

THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY DARRIN J. RODGERS

The year was 1934, and a rising tide of anti-Semitism seemed to be sweeping the Western world. Adolf Hitler had recently ascended to power in Germany and strident voices in America were blaming Jews for the Great Depression.

Responding to this anti-Semitism, *Pentecostal Evangel* Associate Editor Charles E. Robinson wrote an article "as a solemn warning to all Christians" to avoid playing any role in the persecution of the Jews. In his article, Robinson invoked his professional training to demonstrate that a widely disseminated book purporting to be a secret Jewish manual for world domination was, in fact, a hoax.

The Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion, was an early 20th-century example of what might be called "fake news" today. Written to inflame public opinion against Jews, millions of people — including Christians — fell for its false claims.

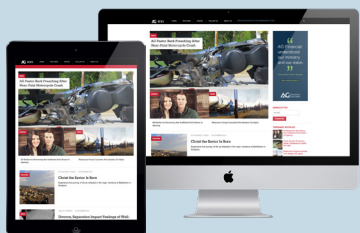
Sadly, Robinson's prediction that the Jews would "suffer every unspeakable villainy that godless men can devise" came true with the Holocaust (1939-1945). However, future calamities might



be avoided if people were to follow Robinson's admonition and carefully examine the evidence before accepting "news" as truth.

Read Robinson's article, "A Lawyer Examines Evidence," on page 3 of the Jan. 27, 1934, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/jan271934.

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SUNDAY, JAN. 27, 2019

AG NEWS

A COLLECTION OF THIS WEEK'S STORIES FROM [NEWS.AG.ORG](http://news.ag.org)

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NEW TEEN CHALLENGE PRESIDENT

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Gary W. Blackard, chief information officer at Evangel University, is the new president of Teen Challenge. Blackard began transitioning to his new role earlier this month. Joseph S. Batluck Sr. will stay on in the post until retiring in May. Batluck says Blackard provides a quality the senior leadership position hasn't had in a while: relative youth. Blackard, 50, says he hopes to remain in the post until retirement. Blackard is the fourth to serve since Mike Hodges left in 2010.

Unlike many previous Teen Challenge presidents, Blackard isn't from the ranks of the organization. Before becoming the first CIO at Evangel in 2014, Blackard spent his career in corporate management, including 14 years at Xerox, where he traveled the world as vice president of global operations. But Blackard, who last year added the role of Evangel vice president of strategy and innovation in addition to his CIO duties, says he has no intention of turning Teen Challenge into a business.

"One of my priority goals is to protect

the ministry that God gave David Wilkerson 60 years ago," Blackard tells AG News. "I believe the Lord has huge plans for this ministry that includes its core DNA of evangelism and discipleship."

Batluck, who in 2015 stepped in as national Teen Challenge president after a 19-month leadership search, has brought a new level of stability and efficiency to the organization. The former AG military chaplain has overseen increased training standards and developed relationships with government entities.

Now, the 18-member Teen Challenge Board, which includes Batluck, has laid out a seven-point strategic plan to help free people from addiction, a plan that Blackard is eager to implement. The proposed initiatives include:

- Resourcing existing centers to fulfill their potential. Teen Challenge has 7,000 residential beds available in the U.S., but they are far from full. "Before we grow, we need to be good stewards of what we have," Blackard says.

EVEN THE WINDS OBEY HIM

BY RACHEL ELLIS

Connie M. McQuin never lost consciousness from her ride in the eye of a tornado last year. McQuin, 59, ran to use the facilities in her master bath before joining the rest of the family, including her son and three grandchildren, downstairs in the new home's unfinished basement. But when she opened the bathroom door, she saw windows shattered on the west side of the home. McQuin knew she needed to find shelter immediately, and decided her bedroom closet would be the safest place.

However, McQuin didn't make it to the closet. She had just enough time to grab the bottom of her bedpost before the tornado's winds picked her up. She prepared to die.

"I'm praying, *OK Lord, if you are going to take me, take care of my kids, and if I sinned anywhere please forgive me,*" says McQuin, who attends Gillette First Assembly of God in Wyoming.

McQuin saw glass, wood, and furniture from the home twirling around

her as she continued to pray. She asked God to spare her from serious injuries, if she survived.

