

# THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY GLENN W. GOHR

Edgar Lee “E. L.” Newby (1889-1978) was an Assemblies of God pioneer in Oklahoma, Texas, and Arizona. In a 1967 *Pentecostal Evangel* article, he shared a testimony of how he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

“The baptism in the Holy Spirit, which I experienced in 1909, is still a vivid reality to me after more than 57 years,” he wrote, noting that he attended revival services in Waurika, Oklahoma.


“As the meetings progressed I developed an intense hunger for the Pentecostal Baptism,” declared Newby. In one service, he heard the evangelist speak in tongues. At the same service, Newby said, “The Spirit of the Lord came upon me also and I began to speak in tongues.”

Here is how he described this experience: “Such a holy quietness, such a flow of joy, such a deep peace possessed me that I have never been able to express it fully.”

His Baptism led to a lifetime of



service in ministry. Ordained by the AG Texas District in 1916, he pastored several churches, spent years as an evangelist, and served as North Texas District superintendent.

Read E. L. Newby’s testimony of “The River Still Flows,” on page 7 of the Feb. 5, 1967, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at [s2.ag.org/feb51967](http://s2.ag.org/feb51967). 



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TOP STORIES FROM PENEWS.ORG

SUNDAY,  
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## BIBLE COLLEGE MARKS 50 YEARS

BY DEANN ALFORD

Fresh out of a nearby university with a criminal justice degree, John G. Walker prepared to live his childhood dream: becoming a highway patrolman. But all along, the Holy Spirit guided the son of an AG pastor toward the ministry.

“God interrupted my plans with His plans,” Walker says.

Walker, a Lumbee Indian, didn’t want to go far from home. He opted to ready himself for the pastorate where his father, Gilbert, received training: Native American Bible College (NABC) in Shannon, North Carolina. Launched in 1968 to equip Native Americans, especially Lumbee Indians, this regional college is sponsored by five AG geographical districts/networks (Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Peninsular Florida, and South Carolina) and U.S. Missions. Roughly 86 percent of the school’s graduates with a bachelor’s degree in religious education minister as pastors, missionaries, or evangelists. In January, the college celebrated its 50th anniversary.

James A. Keys, a U.S. missionary who serves as president of NABC, notes that the Lumbee tribe, which numbers about 60,000, never has

received federal benefits.

“The Lumbee don’t have a reservation,” Keys says. “They’ve had to be self-sufficient.”

Their churches are self-supporting. The area’s 23 Native American churches are all pastored by Native American pastors, most of whom are alumni or current students of NABC, Keys says.

Oppression began in colonial times when the Lumbee often became enslaved. During the Civil War, Confederates forcibly conscripted them into service. Today social blight abounds: drugs, alcohol, and poverty. Yet Keys has observed a difference between Christian and non-Christian Lumbee.

“Those who become Christians have been lifted up out of that, and many have become successful business and professional people,” he says.

NABC remains central to training the Lumbee for ministry. The college offers bachelor’s and associate’s degrees in religious education and professional studies, with majors in Bible, Christian education, ministerial studies, and missions.

## TEEN CHALLENGE STAFFER THANKS JUDGE

BY ASHLEY B. GRANT

Ryan J. Tice stood before Isabella County, Michigan, Trial Court Judge Mark Duthie for the fifth time, unaware that the ruling that could have sent him to prison would end up saving his life. When Tice’s mother fell ill with cancer in 2006, he began to abuse opioids, starting with Vicodin. His drug dependency only grew when his mother died in 2007.

By then hooked on heroin, Tice began to get in legal trouble, racking up five felony charges. Upon being summoned in 2011 to appear before Duthie for a fifth time, Tice — after learning about an alternative faith-based residential drug treatment program from a friend — asked to be sent to Teen Challenge instead.


Although Duthie ordered Tice to stay only seven months at the Mid-Michigan Teen Challenge facility in Saginaw, Tice opted to complete the entire 14-month program. Tice served as an intern the following year, then joined the staff. Now, he meets with students on a daily basis, and teaches classes, including a leadership course.



Last year Tice married his wife, Krista, and he became a credentialed AG minister. The couple attend Saginaw First Assembly of God. Tice, 36, also recently was promoted to men’s program director at the Teen Challenge center.

“I have enjoyed seeing him grow and seeing his sincere change,” says Toni A. Johnson, executive director of the Teen Challenge center.

In December, Tice wrote a letter to a local newspaper expressing his gratitude for Duthie allowing him to attend Teen Challenge in lieu of spending time behind bars.

“With Jesus, there is hope,” Tice says. “My story is proof of that.” 

