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MISSION CONNECTIONS

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Spring 2025

Goodbye

Ian Vellenga and Jhan Dotel-Vellenga

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

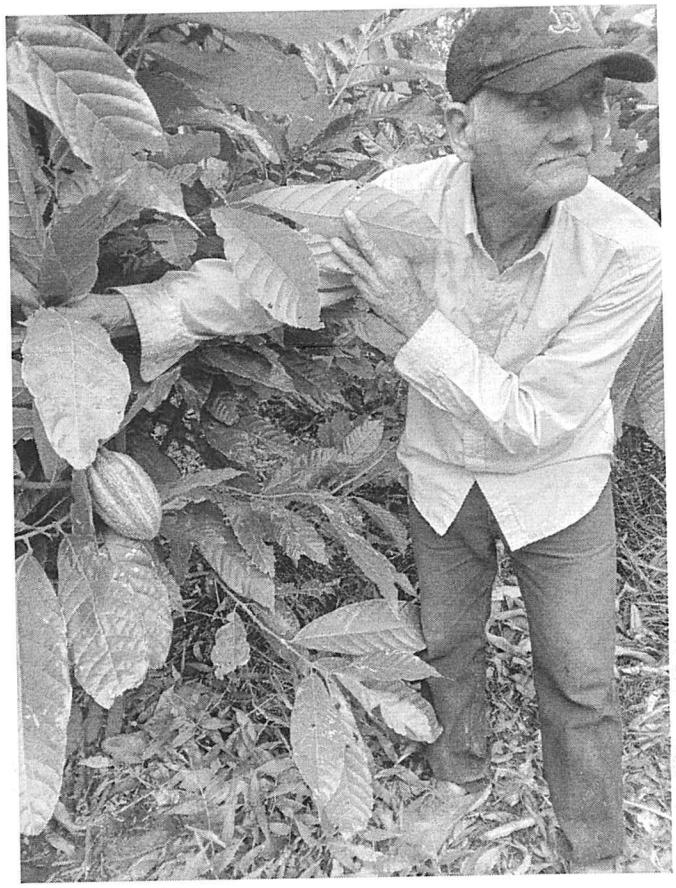
After almost seven years of serving with the PC (USA) in Nicaragua, our time has come to an end. A couple of weeks ago, World Mission leadership met with all its staff and informed us of our status in the reorganized Interim Unified Agency. We will no longer continue serving in Nicaragua as mission co-workers. Even though there will not be any official staff placed in Nicaragua, the leadership of the PC(USA) has promised to explore different ways to continue working in some capacity with local partners in the future.

We have deeply enjoyed working and living in Nicaragua. We got to explore mission from a different point of view and got to know the culture and customs of this beautiful country through its people. We got to meet a lot of different individuals in the many communities we visited. But something consistent in each one of them was how welcoming and hardworking the people are. It has been a privilege to get to work and share the Gospel with our local partners in joint mission. The work they have been doing for so many years is extraordinary, transforming and incredibly impactful. We have grown and flourished as mission co-workers and as members of the global church, thanks to them. We know this change is difficult not just for us but also for many of you. We found some hope in the commitment that many of you have had, and continue to have, to support Nicaragua and its people.

In the next couple of months, we will be getting ready to gracefully exit our call here in Nicaragua and return to the U.S. We have loved and truly enjoyed serving alongside our partners, getting to know people in the rural communities, and in some way contributing to their development. We will miss our lives here in Nicaragua, our friends and the simple daily routines that have made Nicaragua our home for so many years. We are grateful for the learning opportunities that God has provided, for the relationships created, and for allowing us to be part of such a committed and caring community of believers.

We are not sure where God is going to call us again into service, but we will try to continue supporting and engaging with local congregations and international partners the best way we can. We are grateful for the support you and your congregations have provided for us during the years of our service. You all represent the church we know and continue to love.

Jhan and Ian



Cacao Harvest in Matagalpa.