The tornado let her down gently. As she landed, wood and debris from the house formed a tent over her, so hail after the tornado didn't touch her. She landed around 5 feet from falling on the remains of the residence and 5 feet from electrical lines.

When rescue workers arrived, they immediately assumed she had severe injuries because of extensive bruising. At a local hospital, multiple doctors and nurses waited in the trauma unit to treat McQuin's injuries. However, her MRI and X-rays came back clear. She had deep bruising, but no broken bones or internal injuries.

While McQuin's house, barn, sheds, two vehicles, and some chickens, ducks, and geese all disappeared, McQuin miraculously survived inside an F4 tornado with winds exceeding 200 mph. Her relatives in the basement suffered no injuries.

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."



TEXAS CHURCH HAS A HEART FOR KIDS

BY DAN VAN VEEN

When Plainview (Texas) First Assembly of God held its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Jan. 5 for its new \$2 million, 14,000-square-foot kid's center, it wasn't the pastor or board cutting the ribbon. Instead, it was the pastor's young granddaughter, Camryn Sattesahn, who did the honors, symbolizing the focus and ministry intent of the new building.

Pastor Nelson Gonzalez says that from the time he and his wife, Regina, arrived in Plainview in 2010 to lead the church, they felt the Lord directing them to emphasize ministry to children. As the church has grown from 350 to now more than 800 and two campuses, Gonzalez says the church followed through on that calling and in late 2017, it broke ground on the new center, Plainview First Kids.

The new center provides three classrooms for toddlers to kindergarten, four classrooms for elementary students, a 250-seat auditorium, and the Adventure Zone area, which features a multilevel playground with a wide variety of energy-burning activities, including an age-appropriate rock climbing wall and miniature basketball court.

"We've come to recognize things

about kids — one is they're drawn to fun places," Gonzalez says. "So, we're going to teach them about Jesus and help them learn the Word of God in a way that's exciting to them and in an environment that they will look forward to coming back to."

Plainview has a population of about 22,000, but according to demographics, a large percentage of that population is children. "We have to be the generation to raise up and reach the children," Gonzalez states. "We are deliberately diverse, not just in ethnicities, but in generations as well."

Through the generosity and efforts of congregants and community, the church only had to take out a loan for less than one-third of the cost.

The new children's center also has drawn the attention of the community as it is now the largest indoor playground in the city. Better yet, the opening of the new center coincided with the arrival of the church's new children's pastors — Josh and Natalie Pineyro.

"Even though the center has only been open a few weeks, we've already seen an uptick in the number of children attending," Gonzalez observes.

REACHING ROMANIA, INFLUENCING THE REACHING EUROPE NATION'S CAPITAL

BY RENÉE GRIFFITH

BY REBECCA BURTRAM

The day Raegan Glugosh discovered row upon row of abandoned babies in a Romanian hospital maternity ward, she resolved to do something about it. Leaving her career as a registered nurse in the Los Angeles suburbs, she moved to Romania in 1998 to follow God's call on her life.

After working for nearly a decade in the country's hospitals, Glugosh founded Touched Romania with a team of local believers and opened Hagar Home, a residential care and discipleship ministry to single mothers and their children — the first of its kind in the country. Glugosh notes that Hagar Home exists "to stand with the marginalized, as Jesus did, assisting one woman and family at a time to bring them to a place of wholeness."

An ordained Assemblies of God minister, Glugosh insists all programs under her oversight introduce the women and children to Jesus.

In 2013, the AGWM Europe region asked Glugosh to serve on the Europe Leadership Team. When millions of refugees from the Middle East began seeking asylum in Europe two years later, Glugosh coordinated relief efforts throughout Europe that have ministered to thousands. Through these efforts, many people from unreached areas have come to a saving relationship with Jesus.

Paul Hanfere worked as a project manager for Dell when he felt God call him into ministry. He quit his job, sold his car, and gave away possessions.

"Pastoring was never on my grid," Hanfere says. "I thought I was going to be in the marketplace. I thought leading a Bible study or small group would be a stretch."

