

latin american



missions board

THE **lamb** NEWSLETTER

*... and I beheld
the Lamb of God
going forth among
the children of men.*

First Nephi 3:82

September 2006 • Issue 11

"And blessed are ye if you have no disputations among you"

—III Nephi 8:68

I am pleased to report that the LAMB Board has been earnestly seeking to claim the Lord's blessing as it relates to the scripture given above. What a blessing it's been to work with the some of the other brethren serving in Latin America. We have gotten to know brother Chuck Sperry and the Family Support Group much better as we look at ways we can serve together and support each others efforts. They are a true blessing to the work and a blessing to know.

We are looking at a project to help support the Seventies, and looking forward to an even closer relationship with all those good brothers.

I did want to respond to a letter that has been circulated recently. It was stated in that letter that LAMB had affiliated itself with the Branch Conference and that is not a true statement. While as a board we look with favor on any God directed effort to bring unity to The Restoration movement. We have not made any official affiliation with the Joint Branch nor have we been asked to.

We remain committed, with your help, to our

mission of providing ministry and support to the people of Latin America.

I want to take this opportunity to thank brother Lowell Augenstein and all the good brethren that went with him on the recent trip to Honduras. They worked very hard on three church building projects and made great progress. There is another trip in the works and we hope to have funds available to complete the two projects that LAMB has agreed to be responsible for.

I also want to thank each of you that so faithfully support us with your gifts and prayers. We could not do anything without you. I know that many of you have committed to some level of monthly support and that is so appreciated. For those that prefer to give a one time gift we welcome those as well, and finally, if you prefer supporting a special project please check our special needs list.

May God richly bless each of you.

Bud Drummond, LAMB Chairman

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To sign up for the newsletter, please visit our website, www.SpanishMinistries.org, or contact Aaron Rhoads (see Contact Us).

FACTS & FICTION

by Aaron Rhoads



Salaries Paid in Honduras?

Recently some allegations were made on some internet discussion boards that LAMB is paying salaries to ministers in Honduras. While these allegations are not true, there is a certain amount of subjectivity to the statements as well as any response that might be made, so it bears exploring the subject here.

Situations in foreign countries, in my experience, cannot be accurately summed up in a single inflammatory statement. In private conversations with my friends I have made inflammatory statements on one subject or another, so I do not fault anyone for venting their frustrations. However, a reasoned response seems more appropriate to me.

LAMB does the best we can to ensure that the missionary work is supported in a manner consistent with scripture. Our policy is to reimburse Elder's expenses, such as gas, food, plane tickets, or reasonable unforeseen expenses, which are incurred for a specific missionary endeavor. Our policy is also to provide family support while the missionary is away from home on the missionary trip.

God has provided two methods for promoting His work: One is where the missionary goes without "purse or scrip" and expenses are addressed by the good will of those receiving the ministry, as well as by divine intervention. The other is where expenses are addressed through tithing. At this time we leave it to another debate at another time whether God would prefer that missionaries go without purse or scrip, or if He would prefer that expenses be paid with the tithes. However, as both are scriptural, we do not think it incorrect to use either method.

The other half of missionary work is not focused on the missionary work at all, but on the family back home. Using either of the two methods above, the family of the missionary is cared for by the saints. That care can be provided by the saints in the area, or by saints abroad. In this case, we—you and I—are the saints abroad and we are in a better financial situation to provide the support than the saints

in the area. If that situation were to change then I would fully expect LAMB to let the saints in the area shoulder the burden of caring for the family of the missionary.

LAMB has requested that men be sent on a regular basis to Honduras in various missions. Therefore, the reimbursement for their expenses has become fairly regular, as has the cost of supporting their families while they are gone. This should not be confused with a salary which is a fixed compensation to the individual for work despite how many hours the person works. Family support provides nothing to the individual who is serving, but instead cares for the family while the individual is away. Elder's expenses also do not compensate the individual for their work, but instead reimburse them for their necessary expenses while completing the tasks requested of them.

