

Montaño continues to follow wherever God leads

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Carlos Montaño felt an early calling to Christian service, but not a specific direction. Even so, Montaño understands God has guided his life and continues leading him into places he never imagined.

“My calling has been a process in which the Lord opens doors, and I go through them,” he said.

Montaño grew up in Bolivia, along with two sisters and three brothers, in a home with parents who committed their lives to ministry. He attended an art institute in Cochabamba where he concentrated on music. Of the 42 students who started with him in fourth grade, he was one of only 15 who graduated from 12th grade.

In the early 1980s, he received the support from a church in Georgia to attend a university in the United States. As a student, he continued using his gifts for churches in Georgia, where he served as music and youth minister. He also traveled extensively, ministering through concerts, conferences, revivals and missionary work.

Those experiences eventually led him to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, where he and his wife found a home and raised their children.

A family affair

Their daughter Carlena and their sons, Charly and Caleb, instantly became key participants of their parents’ ministry. Since the children were

homeschooled, they were able to travel with the parents, using music to introduce people to Jesus—and often to Latin American culture.

“We have enjoyed this so much. It is a privilege to serve,” Montaña said.

He noted the family’s ministry often provided some Christians in the United States their first opportunity for interaction with someone from Latin America.

As a college student, Montaña only met four other Latin Americans, and Atlanta was the only city in Georgia where he could find a few Hispanic churches. Outside of school and some churches in big cities, Montaña remembers his interactions with other Hispanics—usually first-generation immigrants—took place at the ranches or farms of church members where they worked as day laborers.

He saw that as another door for him not only to worship with churches, but also introduce congregations to his culture and help Anglo Christians learn how God communicates through different languages and cultures, he said.

With a style of music from the Aymara and Quechua indigenous tribes of the Andes Mountains, the family offered a “a little taste of those cultures,” Montaña said.

Many times, members of the churches they visited invited his family into their homes, providing an avenue for their relationship to grow stronger and their intercultural understanding to increase.

Supporting churches in Latin America

As some Anglo Christians in the United States heard for the first time about Latin American cultures, Montaña informed them how some indigenous people in the region continue worshipping elements of nature.



Carlos Montaña and his family have traveled across the country and around the world presenting the gospel and supporting the ministries of different churches. (Photo courtesy of Carlos Montaña)

Thanks to the relationships the Montañas have built with churches in Latin America, the Montañas have been able to enlist support for them.

Ministry for the Montañas continued changing depending on the context in which they found themselves. Sometimes they collected funds to buy school supplies for families in Central America or fund the construction of a new church building.

Their ministry opened doors for the family to experience beautiful and yet very challenging moments, Montaña said.

More than half of their ministry has taken place in rural zones of Latin America, where the Montaña children learned many families there live with a lot less than families in the United States, he noted.

Since they highly esteem contextualization, the Montañas have found ministers who need support in their locations and listen to the ways they can help. They also want to help Christians discover their calling.

“Just like God has used different events in my life to guide me, we also

want God to use us in the lives of others so they can follow their call,” Montaña explained.

As times change, new doors open

God has used the Montañas in concerts with thousands of people in Latin America, where many people heard for the first time about Jesus. They also have assisted growing churches there with building supplies, children’s programs and medical mission efforts.

“I pray God will continue to open doors for them, just as he did for me,” he said.

Now Montaña understands God might be opening another door for him and his family.

His children are now adults, and they are beginning to start their own families and settle down with their own spouses.

While they may not all have the chance to travel and minister together, Montaña understands this may bring a new facet of his service to God. He also understands God may be leading each of his children to use what they learned and reach other areas of church ministry by themselves, just as he did before them.

“I don’t care where God puts them. I just hope they will never stop serving him,” Montaña said. “I hope they will always say, ‘I must live for others and not for myself.’”

After 38 years of ministry, Montaña said, he has learned trusting God is the only way Christians get where they need to be. No matter what the challenge or the problem, God has a plan, he said.

“We may not know where we’ll end, but it’s always amazing to follow God

through the doors he opens," Montañó said.