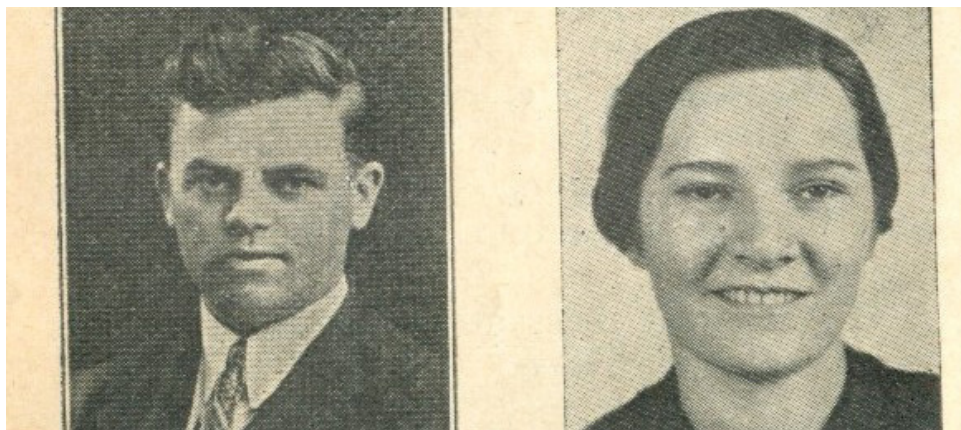


AG NEWS

A COLLECTION OF THIS WEEK'S STORIES FROM NEWS.AG.ORG



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

Assemblies of God missionary Ernest Paul Lindholm (1907-1940) committed his life in service to God with a passion for African people. He died in the jungle just one year after arriving in the Belgian Congo.

Ernest and his wife of about five months, Grace, set sail for the Congo in October 1939. Grace, who had committed her life to serve in Africa, was very early in her pregnancy when they arrived in the Congo on her birthday on Nov. 26. Stephen Paul, was born in May 1940.

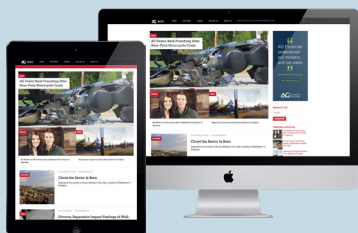
Early in the morning of the one-year anniversary of their arrival, Ernest gathered a few Congolese friends and

went hunting for a buffalo to pay his workers and surprise his wife with a treat of meat for her birthday.

During the hunt, Ernest was gored and killed by a Cape buffalo. Grace remained in Africa. When it came time for her furlough in 1945, she returned to the United States and studied practical nursing. This proved to be invaluable as in 1948 a need for a leper home in the Congo arose. By 1954, more than 300 lepers were under Grace's treatment. She retired in 1961.


Read the report on Ernest Lindholm's death on page 8 of the Dec. 21, 1940, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at <http://s2.ag.org/dec211940>.

Read the full versions of these stories on news.ag.org



NEWS FOR, ABOUT, AND FROM
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

CONNECT WITH US ON

 FACEBOOK  TWITTER

 RSS AND OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER

VISIT [NEWS.AG.ORG](http://news.ag.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

Christmas
AT NORTHPLACE

**AN EXTRAORDINARY
ORDINARY MANGER**

**TEEN CHALLENGE
SHAPES EVANGELIST**

**CALLED FROM JAPAN
TO CHI ALPHA**

**DISTRICT THANKS
HISPANIC PIONEER**



AN EXTRAORDINARY ORDINARY MANGER

BY DAN VAN VEEN

This year, Pastor Bryan Jarrett and Northplace Church in Sachse, Texas, found a unique way to bring attention to the significance of Christmas — a wooden manger.

For some, a manger could be a rather common Christmas symbol. However, that isn't the case for Northplace Church. This congregation now has a manger that may never be forgotten — it can literally hold a ton of hay!

Earlier this summer, the manger theme was chosen to be used throughout the interior of the church for Christmas. The platform, the lobby, promotional materials, and even T-shirts all feature manger scenes to help visually support Jarrett's sermon series focusing on the manger.

With all the manger-themed sites located on the inside of the church, it was recommended that a manger be set up in front of the church.

"I told them that if we're going to have a manger outside, it can't be to scale — not life size — it was going to

have to be big to draw attention," Jarrett says. "My part of it ended there. The team took it and handed the project to volunteers."

Linda Dugger, the events organizer for the church for the past 12 years, took over the project and began imagining what would be needed to really bring attention to the manger.

"I knew the manger would have to be pretty significant for people to notice it," Dugger says. With the help of her husband, who's a builder, they started to sketch the plans.

Familiar with the phrase, "Everything's bigger in Texas?" That's where the Duggers went — bigger!

Handing the schematic to one of the church's small groups made up of people ideally suited for the project — ranchers and farmers — the project got underway.