So, on the surface it would seem that there is no basis for accusing LAMB of setting up a system of paying ministers a salary. However under the surface is a more egregious concern: that ministers of the Lord are using the tithes of the saints for their own personal gain. Worse yet is the insinuation that LAMB knows this full well and is assisting in it!

LAMB does not support paid ministry and in fact we have made it a matter of written policy to the contrary. Should we discover that such a situation exists we would most definitely act immediately to correct the situation . . . if by doing nothing else than to stop sending funds. By virtue of sending people to minister on behalf of the Lord, we are placing a certain amount of trust in them. Worse than misusing money would be teaching a false gospel, ordaining priesthood where God has not called, or baptizing where there is in fact no covenant. LAMB does not believe it has misplaced its trust in the individuals who are serving. However, money is the least of our concerns when mistrust enters into the equation. Yet, despite trusting those who are providing this missionary work, we require them to provide reports detailing how the money was used.

At this time the Elders in Honduras determine who is sent to these missions and LAMB requires an accounting of the trips; the family support and expenses which were incurred. If reports are not provided, then funds are not sent the next month. We believe that we are less likely to be aware of disreputable individuals than the priesthood in the area. So, we rely on the priesthood to require accounting of the individuals that are sent, and in turn we require of the priesthood a report that the funds were disbursed appropriately. If a person were to abuse this system it would be through falsification of receipts or falsification of reports about the trip. Could more be done? Possibly. . . there have been other methods proposed that would be more rigorous for the missionary, and which might provide a greater degree of trust. However we have considered our current level of reporting to be sufficient. At the very least, it is consistent with what has been done in times past. Perhaps that isn't such a strong statement. There have been times in the past where no accounting was required. . . that is not a very high bar to be compared against. A stronger statement is that we are today requiring more of our missionaries than has been required of some in the past. It is also true that we are not requiring as much reporting as has sometimes been required in the past. However, what was done in the past is not the gospel we have to live by. Instead we must live in agreement with scripture, and with the wisdom and knowledge provided by God.

There have been situations from time to time where we have scratched our heads over what to do. We have met these situations with prayer, study, and deliberation. We have endeavored to make our

decisions by Common Consent, even though our policy would allow us to make decisions by majority rule. This has often meant deliberating long after we might have otherwise made a decision, but we believe that the extra work is worth the unity it brings.

You may recall that LAMB has not always been under the Elders Conference, but at one time was an independent organization. We thought it wise at the time to place ourselves under the Elders Conference in order that there was someone over us to observe that our policies were in fact in agreement with scripture, and that we did in fact follow our policies. We make regular reports to the Evangelism Council as to the work that is going on, and the Evangelism

Council has the ability to question us about our decisions should they ever have concern.

There will probably always be disagreement about how the missionary work should be carried out. My hope is that if you disagree with how we are doing things that you will come talk with us. I do not know a single person on the board who is unreasonable and bent on calling the work his own. Instead, I see a collection of men who

have a love for the people in Latin America, and a desire to see as many as possible come to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and His church as restored in 1830. I see these men struggling together to do this according to the leadings of the Holy Spirit, the law of scripture, and the love of the Lord. And, if it is not too presumptuous of me, I see you working with us to see that this good news, that Jesus has conquered death and that He has restored His church in these last days so that His kingdom can be established, is preached in every Latin American country.

Aaron Rhoads



A TIME FOR HARVEST

by Gary Metzger



Plans are underway for a follow-up trip to Peru and a missionary trip to Brazil this July. Our elder, Hugo Flores, is moving to Arequipa, Peru, with his family to unite two of the church families. His dad, an ex-mormon bishop, is also going, to see if united, they can raise up the work. This has been a prayer of ours for more than a year.

Hugo has been working away from his family for many months this year, trying to sustain his family, with limited job opportunities.

