



## THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

Maynard Ketcham arrived in Purulia, India, in 1926 as the first Assemblies of God missionary to Bengal. His sweetheart, Gladys, arrived one year later. Together they served the people of North India and the Far East until their retirement in 1969.


In an issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel*, Ketcham told the story of a girl rescued from a life of “serving the gods” as a Hindu temple prostitute. He appealed to readers to continue to help develop an orphanage in Purulia.

Ketcham, himself, was the answer to a similar plea for help in India decades earlier. Fanny Simpson, a Spirit-filled Methodist evangelist, prophesied over then 5-year-old Ketcham that he “will be the missionary who one day will

take Pentecost to Calcutta and all of Bengal and beyond.”

After graduating from a missionary training school, Maynard joined Simpson in India. With Simpson, he and Gladys opened the Door of Hope orphanage in Purulia.

Later, when Ketcham became the AG field director for the Far East, a young evangelist accepted his invitation to do missions work in Calcutta, and Mark and Huldah Buntain began their storied missionary careers.

Read about Ketcham’s call for help for the orphanage on page 8 of the March 15, 1947, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* at [s2.ag.org/mar151947](http://s2.ag.org/mar151947). 

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SUNDAY,  
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## CAMPUS DISCIPLESHIP'S SECRET SAUCE

PAGE 2



FOR KIDS AGES  
2 TO 92 – AND  
COUNTING

PAGE 3

SMALL CHURCH  
SERVES SCHOOL  
IN LARGE WAY

PAGE 5

U.S. MAPS  
VOLUNTEERS AID  
EXPANSION

PAGE 7

A DEATH SENTENCE REVOKED BY GOD [PAGE 4](#) • A WEB OF  
PURPOSE [PAGE 5](#) • A WIFE'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TREK [PAGE 6](#) •  
THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY [PAGE 8](#)



## CAMPUS DISCIPLESHIP'S SECRET SAUCE

BY TIMOTHY C. MORGAN

In 1973, Brady Bobbink graduated from Western Washington University (WWU) with his eye on a career in secondary education. He didn't know it at the time, but Bobbink was about to get an offer he couldn't refuse, which would require a 180-degree turnabout in the direction of his life. As an undergraduate at the university in Bellingham, about 90 minutes north of Seattle, Bobbink and other new Christians had started an on-campus outreach. While driving home from work, Bobbink says he had a vision about the possibilities for career ministry at WWU.

The next Sunday, Richard Ellison, a pastor at Hillcrest Chapel, an Assemblies of God congregation in Bellingham, unexpectedly took Bobbink out to lunch and told him that the church would help him become a campus missionary. By the spring of 1974, Bobbink was engaged in career ministry with his group, Campus Christian Fellowship (CCF). The university also recognized CCF as a religious student

club allowed to work openly on campus.

By 1977, CCF had achieved unusual success on a secular campus. Bobbink accepted an invitation to a watershed event in San Antonio, where Chi Alpha would map out its future.

"Brady quickly earned respect nationally as people learned the quality of his work," says C. David Gable, national director of Chi Alpha in that era. "He has a capacity to absorb hurt and keep on going."

The "San Antonio Seven," including Gable and Bobbink, wrestled with drafting a core principles discipleship statement. In the end, they succeeded and Chi Alpha began a new season of growth.

Bobbink is still on the WWU campus in 2018, still teaching his renowned discipleship class, now called "the D class." Gable says Bobbink's ministry is an example of "how to reach the world by staying in one place." He says Bobbink's methods are reproducible, despite the dominance of political

## U.S. MAPS VOLUNTEERS AID EXPANSION

BY KEN WALKER

With chairs in the sanctuary stacked so close together it's hard to walk between the aisles, the once-mushrooming River of Life Church experienced an additional 3 percent attendance growth last year.

Expanding its cramped quarters isn't the only reason Executive Pastor Corey R. Erickson is enthused about a pending expansion project. It will enable the central Minnesota congregation to nearly double its seating capacity.

Erickson also looks forward to the church extending its community outreach. That includes such features as hosting a support group for recovering drug addicts, food distribution, paying low-income students' school activity fees, and a Christmas shop for residents of Sauk Centre.

In addition to a larger sanctuary, River of Life hopes to open a gymnasium as part of the building project second phase, expected to continue into 2019.


"This gym will be a huge way to

bless our community," Erickson says. He notes that Lead Pastor Kyle R. Peterson coaches a third-grade basketball team, which will use the gymnasium for practice.

