns of our indigenous brothers and sisters, and on the other hand, I was able to learn more about this ministry up close. The approach of unity and collaboration remains important.

Discipling Missionaries:

In addition to these specific activities, my work continues in other areas such as teaching in churches on topics related to missiology. Currently, I assume the responsibility of discipling missionaries who are in the field, answering their questions, and in some cases, providing them with the necessary tools to understand new cultures. I am also one of the coordinators in Peru for the Latin American Theological Fraternity (FTL), an organization which emphasizes the collaborative theological work of Latin American evangelicals.



With some brothers and sisters of the Junikuin ethnic group (left)

Preparing Training Materials & Strengthening Ties:

In May, I made a trip to Denver, Colorado to present the ministry of the Three Waves Movement (a non-profit ministry that Irma founded, cve). We also spent many days working on reviewing and developing Catalytic Leadership training materials, which we will use in September.



Focusing on the Mission Ahead:

I traveled to Tennessee in August, being part of the ALTECO Board of Directors. We had healthy, lively interactions and hearts ready to serve God and the Three Waves Movement, always with a focus on the Amazon. I thank God for having such dedicated colleagues!

RCA Global Mission does not receive denominational assessments or covenant shares. We depend on the faithful generosity of churches and individuals.

(ALTECO is a broad partnership of Christian individuals and organizations that focus on the empowerment and holistic development of the 400+ tribal nations of the Amazon basin and lowlands of South America. They assist tribal leaders in forming their own networks and infrastructures, so they can better coordinate their leadership resources and assume greater responsibility and autonomy. — from their website, cve).

Thank you!
Chuck and Jean Van Engen