A man in Buenos Aires, Argentina has left a different denomination of the Restoration movement and requested that we visit him. He is interested in sharing our tracts and study materials and assisting in the Restoration Branch movement. On his own, he placed the entire Spanish Book of Mormon on CD for people to be able to read.

Our contact in Brazil continues to prepare others

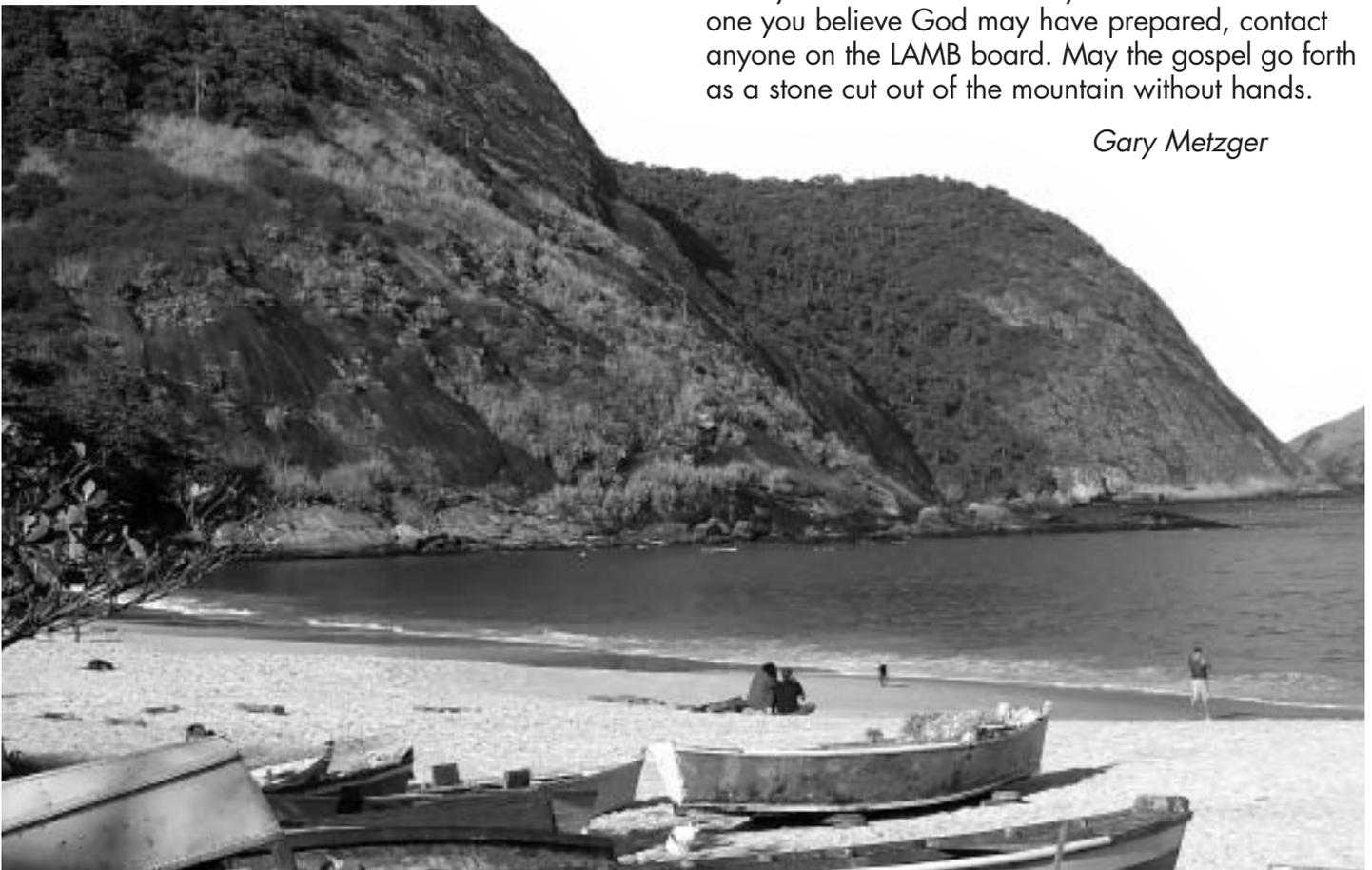
for the gospel, to be harvested upon our arrival. He has already translated 3 tracts into Portuguese and is desirous of being baptized into the Restoration.