The other reason Erickson is so thrilled is the involvement of U.S. Mission America Placement Service RV Volunteers in the building program, which plans to break ground by May.

U.S. MAPS RV Volunteers — 404 active during 2017 — are involved all across the nation constructing or remodeling AG churches, camps, college buildings, and other facilities.

A crew of U.S. MAPS RV Volunteers helped erect River of Life's current sanctuary in 2005. Located in a town of 4,300, Erickson says it wouldn't be possible for a spiritually young church like River of Life to expand without this kind of help. He says congregants have repeatedly complimented the RV volunteers on their passion and drive.

Phase two calls for further expanding the sanctuary and adding a kitchen and the gym. 

### 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."



# A DEATH SENTENCE REVOKED BY GOD

BY DAN VAN VEEN

*He's crazy!* That's what 72-year-old Nancy Forras thought when she saw her 77-year-old husband, Pete, who had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, running across the parking lot toward her.

"I thought for sure he was going to get to me and collapse," Nancy says. But he didn't. For unknown to her or Pete, God had healed him!

The Forrases have attended Tullahoma (Tennessee) First Assembly of God for the past 13 years. Always active, Pete was an energized personality. But early in 2017, fatigue and pain became constant companions.

When he had trouble urinating, Pete went for a prostate exam. The exam revealed that the arteries to his kidneys had either shrunk or were obstructed. It also revealed tumors on his pancreas. A biopsy confirmed that he had pancreatic cancer.

Pancreatic cancer is a killer — radiation and chemotherapy are ineffective against it. "Typically it means you're doomed," Pete says.

The Forrases turned to prayer. Nancy spread the word through social media and contacted friends across the country.

But Pete's health continued to decline.

"They were getting ready for him to die," says Ron Forrester, pastor of Tullahoma First AG." Family and friends were visiting and they were taking inventory of stuff at his house."




But God wasn't ready to "inventory" Pete. In late October, Pete went to the ER for another issue and an X-ray was taken.

Following the test, Nancy stopped at the grocery store.

"As she walked across the parking lot, suddenly I thought, *Gosh, I'm not sitting here,*" Pete says, and that's when he ran across the parking lot to her and walked all around the store with her. "I felt like a million bucks!" he says.

A week later, the test results came back. The tumors had vanished. A trip to his oncologist confirmed the finding — no tumors, no pancreatic cancer, and the arteries fully functional!

Shortly afterward, Pete visited his doctor. He had all Pete's tests. "He looked at me and said, 'Pete, we did nothing for you; the Lord healed you.'"

Pete shares his testimony regularly, stating, "There's no denying what God's done in my life!" 

# SMALL CHURCH SERVES SCHOOL IN LARGE WAY


BY JOEL KILPATRICK

River of Life Assembly of God in Pojoaque, New Mexico, has but 23 regular attendees, yet the church is having an outsized impact on schools by providing backpacks, classroom supplies, and even shoes to hundreds of students.

"The church got excited about buying basic school supplies, and got behind it with prayer and financing," says Lorenzo R. Martinez, Jr., 37, pastor of the small Central District congregation.

Sixty percent of local students are on free lunch programs and are being raised by grandparents because addictions and crime have gutted families.

When Martinez and wife Victoria, 36, arrived three years ago, they made the school district in the town of 1,900 a focus of their ministry. (Lorenzo also works two jobs for the district, as an instructional assistant and running a before-and-after-school program.) The church, though small, raised enough money to give away 600 backpacks one year. One congregant in her 80s raised money from friends at the senior center.

Last year, the church stretched even further, and, with help from Convoy of Hope and Rural Compassion, partnered with a major shoe company to provide free shoes for every student at Pojoaque Middle School. 

# A WEB OF PURPOSE

BY KRISTEL ORTIZ


Thelma Tate Cook lived in an impoverished area of Springfield, Missouri. Thelma's parents divorced; her mother left to care for nine children.

But God blessed Thelma. By 1955, she was a Bible college graduate, registered nurse, and AGWM medical missionary on her way to India.

Arriving in Bombay, Thelma was bound for northern India. Feeling devastatingly alone, God answered her prayers to renew her confidence that He was with her.

For over a decade, Thelma's work brought health, value, and salvation to tens of thousands of people of all ages, statuses, and creeds. She compassionately served Hindus and Muslims, building bridges of trust and friendship as she also shared about Jesus.

