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Rev. Dr. Karla Ann Koll

Karla Koll

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(Mailing address operational after August 27, 2007)

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Karla will be on interpretation assignment for one year beginning in July 2007. To ask her to speak at your church, please [contact her directly](#).

Karla serves as professor of history, mission, and religions for the Latin American Biblical University (UBL), an interdenominational institution located in San Jose, Costa Rica, which has been training Latin American church leaders for over 80 years. The UBL placed Karla with the Evangelical Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA), an associated institution in Guatemala.

Karla arrived in Guatemala with her family in September of 2000.

Karla and her family live just outside of Quetzaltenango, a city in the western highlands of Guatemala. Karla teaches university-level courses in Quetzaltenango and in Guatemala City. Together with her students she explores the call to be a part of God's mission today in contexts of violence and corruption.

In recent years Karla has also taught courses at institutions related to the UBL in Honduras and Peru, as well as courses at the main campus in San Jose. Karla is developing materials on the history of Christianity for the UBL's Bible institute program. Two groups of Mayan students in Guatemala have been contributing their insights and questions to this process.

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Karla writes of her work, "Guatemala is a fascinating place in which to explore with students the history and mission of Christ's church. Several different forms of Christianity—Roman Catholicism, historical Protestantism, evangelicalism, classical Pentecostalism, and Neo-Pentecostalism—compete for people's allegiance. Mayan spirituality, long practiced clandestinely, has become more open and public since the signing of the peace accords in 1996. People are asking how Mayan spirituality and Christianity relate to one another. They are coming up with very different and conflicting conclusions. As a missiologist from outside, I can offer people tools with which to explore these questions as they seek to be faithful to Jesus Christ in this context."

Karla first went to Central America as a theology student. In 1984, she spent eight months in San José, Costa Rica, at the Latin American Biblical Seminary, the institution which today is the UBL. She went to work in Nicaragua in 1986 as a study tour facilitator with the Center for Global Education of Augsburg College. Karla was first commissioned as a mission worker with the PC(USA) in 1988 when she joined the staff of the Interchurch Center for Theological and Social Studies (CIEETS) in Managua, Nicaragua, as a seminary professor. She taught at CIEETS until 1994, at which time she returned to the United States for further education.

Karla is a minister member of Pueblo Presbytery in southeastern Colorado. She is a member of the American Society of Missiology, the Association of Professors of Mission, the Latin American Studies Association, the Presbyterian Historical Society, and the Society for Pentecostal Studies. She received a bachelor of arts from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, with a focus in environmental sciences and political economy. She holds a master's of divinity and a master's of theology in Christian Ethics from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. In May of 2003, she completed her doctor of philosophy degree in mission, ecumenics and the history of religions from Princeton Theological Seminary. Her dissertation focuses on the PC(USA)'s mission relationships in Central America during the 1980s.


Karla is married to Francisco Javier Torrez Bermudez. Javier, native of Nicaragua, is currently studying political science at the Rafael Landivar University. Their daughter, Tamara Rebekah Torrez-Koll, attends the Inter-American School in Quetzaltenango.

Birthdays:

Karla – May 3

Javier – December 20

Tamara – December 15



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