



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY DARRIN J. RODGERS

An early Assemblies of God mission located in Nawabganj, a city in northern India near Nepal, operated ministries to help the poverty-stricken and disadvantaged.

A boys' school at the Nawabganj mission rescued street children and nourished their souls, bodies, and minds.

The school, equipped with modern living quarters for about 70 boys, provided a safe, healthy environment and taught them weaving, carpentry, and machine work in the school's industrial department.

Workers also ministered to those with leprosy – a contagious, skin-eating disease. The mission provided dignity, physical comfort, and the hope of eternal life with Christ to the afflicted.

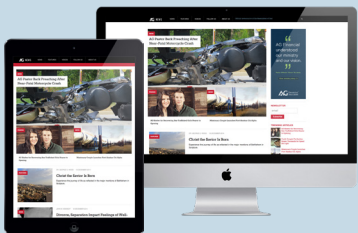
Women missionaries ministered to

women at the mission, often widows or those who had experienced extreme poverty or suffering. Many of these women became Christians, and prayer became an important part of their lives.

The mission was also home to a vibrant evangelistic ministry. Indian Christians went into the surrounding villages and preached the gospel. Persecution against them was "beyond endurance and almost unbelievable." However, the gospel was confirmed by acts of compassion and by miracles of deliverance and healing. One by one, people accepted Christ.

Read "More about the India Mission Stations," by William M. Faux, on page 10 of the June 20, 1925, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/june201925.

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DRAWING THE UNCHURCHED

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

Meredith F. Holden, 75, a Connecticut native now living in Santa Fe, New Mexico, did secretarial and administrative work for years at Yale and the University of Connecticut. During those decades she felt drawn more to New Age spirituality than to the Christian faith she left in her teens. Holden moved to Santa Fe after her husband's death.

Though she had not been involved in church for nearly 60 years, once in Santa Fe, a painter Holden hired invited her to The Grove, a new AG congregation meeting in a theater. Holden checked it out.

"Putting your hands up when you're singing — that kind of emotion is not New England," Holden says. "But the church has this wonderful little rock band that made this big noise. I loved it."

Holden surprised herself by crying throughout the service.

"It was a real emotional reaction and I'm not the only person," Holden says. "I've seen other people let the water fall."

A few weeks later, Pastor Eric B. Montoya, 38, baptized Holden, then 72, in a swimming pool.

The Grove was launched in 2014 by a team led by Montoya and his wife, Sincerity. The two Santa Fe natives met in the youth group of an AG church.

"We've always had a passion for our home city," Eric says. "It's highly



unchurched."

One adherent, Irving O. Gonzalez, 28, says he had a "cutthroat attitude" toward life before he and wife, Veronica B. Gonzalez, 30, came to The Grove at the invitation of Veronica's sister.

"We weren't church people at all, but she really liked what was going on there and invited us a few times," says Irving. "We were hesitant, but we ended up going as a favor and got hooked. A lot of the stuff that's going on has changed our lives."

Irving now serves on the sound team. Veronica is a greeter and a women's group leader. Their 6-year-old daughter, Ariana, surprises them with what she learns in kids' ministry.

"I was at a point where I had given up on church," Irving says. "I thought I

LOCAL ROOTS AID CHURCH PLANT

BY ERIC TIAN SAY

A good first impression worked wonders for Frank and Melissa Anzalone in connecting to Shorepoint City Church in Brookfield, Wisconsin.

After their son was born, the couple discussed finding a church, but they had not been churchgoers for many years. Then they received a postcard from Shorepoint.

"Seeing the pastor and his family in the picture on the postcard was the first step in seeing there were real people leading the church," Frank Anzalone recalls.

The couple also felt more comfortable after being invited to visit Shorepoint by out-of-town friends who attended River Valley Church (RVC), an AG megachurch in Apple Valley, Minnesota. During their first visit, the Anzalones felt welcomed and Pastor Brian T. Engl's sermon resonated with them. Over the past two years they have become involved in church life.