Given the prior contacts we have mentioned from Uruguay and Venezuela, the contacts mentioned in this article, and the church being already established in Peru, we know the Lord has prepared a harvest.

Is there someone who can go to South America for 6 months to a year to develop and expand the work? They would need to be an elder, fluent in Spanish, and ready to travel and testify of the gospel of Jesus Christ in these latter days. Who has the Lord prepared for this hour—to raise up the work among the already established contacts and see the fruition of the earnest pleas they have made for the Restoration gospel to be in their countries?

If you are interested or if you are aware of someone you believe God may have prepared, contact anyone on the LAMB board. May the gospel go forth as a stone cut out of the mountain without hands.

Gary Metzger



DOLLARS AND SAINTS

by Steven Schultz



Throughout our Restoration Church history, missionary travel has usually been made by dedicated priesthood and saints on limited funds, at best, and under conditions of great personal and physical sacrifice. It is no different today. Material costs to build churches has risen 50 – 75% in recent years. Travel in Latin America is still difficult and slow, airfare is prohibitively expensive and fuel there is \$5.50 a gallon. Yet, to save money the priesthood of Honduras, Belize, Mexico, etc. often walk, hitch-hike or take a slow bus in their quest to minister to congregations or families several times each week. What an example of dedication! The geographic area to minister in is quite large for our limited budget and we pray mightily for its expansion.

Besides this newsletter, there is no overhead expense to speak of. This means that all of your faithful donations go for evangelism work. Board members contribute significantly as well. The church construction in Magote and Jardines needs additional funds to complete the roofs, infrastructure, etc. There are opportunities, too, for further ministry in Cuba and South America.

We are jointly committed, with you, to meet these challenges in order to see the good news of Christ's kingdom bear fruit among the Heritage Peoples. While striving to be effective stewards of contributions, it is exciting to see our brothers and sisters strengthened, baptism occurring and new congregations established. Let us invest our surplus in ways that yield righteous dividends in the lives of His people. Thank you for your faithfulness as the Holy Spirit touches us all.

May Year-To-Date Actual Donations \$10,880

May Year-To-Date Budget Donations \$17,666

Steven Schultz, Treasurer

SPECIAL NEEDS

- Funds for building projects in Honduras



- Those that speak Spanish that would like to help with the work.

(Opportunities are available in domestic service and in Latin America)



- Funding to help with vehicle expenses



LETTERS FROM JUAN



3/23/2006

We enjoyed our 12 days missionary trip with our people in Jojutla, Tlaquiltenango, Galeana and Zacatepec Morelos. We visited over 60 persons having the attendance of over 30 persons to our Sunday activities. Our classes were mainly based on the Book of Mormon supported by the Doctrine and Covenants and the Bible. Our people down there are beginning to think on a building in where we can meet for our Church activities or on a piece of land where we can build a little chapel. One of those families promised to try to find some place not expensive and will let us know when I go the next time.

Day after day we visited 3 or 4 families most of them in the afternoon, the majority of the husbands work morning time even on Sundays. One of those families are Sabath, but are interested in attending to our Church activities on Sunday besides they seem to be very pleased in our Restored Church and our teachings. One of the families who seemed to be cold and not willing to come to Church, whose mother is R.L.D.S. since before 1984. This time, after visiting this family, when we were visiting a family close to where she lives and ready to leave at night, she sent her mother to ask me to go back and bless her just born little grandson. The Lord said: And greater things ye shall see. Our God is so good to make us available to come to those who cry for a blessing.