Approximately a month and 2,000 pounds of lumber later, a massive manger reached into the sky. About 20 feet tall, 20 feet long, and 18 feet wide,

DEALING WITH HOLIDAY ANXIETY

BY DONALD A. LICH

Are you anxiously awaiting the holidays or awaiting the holidays with anxiety? Or depression? For many, the end-of-year holidays are the most stressful, anxiety/depression prone time of the year.

It is highly likely that you or someone you love experiences the pain of anxiety and (at times) sheer panic. Anxiety and depression are unhealthy states of conscious emotional suffering and guilt, accompanied by excessive worry, a marked decrease in the sense of personal value, and a reduction of mental and physical activity. In many instances, anxiety and depression can have "*spiritual-like symptoms*" without a *spiritual origin*. It is characterized by signs such as sadness, apathy, feelings of worthlessness, withdrawal, and thoughts of death or suicide

One feels unlovable, valueless, unforgivable, unchangeable, and alone. The person suffering anxiety/depression needs a supportive environment where he or she is accepted unconditionally. The Christian is encouraged to "get moving." That

might entail talking to someone else, taking a walk, clearing your desk, engaging in moderate exercise, or reading passages from the Bible.

Among Christians, there often is the mistaken view that those who experience depression must be guilty of some sin. There are numerous examples in Scripture where leaders experienced depression and/or anxiety, including Moses, Job, Elijah, Jonah, and Paul.

If you find yourself with loss of appetite, lowered sex drive, insomnia, and a life void of joy — and *this mood doesn't lift by itself after just a few days* — you may be at risk of experiencing anxiety/depression. Perhaps you have lost someone close to you, a job, or prestige.

If you or someone you love appears to be at greater risk to commit suicide, seek immediate help from a friend, pastor, or competent Christian counselor. Do not travel the journey alone. According to God's Word, you are lovable, valuable, forgivable, changeable, and never alone!

THE ABCs OF SALVATION

ACCEPT that you are a sinner, and God's punishment for your sin is death and separation from God forever.

BELIEVE that Jesus paid God's price for your sin when He died on the cross.

CONFESS "Jesus, I believe You are who the Bible and history declares You are — the Son of God. I humble myself and surrender to You. Forgive me. Make me spiritually whole. Change my life. Amen."



CALLED FROM JAPAN TO CHI ALPHA

BY DEANN ALFORD

Ryota Yogo left his native Japan to study journalism in Texas. But after he heard the gospel through Chi Alpha at Sam Houston State University, he instead felt dispatched to proclaim God's good news.

Today, Yogo, 35, is a U.S. missionary associate with Chi Alpha at the University of Texas-San Antonio.

That's an unlikely destiny for someone who knew nothing about the Bible and had never even seen a church until 2002 — when he showed up with one suitcase to study at Sam Houston in Huntsville. He knew no one in the U.S. But his first week, a staffer from Chi Alpha invited Yogo to a "welcome to America" party of the campus group.

"I saw how genuine their lifestyle was," Yogo says. "Through the power of community, I was able to see my sins and the forgiveness of Christ."

While he did eventually graduate with a journalism degree, Yogo sensed the Holy Spirit calling him to full-time

ministry. In 2011, he joined the University of Texas at San Antonio Chi Alpha and became a full-time staff member in 2013.

He recognizes that his Japanese ethnicity has served him well as he shares the gospel on a U.S. university campus. While Yogo reaches out to everybody, regardless of origin, he does have an affinity for foreigners who may never have heard the gospel.

"Because I'm a former international student, I do know what internationals on campus are going through," Yogo says. "They can embrace me as a friend quickly."

He's particularly burdened not only to reach those from countries that historically have never had access to the gospel, but also to instill into U.S. students, who grew up in church, with a call to live missions now and to minister to such internationals while on American soil.

DISTRICT THANKS HISPANIC PIONEER

BY WILLIAM RINCÓN

The AG Northwest Hispanic District recently honored 84-year-old Hill Alvarado in recognition of his longtime ministry. Three decades ago, Alvarado arrived in Lynden, Washington because he heard the previous pastor had left. With only \$85 and his wife and five children in tow, Alvarado decided to rebuild a congregation that practically had dwindled to nonexistence. He named the new church Templo Evangelico. One of only two bilingual churches at the time in the region, Alvarado remained pastor until retiring in 2010.

Alvarado's arrival in Lynden followed a storied life of seeking the Lord's guidance after converting to Christ in 1953 in Munday, Texas. At the age of 18, the son of Mexican immigrants didn't know how to read or write, either Spanish or English.

Motivated by his recent salvation, Alvarado entered a Spanish Bible institute in 1954 and says the Lord miraculously enabled him to learn to read. Alvarado established himself as one of the first Hispanic pastors in the Washington community. Alvarado gave Hispanics in Lynden a place to worship.

As a father of three daughters and two sons, his work continues through his family. Alvarado's impact in Lynden is still evident at the church he served, which now is known as Mount Zion.