In 1969, Thelma returned to Springfield to care for her ailing mother. She also earned another bachelor's degree and a master's degree in special education. And in 1974, she married Tom Cook. With each new adventure, she touched more and more lives.

In 2005 a letter from Don Filbeck, an AG pastor for over 50 years, arrived, thanking her for her witness and taking him to church 60 years ago. Today his entire extended family serves Christ — just one of countless examples of God's intricate web of purpose for Thelma's life. 

# A WIFE'S UNCONDITIONAL LOVE TREK

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Don and Ginger Galloway met at Vanguard University and married in 1963. However, 16 years into the marriage, Ginger discovered why her pastor husband had grown so distant when she found a romantic greeting card on her husband's desk — from a man.

Close friends advised Ginger to divorce, but she says God had prepared her to unconditionally love her husband. But first, Ginger says the Lord gave her an attitude adjustment.

"I thought I was better than Don because he had these big gross sins in his life," Ginger says. "But God showed me that his sins of the flesh were no worse than my hidden sins of the heart — self-righteousness, pride, resentment, unforgiveness."

Ginger vowed to remain committed to the marriage, although no longer in a physically intimate sense. Don left the ministry, but promised to seek counsel, a pledge he repeatedly postponed. Five years later, Don moved out, only to return two years after that. Ginger welcomed him back. Don had stopped living with a gay partner, but he continued to struggle with sexual temptation.

In 1991, Don learned he had contracted HIV, brought on by his relationships during the marital separation. Ginger cared for Don at home, even when he had seizures and lost sight in one of his eyes. Don died of AIDS in 1996, at the age of 6




53. Starting in 2001, Ginger met with AG attendees at ex-gay ministry conferences.

"I knew churches needed help dealing with a problem that wasn't going away," says Ginger.

Ginger founded ReStory Ministries to equip local churches to address homosexuality and gender identity issues in a compassionate, yet biblical, way. The AG endorsed the ministry in 2015.

Ginger, 77, has handed the reins of ReStory Ministries over to Michael S. Newland as executive director. Since 2014, the two have worked to assemble a larger core leadership team throughout the U.S. and to develop a referral network.

After more than nine years of being a widow, Ginger married Cornell "Corkie" Haan in 2005. 

correctness on campus.

"Brady Bobbink has probably disciplined more university students than anyone in history," says E. Scott Martin, senior director of Chi Alpha. "Understanding that the secular university is the most strategic mission field in the world, Brady has resisted the temptation to 'move on to bigger things.'" Bobbink has touched the lives of more than 7,000 individual students.


But what is Bobbink's secret sauce?

"Brady has really created a culture of discipleship, and it becomes a way of life," says Jennifer D. Klier, Chi Alpha director at the University of California-Davis campus. Under Bobbink's tutelage, Klier says she discovered his strategies to be based on long-term

relationships all across the university, a consistent teaching of Scripture, a Christian worldview, and culturally savvy ways to share the gospel message.

Bobbink has experienced success, setbacks, and near burnout. Bobbink, who is not a leader to go chasing after the latest fad, cautions new staff members to learn from the mistakes of others in ministry, namely avoiding overwork and to take a Sabbath rest.

Another critical component for Bobbink is the CCF internship for recent college graduates, launched in 1977. It's like a yearlong "spiritual boot camp" for people who want to know if they are called to full-time ministry.

"We make disciples who make disciples who make disciples," Bobbink says. 

## FOR KIDS AGES 2 TO 92 — AND COUNTING

BY DAN VAN VEEN

When most people hear the acronym BGMC (Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge), they think of youngsters who have a heart for missions. But that's not Wade Presley's view — he believes BGMC is for any age.

Presley's pastor, Jerry Hightower of Prescott (Arkansas) First Assembly of God, agrees. But Presley isn't your typical "post-elementary-age" BGMC fan. This month Presley turns 93.

Prescott First AG averages about 50 on Sundays, and Hightower says that Presley is a key fixture in the church body and ministry, serving in many different areas with his wife, Joann.

Presley, the church's longtime

BGMC coordinator, says his support for BGMC comes from his desire to see people reached for Christ. "It reaches out to people who don't have the privilege to know the Lord," he says about BGMC. "The more that we can do, the better we can help get the gospel out."

Although some people step away from being involved in church ministries once they exceed retirement age, Presley's mindset is one of continuing to serve God to the best of all of his abilities.

"You need to do what you can do while you can do it," he says. "Do your best and the Lord will do the rest!" 