I am planning to come to our Elders Conference combined with R.B. Conference. I requested funds for my trip to Independence from the Seventy fund and have received no answer. Besides, I would like to know if at this point Brother Lowell and Sister Kim I can find a place to stay with you.

5/2/2006

We enjoyed our missionary trip in Matamoros, after visiting all those members and friends of our Church there. Sunday was a big party day for the Children in Mexico but anyway we had an attendance of 15 persons for our Church activity. Titino and his family

did not come. Emilio reported to the group that he will have his eye surgery on May 23, and requested our prayers for our Lord to bless him to have no problem in his surgery.

Rossy, a lady Church member testified that after Manuel and Lowell blessed her children when she returned home she received a phone call from U.S. It was her brother that after 25 years of not hearing from him, he wanted them to know that he lives and is well. This is, I explained them, considered an extension of the blessing for the relatives of those two kids, Rossy's sons, who received the blessing from these two elders of our Church. It is the Spirit of our God that is working with us, His people, to bring all these blessings to those our brethren who cry for joy.

6/13/2006

Last night Tina and I returned from Jojutla Morelos where we stayed for ten days doing missionary work in the towns of Jojutla, Tlaquiltenango, Galeana, Zacatepec, Xicatlacotla and Tlaltizapan. Having Colonia Manzanares of Tlaquiltenango town as the place to meet for our Church general activities on Wednesday and Sunday. We got there June 1st at night. June 2 and 3 we started our visiting and teaching program firstly in Tlaquiltenango then to the other families who live in the other towns. This time we did not find at home one family in El Higuierón, but one more family in Tlaquiltenango was added to our program of people interested in the Restoration. Again this time we taught from the D. and C., Book of Mormon and the Bible being our theme Come to Christ and be baptized as well as The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.

We held Church activities each night in Tlaquiltenango, Colonia Manzanares as we spent our time visiting and having classes in the houses of the families in the other towns. We had an average attendance of 23 for Sunday morning Church activities. The Spirit of our God was with us on every class and sermon. He manifested His presence one day even in a lady about 50 years old who dropped

LETTERS FROM JUAN (CONT'D.)

in to our class one morning and said: I am looking for one of the Seventy, I want to hear him and his teaching about the Word of God, I heard your voice brother Seventy and want to join your group for awhile. This lady (widow) is one of the very active in our classes and services, this time was the first time she called me by my Priesthood office name. I praised our Lord Jesus and so did those who were present. Our pain is when we leave them with tears in their eyes and saying: Brother Juan and Sister Tina, come back soon, we enjoy your company.

7/12/2006

Tina and I started our missionary trip at 7 a.m. last Friday. We had to stop our missionary visits at 5 p.m. due to a hard storm which made impossible our transit in the streets in Colonia Sec. 16, on Saturday morning with much courage we started again our missionary work in the different homes of the Church friends and members; again we had to stop at 5 P.M. because big huge clouds covered the sky and lightnings and thunders advised us that we should come out from Colonia Sec. 16

before the flood in the streets. On Sunday morning we had an attendance of 14 who came in time for our classes and sermon, a few others came a few minutes before the end of Church activities. Again, we were visited by the presence of the Holy Spirit, and with no other way as I was pushed by the Spirit of God to finish our activities with a prayer service and Emilio asked for the group to pray for the health of his eyes, some prayed for guidance, their family and others gave thanks to the Lord for the blessings of the message brought to them by us. This includes all who with much love and courage help for the work to be done, and it is done according to the will of God which is to take the fullness of His Gospel especially in these days. A new candidate for baptism made me plan for a baptism service before November this year. I will check on my car to find the problem that makes the engine in my car to make some strange noises after passing through so much water in Matamoros. Everything becomes very easy to do when thinking of the marvelous works of our God especially to be able to bring the good message to those who find this opportunity.

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