"We have hosted a life group, participated in weekly playdates, become part of the leadership team, served in the children's ministry, and



referred multiple people to join us at Shorepoint," Anzalone says. "We would have missed all that if we never received that postcard."

Engl and his wife, Bethany, launched the church in 2015. An average of 230 people now attend Sunday services. Brookfield is adjacent to another Milwaukee suburb, Waukesha — Engl's hometown.

"A sense of community gets them through the doors and provides opportunity for an easier invitation," says Engl.

Shorepoint has 165 recorded salvations since it started and the church regularly supports 15 missionaries.

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."



CHAPLAINS IN MINISTRY MODE

BY DAN VAN VEEN

As hundreds of bikers traveled in lined pairs in a visually and audibly impressive pack across the United States, from Los Angeles to Washington, D.C. (May 16-25), few would have guessed that within that mass of riders were three AG U.S. Missions chaplains and nearly a dozen more HonorBound Motorcycle Ministry bikers.

The 30th annual Run for the Wall ride, founded by Vietnam veterans, has become a ride of recognition, honor, and healing that spans 3,000 miles and concludes at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, also known as the Wall.

Curtis Hubbell, 50, has done the ride 15 times. He is the ride's senior chaplain and a U.S. missionary. He explains the ride has evolved into a veterans' rights and issues ride.

What many of the participants may not understand — especially first-timers — is the "issues" Hubbell mentions are not necessarily just political issues, but personal ones.

"On nearly every overpass, people are standing, waving flags, and have signs welcoming veterans home — all the way across the country," he says.

U.S. missionary chaplain R. Duane Gryder says many veterans have never been welcomed home or have had gratitude for their service expressed. As they see demonstrations of appreciation, many find that they are still dealing with the stress of war and need to talk.

Tragically, for the first time in the history of the ride, one of the riders in an advanced element, which prepares the way for rest of the riders, was killed in an accident.

The day after the accident, chaplains sought out, spoke to, and prayed with the seven other members of the advanced crew. Their effort resulted in one of the riders standing in front of the platoons to share the story and let riders know that the chaplains were there to take care of them.

"That short speech kicked open the door for people to open up to us and let us minister to them," Gryder says. "Between all of the chaplains, we spoke to hundreds of bikers."

"Countless people have come up and thanked me for encouraging them or to let me know they found God," Hubbell says. "We're in a time of harvest."

RECEIVING THE BAPTISM: FOR KIDS

BY DAN VAN VEEN

Recently, Gospel Publishing House made sure children can understand and experience what Pentecost is all about with the release of *Now What? For Kids: Baptism in the Holy Spirit*.

AG General Superintendent Doug Clay has articulated a clear vision for biblical literacy. It is his desire that the Bible be read, understood, and then applied. He says, "I want every AG adherent to read it, speak it, and live it."

Now What? For Kids: Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a 30-page booklet that walks kids through the questions surrounding the baptism in the Holy Spirit and how to experience the Baptism. Following salvation, many children don't realize the importance of seeking the infilling of the Holy Spirit. But this booklet, designed for children to read with an adult, answers key questions.

"What I like about this kid-friendly booklet is how it simply and clearly explains the who, what, why, and hows surrounding the baptism in the Holy Spirit," says Patti Chapman, Children's Ministries Leadership Development coordinator. "Even more, it explains how the Baptism gives you the courage to witness and then to do so in how you live and what you say."

Available in Spanish, see myhealthychurch.com for more information on adult and kids versions.

EVERY ZIP CODE FOR CHRIST

BY GINGER KOLBABA

As lead pastor of Evangel Church in the suburban Chicago city of Hanover Park, Illinois, Ron W. Heitman wanted to reach as many people with the gospel as possible. With so many different nationalities in the vicinity, however, Heitman knew people weren't going to just show up for services, so he decided to take the church to them.