### 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.”

# GOD NEVER LETS HIS SONS BE LOST

BY KRISTEL ORTIZ

In the violence that gripped Colombia for nearly 70 years, rural Colombian Christians have long been viewed by armed groups as a threat to their ability to control a region. Pastors are often key players in civilian life, and many took courageous stands against guerrillas and vigilantes.

Franklin Lana Conde is one such pastor. His people are the Embera Dobida — one of seven subtribes of the Embera tribe. Conde serves as his community's spiritual leader and works closely with their appointed tribal governor.

Conde's tribe has twice been driven from their homeland, first by guerrillas, and then by paramilitaries. Two of his friends were murdered during the first crisis. During a second confrontation on Dec. 12, 2016, Conde's cousin and childhood friend were murdered after refusing to work in the paramilitaries' cocaine fields.

"We do not have weapons," he says. "We are not aggressive. There were no police, no army, nothing to help us. And so, the guerrillas drove us out."

Now staying under flimsy plastic tarps on a beach in the northern coastal town of Bahia Solano, the Embera Dobida live in limbo and uncertainty.

"Yet still we see God's hand at work, providing for us," Conde says. "We know He has not left us."


Conde explains that despite the hardships, they have what they need.



However, their fellow tribes, who have not been displaced, often are in need. "That is because they do not trust the Lord," he says. "We have plans to go to them and evangelize them so that they too can learn to trust Him."

In March 2017, Conde traveled by plane to Bogotá to meet with AGWM missionary Mike Lawrence.

Conde grins. "I am the only person I know of in our tribe who has flown in an airplane. My mother was very afraid and said to me, 'Who knows what might happen to you so high in the air?' I told her, 'Don't worry. God never lets His sons be lost. If He is with me, I can find anything.'"

*Note: For more information, read "United by Christ," in the February 2018 WorldView at [agwm.com/worldview](http://agwm.com/worldview).* 

# ELLEN BLACKWELL DIES AT 104


BY DAN VAN VEEN

Ellen K. Blackwell, the longtime Assemblies of God minister and founder of the Way of Faith AG in Fairfax, Virginia; Mt. Zion AG in Charles Town, West Virginia; and Fellowship House Retreat Center of Midgal in Galilee, Israel, died peacefully on Jan. 12 at a hospital near her beloved retreat center. She was 104. Up to the time of her passing, she was the oldest living female minister in the Assemblies of God.

Blackwell spent nearly 60 years as an AG minister. However, her passion was the Holy Land. In addition to founding and helping to run the Fellowship House Retreat Center, she had made well over 100 trips to the Holy Land.

An incredibly godly woman of conviction and prayer, Blackwell visited the Galilee area with 12 church members in 2004 to pray and fast for a "sliver of land." The answer to those prayers resulted in a five-building retreat center.

In 2015, Blackwell was honored during the Influence Conference at the General Council in Orlando, Florida, with the Lifetime Influencer Award.

Funeral services for Blackwell were held Jan. 21 at the retreat center in Midgal, with burial following at the Messianic Cemetery in Haifa. A memorial service for Blackwell will be held at 11 a.m., March 10, at Mt. Zion AG in Charles Town, West Virginia. 

# PASTOR CONNECTS WITH LAWMAKERS


BY DEANN ALFORD

Karen M. Abrego, community resource pastor at Ebenezer Christian Center in Sacramento, is also on the staff of Richard Pan, California's District 6 senator, helping to provide safety-net services to the public. She has served in that position four years as the only such pastor employed by the California State Senate.

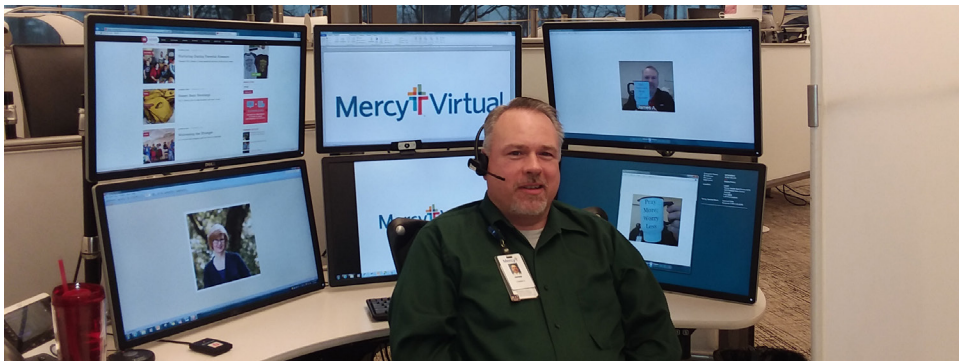
Pan wanted Abrego on staff because she had a heart of compassion focused on caring for the people.