Hanfere began pastoring a young adult multiethnic service at the congregation where his father, Aligaz, pastors in Washington, D.C. Paul and his wife, Christina, led the international service to help young adults transition. Many individuals from that service eventually became part of the launch team for Overflow City Church in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Hanfere registered for a Church Multiplication Network Launch event training. In retrospect, the timing seemed just right.

"Planting was on our hearts, but we didn't even know where to start or what to do," Hanfere says. "It was exactly what we needed when we needed it."

The training event so impressed them they returned a second time and took six others from their team with them.

Overflow City Church held its first service on Sept. 9.

Overflow is in a parent-affiliated church relationship with Oaks Church of Red Oaks, Texas.



HOPE FOR RENO'S DOWN AND OUT

BY ERIC TIAN SAY

Alex Johnson had lost all hope. After both his parents and his wife of 30 years died as a result of alcoholism, Johnson, 61, depleted all his savings — as well as his faith. He descended into a deep, dark, and empty depression.

For more than a year while living on the streets of Reno, Nevada, Johnson became a stereotypical homeless man, scruffy long hair and beard, unable to care for himself.

In September 2017, he walked into a church service at the Reno Sparks Gospel Mission and heard a message of hope that would change his life. AG U.S. missionary associate Jay R. Van Sickle, pastor of Pioneer AG, preached the service.

"The words were easy to understand and related to me," Johnson recalls.

"Pioneer AG is called to minister to the homeless people of Reno and Sparks," says Van Sickle, 58.

Tim L. Thomas, national urban liaison

for U.S. Missions, says Van Sickle and his wife, Dawn, are compassionate to the homeless of the region.

"They have been on the streets, under the bridges, and in the shelters distributing food, clothing, and a message of hope to hundreds of hurting people," says Thomas.

Johnson rededicated his life to Jesus soon after hearing the message of hope from Van Sickle. A few weeks after arriving at the shelter, he found a job and an apartment. He attends Pioneer AG church services regularly.

"I looked forward to the sermon, fellowship, and a place to feel safe and not be judged based on my clothing, lack of a vehicle, or not living in a big house," Johnson says. "I have a place to call home and I am officially alive again. Both my children are in my life."

After Sunday services, the Van Sickles hit the streets and serve coffee and doughnuts.

- Revamping curriculum, some of which is 40 years old. "It needs to be more relevant," Blackard says. "It doesn't even mention social media or cellphones, which have become addictions."

- Developing emerging addiction recovery leaders across the U.S. "Many of our leaders are former addicts, but they came in with no background in leadership," Blackard says.

- Devising more applicable and broadened prevention training.

- Expanding nonresidential programs. "Many people can't see themselves in a 12-month program — which is the typical

length in Teen Challenge," Blackard says. The organization also is looking at ways to partner with church faith-based programs such as Living Free, which could serve as feeders for long-term Teen Challenge residential stays.

- Establishing scholarships for students to help defray costs to enter the program. If a breadwinner is the addict, he or she often is reluctant to seek treatment due to concern of how the family bills will be paid.

- Bringing innovative technology platforms and applications to the 260 Teen Challenge centers across the nation.

PLANTING CHURCHES AND RELATIONSHIPS

BY IAN RICHARDSON

Matt B. Nelson realizes if his Seed Network's goal of planting 100 AG churches within the next decade is realized, it will be the stuff of miracles.

But Nelson, who pastors City Church of Tulsa in Oklahoma plus serves as the Seed Network's director, believes in such goals. The two-year-old Seed Network works hand-in-hand with the AG's Church Multiplication Network. Its focus is to form "a relational network that helps church planters thrive" during both an initial launch and the first months of growth.

While CMN offers more practical resources — assessments of proposed church plants, pastoral counseling, local leadership recruitment, establishing congregational governance standards — Seed Network seeks to intensify

pastoral preparation on a more personal and immersive level.

The Seed Network offers two options: its cohorts and residency programs. A cohort consists of roughly a half-dozen would-be church planters who undertake six to nine months of off-site training via regular video conferencing. In addition to these monthly group teachings and discussions, Nelson also does one-on-one video coaching calls, from New Jersey to Washington state. Participants often face similar fundraising, marketing, and staff training challenges.

"We check on each other, talk about what's going well, what we're struggling in," says Nelson, who is the CMN representative for the AG Oklahoma District.