

# LAC Elders

Serving the People Who Serve



## Rick & Ruth Johnson



Rick and Ruth Johnson have been married 47 years with 3 married children, and 7 grandchildren. Their missionary career of 40 years includes the Dominican Republic, the Caribbean School of Theology, Area Director of the Caribbean, and then as a member on the World Missions Executive Committee, serving 18 years as the director of Personnel and Member Care. Pastoral care and counseling have been central in what God has allowed them to do. Returning to LAC in 2021, their primary assignment became member care to the LAC missionary family.

## Laurel Ellis

Laurel first went to Latin America in 1982 as a missionary associate alongside her husband, Rick, helping establish new churches in Argentina and Paraguay. They subsequently became career missionaries planting churches in Loja, Ecuador and in several cities in Chile. During those years three sons were born on the mission field.

In 2017 Rick unexpectedly died of a heart attack. Laurel continues to follow God's call as a missionary in Cuenca, Ecuador. She serves alongside Ecuadorian pastors and the missionary team, helping them to expand their ministries including church planting as well as identifying and developing leaders. She is also involved in training and mentoring Ecuadorian and AGWM missionaries.



## Don & Melba Exley



Don Exley, his wife Melba, and their 3-year-old daughter arrived in Argentina in June 1976 and soon began a church planting ministry. They began that ministry by opening four new churches in the city of Córdoba. They then went to Mexico City, where they planted a church that is now a large church with a Christian school.

In 1990, Donald was asked to serve as the area director for the Southern Cone of South America, overseeing the ministries of Assemblies of God missionaries in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

At the end of December 2009, Don resigned from that position to continue his ministry as pastor of the Christian Family Center in Martínez, Buenos Aires Province. They founded that church in 1997, and after several years of living in Chile, the national church in Argentina asked the Exleys to return and pastor that church, which has a primary and secondary school and a rehabilitation center for men with addictions. Today, the congregation, under the leadership of Pastor Gonzalo Caloustian, has nearly 3,000 members.

In addition to his missionary and pastoral responsibilities, Don has frequently been the guest speaker at various conferences and meetings around the world.

## Dick & Cynthia Nicholson

The Nicholsons were both raised AG. Dick is an MK (born in Cuba) and Cynthia was raised in a faithful AG family on Long Island, NY. They met at Central Bible College, later married and upon graduation, planted a church in La Grange, Illinois. After pastoring two more churches on the West Coast, they were called to missions and thereafter planted or helped plant 16 churches in Argentina, Paraguay, and Cayman Islands. They also based in Mexico City for 3 years holding 40+ Holy Spirit conferences throughout Mexico. Then they served 3 years as Caribbean ADs and 17 years as LAC Regional Directors.



They both have taught in Bible Schools or extension courses in several LAC countries, as well as Bible or Pastoral Counseling courses for ISUM (post-bible school) and Facultad (MA level). Cynthia continues teaching virtually for ISUM. She has also worked 20 years for Focus on the Family as a licensed marriage therapist in Branson, MO, when they aren't traveling in ministry. They both serve on the Cuba Resource Team.

The Nicholsons have three adult children (two in pastoral ministry), eight grandchildren, and five great grandchildren (going on 7). They consider it a privilege and honor to continue serving LAC and global friends.

## Ken & Marcie Dahlager



After serving 40 years in LAC, Ken and Marcie retired in 2014. Since then, they have been leading the Seniors' Ministry at Praise Assembly in Springfield. They served 16 years in Costa Rica, eight years in Mexico, two years with special projects for the LAC region, ten years with ChildHope, and finished their missionary journey back in Costa Rica. They were involved in Church planting, training the next generation of pastors and leaders, reaching children, and investing in new missionaries. They served as Area Directors in Mexico for six years and then AD at large for twelve years.

While they were in Costa Rica they were privileged to serve as coordinators for the language school students and thirteen years as a board member of the Instituto de Lengua Española.

Marcie took over the bookkeeping early in their ministry and specialized in raising their kids. Joni is a missionary in Spain working with "On the Red Box" with her husband Jacob Bock. Jon and Jennifer serve in Costa Rica at CINCEL and advance education in LAC. Jenny and her husband live in Springfield and are extremely active in their church. The Dahlagers have nine grandchild and three great grands.

They would be delighted to help you talk through some of your challenges and pray with you.