

ABBOTT NEWS BRIEFS

December 2011



SEMINARY

Government Recognition

Here is the press release I wrote upon learning of our seminary receiving government recognition.

November 11, 2011 marks a very historic occasion for Spanish Protestantism. On this day the Cabinet of the Spanish government passed a law (Royal Decree) that recognizes the civil effects of the degrees of Protestant seminaries in Spain. This puts the collaborating institutions' degrees on the level of a Spanish university degree and enables students to seek scholarship assistance from the government.

Five seminaries, now called Theological Faculties, qualified to be recognized in the first round. A Protestant accrediting commission has been formed to ensure compliance with government standards and to assess other institutions who would like to have officially recognized degrees.

The oldest Protestant seminary in Spain, the Seminario Evangélico Unido de Teología (United Evangelical Theological Seminary, now the SEUT Faculty of Theology) was founded in 1884, but only now, 127 years later, will its service of theological and pastoral formation be formally recognized by the broader society.

Marcos Abbott, the current dean at SEUT says of the decree:

“With this Royal Decree the Spanish State joins the other great European democracies that have their centers for theological and pastoral formation officially recognized. Also the new law recognizes the great effort that the evangelical academic institutions have been carrying out for more than 100 years.”



Spanish Cabinet
presided by President
José Luis Zapatero

We will begin offering the official degree in the Fall of 2012. We have much work to do, so pray for us!

SUMMER TRAVELS

Diane and I visited all of our supporting churches this summer in New Mexico, Texas, Pennsylvania and New York! One of the most amazing mission projects is the Fallowfield UMC in Atlantic, PA, a farming community. For over 50 years they have been raising money for missions by making homemade pies and selling them at the County Fair. I (Mark) worked the fair booth one day and helped in the pie kitchen one morning (6-10 am shift). The variety of pie offerings is astounding: apple, peach, cheery, blueberry crumble, raisin, elderberry, blackberry, rhubarb, strawberry rhubarb, peanut butter, lemon, and the biggest selling, coconut cream.



Francis Spencer, in the middle, doesn't just put me up for the night. She puts me to work! (My mother and wife are jealous. How does she do it?)



Mark was also able to visit old friends. Below is Dr. Bob Stamps (with his wife Ellen), formerly campus chaplain at Oral Roberts University. He is currently Dean of the Chapel at Asbury Theological Seminary. The person in the middle is Blair Bertram, a friend from ORU days.

FAMILY

Happy Birthday!

Diane's mother celebrated her 95th birthday in August! We were able to be with her for this momentous occasion. Diane's sister from Portugal, all of our immediate family and other extended family members were able to attend the reception at the Hamburg United Methodist Church.



We are thankful that the Lord has made it possible for both Diane and her sister (who lives in Portugal) to travel to Hamburg, NY to celebrate along with extended family members. Happy birthday, Kay!

Our Children

We were all together as a family for the first time in three years at the birthday celebration. Andy has been doing flight instruction in the Buffalo area for the past year. He anticipates moving on in his career in the new year. Caroline graduated from college in May and continues living in Boston. She is currently looking for a job in her field. Chris is in his first year of college at the New England Institute of Art in Boston where he is studying sound production.

On January 1 Diane and I begin our 25th year of service with Global Ministries! God has been so faithful, and we could never have done it without the prayers and loving support of our covenant churches, friends and family. Thank you!

¡Feliz Navidad! Merry Christmas!

Your Partners in the Gospel,

Mark & Diane

GBGM Missionary Codes:

Diane: 10070-Z Mark: 10069-Z