



Send Us as “Lifetime Missionaries” to Colombia Beth Wallace

I was the first born of Troy and Emma Hickmon, October 9, 1935 in Bladenboro, NC. My father was the “fix it man” and my mother was the “listener, helping mend hurting hearts and bodies.” “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel” was the message of the Free Will Baptist and Southern Baptist Churches, which shaped our family life. We prayed, raised offerings, and sent missionaries. After high school I enrolled in Free Will Baptist Bible College in Nashville, Tennessee and this is where I met Boyce Wallace. To make a long and beautiful story short—we were married July 24, 1955.

We soon found our way to the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and have been at home ever since. Boyce pastored several congregations in Middle Tennessee and I finished school, served alongside him, and cared for our children, Melody and Andrew.

It was during this time that we began to hear God’s call to missionary work. In the beginning of the discernment process, we thought that maybe God was calling us to Japan, because that was where the Cumberland Presbyterian Church needed a missionary couple. To be fully prepared to serve God as a missionary, Boyce enrolled in the Cumberland Presbyterian seminary. Upon graduation in 1962, there was no mission field open, but God called us to Marlow, Oklahoma to serve a church there. Six months later, we received the call to go to Colombia, South America. Were we interested? Yes! After a moving farewell to our beloved Marlow church family, we began our journey to language school in Costa Rica—by car with two children in the backseat with their games and toys. That 10-day car trip confirmed our call as we experienced community sharing in local and remote places with our minimal Spanish.

Our work in Colombia started in Armenia where Boyce served as pastor and I taught English in the private school that our two children attended. I served in various roles in that first church and truly felt welcomed and a part of the communities that surrounded us. We are proud to say we are Quindianos because we arrived in time to celebrate the birth of the Department! (State)

Our call to Colombia has spanned over 50 years. Together Boyce and I have served various churches meeting the different needs of many different people in Armenia, Cali, Buenaventura, places easily accessible, and places that can only be reached by boat. We have loved and served the Blacks of the Pacific coast, the Indigenous of Nariño, our nurturing Quiendian family, and the welcoming Caleños who opened the door and said. “Make yourself at home.” We have been blessed. We have seen lives transformed by the Good News of Jesus

Christ. We've seen churches start from tiny seeds, flourish into thriving, passionate churches such as the CP Church in Popayán, our largest church in Colombia. We've witnessed countless miracles of love and faith.

The Lord opened the door in Colombia over 50 years ago and said, "I send you." Wherever we have been our Lord has provided. Each member of my family has left part of our hearts in Colombia. Boyce died at our daughter's home in Florida in December 2016 while we were there for Christmas. I returned to Colombia and am "at home" in Cali. I want to be used in this season of my life because we were called to be Lifetime Missionaries. I covet your prayers and the welcome mat is out.

Reflections

Read John 20:19-22. After Jesus' resurrection, he went to his disciples and told them he was sending them as God had sent him. Note that he tells them they are to receive the Holy Spirit to go with them. When God called Boyce and Beth Wallace to go to Colombia, God equipped them by filling them with the Holy Spirit so that they could do great things in Christ's name. What does it mean to you to know that God sent a comforter, the Holy Spirit, to abide with you always? Name persons you know, or have known, who were filled with the Holy Spirit. How were they different?

Call to Action

How can you seek to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? Make a covenant to begin each day with prayer that the Holy Spirit will guide you so that you will see and meet the needs of someone today. Make it your goal to live a spirit filled life.

Prayer

Spirit of the living God, you broke down barriers and showed us there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither male nor female. You opened our eyes to see that we all are your children: red, yellow, black, brown, and white. Now we see how the hands of the rich were empty and the hearts of the poor were full. All are one in Jesus Christ and for this we praise you. Thanks be to God for the lives and ministry of Beth and Boyce Wallace. Continue to pour out your blessings on Beth and grant her opportunities to continue to serve you at this season of her life. May we, like Beth, hear your calling, "Follow me," and answer, "Here am I." Amen.