Today, Evangel Church has birthed multiple parent-affiliated churches, including Indian, Hispanic, and the first Mongolian AG congregation in the U.S. Evangel Church is in the process of planting Russian, Polish, and Japanese congregations.

"The need is so great," Heitman says. "We must multiply to reach lost people."

His passion for evangelizing the lost garnered the attention of the Illinois District. In June 2017, district officials hired Heitman as a second assistant district superintendent, whose sole focus is to oversee church multiplication in the eight counties that make up Chicagoland. Ten new churches are expected to launch this year.

Heitman's vision is to see every one of the 77 Chicago city neighborhoods have a vibrant AG church. That's 300 different zip codes.

"The world is literally at our doorstep," Heitman says.



HELPING DEAF GRASP THE GOSPEL

BY IAN RICHARDSON

James W. Banks, who serves as an Intercultural Ministries U.S. missionary to the deaf, and his wife, Ramona, have led a deaf congregation at Radiant Church in Colorado Springs for more than 25 years.

James says the main hurdle a deaf person has regarding understanding the gospel is not just that they can't hear — which can be overcome using sign language — but rather grasping certain concepts. Because English is a second language for most deaf people, many read at around a fifth-grade level. It can be difficult to comprehend the Bible on their own.

And because the deaf do not have a written form of sign language and do not necessarily “think” in English, Banks says many of the intangibles in the gospel message present a challenge.

“Grace, righteousness, holiness

— there is no sign or expression that gives them the biblical understanding of what these are,” he says. “They feel conviction, and they accept Jesus Christ, but it takes so long for them to understand what that all means.”

Overcoming this struggle is a gradual process that can take years of teaching. At Radiant Church, the couple hold interactive services. James hands out Scriptures and an explanation of some of the concepts, then preaches verse by verse, and sometimes word by word. Anyone attending can stop him with a question any time.

Radiant Church serves around 25 deaf adults and 15 CODAs — children of a deaf adult who are able to hear. The church offers Sunday School and worship services, Sunday and Wednesday night meetings, men's and women's groups, and a youth group.

had to do things for myself — no one's going to help me and that's it.”

Since attending The Grove, Gonzalez says his attitude has shifted to what the Lord can do with his life.

“You start telling other people how amazing God is,” Gonzalez says. “The end goal is to get them to find a relationship with God.”

The Montoyas' church-planting journey included training with the Church Multiplication Network. The Grove is a parent-affiliated church of

Harvest Fellowship of Albuquerque.

Since the launch, people have accepted Jesus as Savior every week at The Grove. The church occupies three theaters — one for the main service, the others for kid's ministry and the nursery. More than half the attendees belong to a small group.

Holden can attest to the spiritual impact.

“The rest of my life is going to be dedicated to Jesus,” she says. “I pray that every morning.”

ADVOCATING FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS

BY DAN VAN VEEN

With a passion of advocating for persecuted Christians around the world, Southeastern University (SEU) in Lakeland, Florida, will start an International Christian Concern (ICC) club on its campus in the fall. The student-led chapter will raise awareness and partner with the advocacy team of ICC in their efforts to influence policy-level change in international religious freedom issues in countries of specific concern.

“Our goal for this club is to give students a space where they can learn about the reality of religious persecution and the link between religious freedom and human prosperity,” said SEU President Kent Ingle. “Our students will have the chance to bring direct relief to those persecuted for their faith through trips into these countries of concern



and witness firsthand the results and the detrimental impact of religious persecution.”

Ingle, along with Southeastern international student Joy Bishara, participated in ICC's Policy Day on Capitol Hill on June 5. The event focused specifically on Nigeria and the persecution of Christians in the country. Bishara was one of the more than 200 girls who were kidnapped by the Boko Haram in 2014.

As an advocacy chapter on campus, students will organize public events to raise awareness of religious freedom and persecution of Christians and other religious minority groups around the world.