

Kansas missionary murdered in Colombia

By Kenneth D. MacHarg

Miami, FL—An Assemblies of God minister from Kansas was killed in Colombia on December 17 by an unidentified gunman.

Sisinio Bernal, from Parsons, Kansas, had just delivered a sermon near the city of Medellin when he was killed getting into a borrowed car. Police officials believe that he was mistaken for the pastor who owned the car.

Witnesses said the gunman walked up to Bernal and shot him, then sped off on a motorcycle

Pastors have been targeted in Colombia in recent months, with over 35 pastors reported to have been murdered by guerrilla groups.

Rev. Hector Pardo, pastor of the Tabernacle of Faith church in Bogotá and a well-respected evangelical spokesman in Colombia said that any one of several violent groups in the region could have carried out the shooting.

Evangelical churches in Colombia have accused the country's main leftist guerrilla group of waging a terror campaign against them. The main evangelical umbrella organization claims at over 300 churches have been forcefully closed by guerrillas in the past year. Several leading evangelical pastors have fled the country because of threats.

Bernal arrived from the United States the night before the shooting on a three-day visit. The car he borrowed belonged to Basilio Patino, the pastor of the church Bernal was visiting.

Patino, who may have been the intended victim, said he was fearful for his life and staying at a friend's house. He said he had never received death threats.

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