As a Senate staffer, Abrego liaisons with Cops and Clergy, an organization created by the Sacramento Police Department to work with youth and families in crisis. The police department named her 2016 community partner of the year, the first female minister to receive the award.

Abrego's responsibilities in the Senate may include helping a family in a medical crisis by handling red tape and paperwork to ensure that the patient is qualified to receive treatment. Another area of focus is "food desert neighborhoods" — working-class communities that lack access to fresh fruits and vegetables. Abrego belonged to a team that worked to open a grocery store to provide nutritious foods immigrant families without vehicles.

"She has an opportunity to be a bit of a Joseph in the home of Pharaoh," says Nick Garza, secretary-treasurer of the Northern Pacific Latin American District. 





## CHAPLAIN'S VIRTUAL HOSPITAL MINISTRY

BY DEANN ALFORD

Amid chronic patients' long-term challenging medical needs, often overlooked are their spiritual and emotional needs. U.S. missionary James M. Austin serves as tele-chaplain for Mercy, a nonprofit health care system composed of 44 acute care and specialty hospitals in seven states.

To better attend to needs of patients who are by and large homebound, medical monitoring is done via computer from Mercy Virtual in Chesterfield, Missouri. This pioneering, technology-empowered model lowers stress, risk of infection, and costs. Austin's ministry to chronic patients throughout Mercy's system takes place here.

"My job as a hospital chaplain is to make sure all their spiritual needs are being monitored as well," says Austin.

Four months ago, Austin began serving as Mercy Virtual's chaplain after the program's founder, fellow U.S. missionary chaplain Art W. Maddock, became manager of Mercy's pastoral care department in Rogers, Arkansas.

"Many say tele-chaplaincy is like the olden days when doctors came to homes to visit," Maddock says, noting that patients have 24-hour numbers to connect with care providers.

As a Christian charity, Mercy welcomes "God discussions" when patients seek to find meaning and hope amid addressing deep spiritual and emotional concerns. That journey may include anticipatory grief about what's about to happen and dealing with one's own mortality.

"I'm encouraged to find out how patients are doing spiritually — how they're finding meaning, their thoughts about approaching the end," Austin says. In addition to helping these patients suffering chronic illnesses, he also ministers to the doctors, nurses, and other staff treating these patients.

Austin often converses with patients more than an hour, and sometimes that leads to discussions about eternity.

"When people are trying to find meaning and purpose and they ask me to pray with them, I'm totally willing," he says. PE

"Among Lumbee Christians, there has always been a real zeal for evangelism, but there continues to be a need for further ministerial training," Keys says.

Most of the college's 34 students who finished last semester also ministered and/or worked bivocationally full time — while taking night classes.

"Because of our size, we can lavish attention on each student," Keys says. "Along with the academics, our focus is on the overall well-being of our students."

Walker, 37, received a two-year associate's degree from NABC; after graduation, he served as a student recruiter. He also participated in summer camp meetings held among

Lumbee AG churches. Today he's the full-time pastor of Beyond the Veil AG in Laurinburg, North Carolina.

"The school has widened its vision from being primarily aimed at Lumbee to becoming a multicultural, multiethnic training ground for whosoever will come," Walker says. Last semester, around 70 percent of NABC students were Lumbee. Today, NABC's student population includes other Native American, African-American, Hispanic, other ethnic minorities, and white students.

"It's local; it's affordable," Walker says. "You don't have to take a loan out to attend. Students receive mentorship and experience God in a new and fresh way." PE

## CHURCHES UNITE TO MEET NEEDS

BY JENNIFER M. NELSON

New Life Church and Open Heart Assembly in Farmington, Missouri, are two of 10 local congregations participating in "Love Farmington," a Rural Compassion outreach. Adherents from each church have "adopted" one or more city departments, schools, or organizations for practical service each month. That involves serving cold drinks to street employees, making up snack baskets to put in break rooms, or giving school supplies to local teachers.

Volunteers wear matching T-shirts with a Farmington area map, Love Farmington open heart logo, and a Bible verse. The shirts don't list the name of individual congregations, as leaders and laypeople have put aside competitiveness and territorial thinking

in an effort to reach out.

"We're 10 different churches represented here, but with the T-shirts we're just one big family," says Pastor Kevin C. Davis of Open Heart Assembly, which launched the outreach.

Each month, members of the various churches take turns driving a truck to Convoy of Hope's Springfield headquarters to gather Rural Compassion supplies. The team divides up the commodities among the 10 churches for distribution upon returning to Farmington.

"Love Farmington gave a name to what churches were already doing and it made it so we're more intentional and not duplicating efforts," Life Pastor Kevin L. Kappler says. PE