THE WILDERNESS OF GRIEF

BY MARLENE CRAFT

Understanding more about grieving can help you deal with it and to better understand those who are going through the grieving process.

There are some things that are consistently true of grief: There is no time limit on grief and you have no control over it — it will come and go as it pleases, sometimes washing over you like a wave when you aren't expecting it.

The good news is that grief is a journey and you are walking through it. Being able to be honest about the heartache of your loss is an important part of healing and getting "through" the wilderness.

As David did in Psalms, we need to express our pain to the Lord, and find a way to release the grief within us. It is proven that journaling, expressing your deepest feelings by writing them out, can help in the healing process.

But just as Christ cried and grieved over the death of Lazarus, so we too can know that tears are another way of letting the sorrow have a passage of release.

Anger, depression, and many other emotions can be tied into grief, so attending a "Griefshare Class" (griefshare.org) could also be very beneficial in understanding more about grief and experiencing healing.

In the wilderness of grief, one can feel like they are going crazy, when so much of what they are experiencing is normal.



CAREER CALLING INTERSECTION

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Joshua J. Ziegler's Army career started in 2001 when he served a tour of duty as an enlisted soldier, including nine months in Afghanistan. The New Orleans native sensed a call to ministry while attending youth camp as a teenager. For years he didn't understand how God could reconcile his desire to be a pastor with the duty he felt to serve in the military.

"I had a wrong understanding about being a chaplain," Ziegler says. "I thought it was a geeky guy sitting behind a desk, unable to tell anyone about his belief system."

During his four enlisted years, Ziegler learned differently, seeing chaplains in action explaining how Jesus impacts their faith.

"I understood you could be called to more than one thing at a time," says Ziegler. In his more than a decade as an active duty chaplain, Ziegler has served as a battalion chaplain in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Ziegler, who holds the rank of major, is highly decorated. His honors include receiving the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal

with three oak leaf clusters, the Combat Action Badge, and the Parachutist Badge.

Since January, Ziegler has been brigade chaplain at the U.S. Army National Ground Intelligence Center in Charlottesville, Virginia. One of the primary functions of the center is to analyze foreign ground forces and equipment. The vast majority of employees are Department of Defense civilians. Ziegler sees his role as providing for the religious needs of military service members, defense contractors, and civilians with whom he interacts.

"Much of it is the ministry of presence," says Ziegler, who has contact with 2,000 people at the center. "I walk around and talk to people, dialoguing with respect. I try to find out what their common needs are."

At quarterly luncheons, Ziegler provides leadership training on how faith intersects with morally complex issues. In addition, he conducts moral leadership training in occasional half-day or all-day off-site sessions.

the bolted-together manger is next to impossible not to notice.

Dugger says that the small group, with help from some friends, built the manger at the home of one of their members.

"Once they had it done, they took it apart and hauled it to the church and set it up here," she explains. "It took them about a day to set it up and fill it with about a ton of hay."

The bottom of the manger is protected by six-foot walls to help keep strong winds from knocking it over.

"Once we had it up and got to looking at it," Jarrett says, "we began to wonder, *How big is this thing?* So, we contacted Guinness World Records. "We were told that as far as they knew, this is the largest manger in the world."

The manger has garnered quite a

bit of attention by people outside the church.

"We've had a lot of TV, radio, and print media sources out here telling people about it," Jarrett says. "As it's lit up at night, people are driving by the manger all night long to see it."

The publicity generated by the manger, additional church events, and what Jarrett sees as a powerful move of the Spirit in the church, has led to Northplace experiencing record-breaking attendance.

We wanted everyone to know, the minute they pull into our part of our neighborhood, why we celebrate Christmas," states Dugger.

One might say, "Goal achieved — and then some."

TEEN CHALLENGE SHAPES EVANGELIST

BY RACHEL ELLIS

Grady Lee Watson spent seven years as a youth pastor in Arkansas before going on staff at Adult & Teen Challenge in Hot Springs.

Watson, 36, says those four years at Adult & Teen Challenge helped him prepare for the evangelistic work he does now. Ministry to the addicted and recovering gave him a better understanding of the drug crisis around him and a deeper compassion for the spiritually lost. When Watson worked the evening shift, he preached chapel services for the program participants.

After about a year and a half at Teen Challenge, Watson says God began opening doors to travel and preach. Being on staff at Teen Challenge

gave him the opportunity to keep his weekends open to fill in for pastors at different churches or to preach at church camps and retreats.

"I always felt God said the word *evangelist* to me before I knew what evangelist even meant," Watson says. As a full-time evangelist since 2015, Watson has traveled to youth services, one-day church meetings, revival services, church camps, and to Kenya and Nicaragua to preach revivals.

Watson believes churchgoers will experience a renewed encounter with God when they live holy lives, engage in prayer and fasting, and are open to spiritual gifts.