

THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY GLENN W. GOHR

Sixty years ago, the national Women's Ministries of the Assemblies of God was known as the Women's Missionary Council (WMC). The WMC was founded by Etta Calhoun of Houston, who felt that Spirit-baptized women, properly organized, could accomplish more for the kingdom of God than individual efforts.

Calhoun organized the first Women's Missionary Council at Morwood Mission in February 1925. The original group of women met for intercessory prayer for missionaries, and this evolved into also finding practical ways to provide support for missions. From that small beginning, other churches in Texas quickly adopted this idea, and Calhoun became the first district WMC president.

WMC groups soon developed in other states. Eighteen districts had organized programs by 1947. At the 1951 General Council, a resolution authorized the establishment of a national office to coordinate the various district activities of the WMC. By 1955, every district in the Fellowship had organized a WMC program. Edith Whipple was chosen as the first national

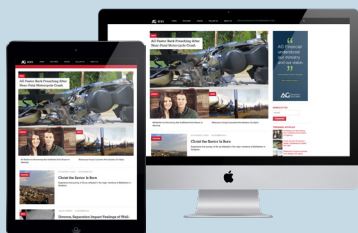
WMC secretary.

The WMC became the forerunner of today's National Women's Ministries, which exists to challenge and equip women to passionately pursue God and to influence the world.

Read about the WMC on pages 20-21 of the March 29, 1959, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/mar291959.



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AG[®] NEWS

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THIRD TIME CHARMING

BY REBECCA BURTRAM

Bob W. Griffith, executive pastor at Journey Church in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and his wife, Wendy, officially adopted Sarah recently in front of about 1,000 students, parents, teachers, and courtroom officials.

Griffith greeted the Feb. 20 declaration by the judge, "This order is final and irrevocable," with great enthusiasm.

"With the stroke of a pen, the trajectory of her life changed forever," Griffith says. "It is the power of a covenant and a promise."

Sarah came into the Griffith home five years ago, at only 7 months of age. She represents the third, and final, foster care adoption for the family. The couple also have three older biological children: Lindsay, Mark, and Madison.

Wendy began to feel a call to foster care when Madison entered kindergarten. As she prayed about how she could be intentional and effective in ministry, Wendy sensed God revealing she needed to focus her efforts more in a season of mothering.

"I knew I could be a mom to one

more," Wendy says. "That began the foster care discussion in our home."

At the same time, Bob had been speaking with city officials to find out how the church could best meet community needs. Among the greatest deficit areas? Foster care and mentoring.

Thanks to training through **COMPACT** Family Services, Journey Church has become a leader in training adoptive and foster care families in Kenosha. Bob serves as a representative of **COMPACT** Family Services, the AG adoptive and foster care ministry based in Hot Springs, Arkansas. Journey Church attendees now comprise 20 percent of all the foster families in Kenosha County.

"Through foster care we have the opportunity to connect with a child and their family," Wendy says. "We became passionate about the people who don't always walk through our church doors."

During their time in foster care ministry, the Griffiths have fostered and adopted Kelsey, 6; Sarah, 5; and Brooks, 3. For the first two adoptions, they invited friends and relatives to the

DICK EASTMAN: 50 YEARS OF PRAYER

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

Fifty years ago this month, Dick Eastman — perhaps the world's foremost prayer leader — became an ordained AG minister. Today, Eastman, 75, serves as international president of Every Home for Christ (EHC), an interdenominational ministry with 189 offices around the world, 8,000 supported staff, and more than a million annual volunteers. All work to share the gospel in residences and villages through literature and church plants. A decade ago, EHC surpassed 100 million respondents who had made salvation decisions to follow Christ since the organization's inception in 1946.

Eastman says God made a promise of a million coming into God's kingdom through prayer to him in 1964 as he prayed in his North Central University dorm room.

EHC today reaches more than 100 million homes annually with the gospel. Over 104,000 churches partner with EHC around the world, and EHC has planted 375,368 "Christ groups" in villages where there are no congregations.

EHC's Jericho Center in Colorado Springs, a 24-hour prayer center built in 2003, is contributing to results. Three years ago, EHC opened the American Center for Prayer and Revival in Washington, D.C., which faces the Supreme Court and is open for prayer to anyone on Capitol Hill around the clock.

"Prayer is dramatically impacting the harvest," Eastman says.

Eastman has kept a daily prayer journal since 1979, numbering nearly 15,000 entries. He keeps the 31 volumes in his prayer room at home, and when he travels, he takes pages from the journals with him so he can pray for the list he committed to on that day.

In the journals are notes about each day and the names of people he meets and feels led to pray for on an ongoing basis.

"Lifting people up in prayer can make a difference, and it keeps me connected to all who crossed paths with me," Eastman says. He also prays daily for every nation, a commitment kept since 1975.

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."



SPENCER JONES A CHICAGO MAINSTAY

BY ONEYA OKUWOBİ

Spencer Jones, 73, has had an immense impact on the AG, from becoming the first African-American student at Central Bible College, to pastoring a thriving church in Chicago, to founding the National Black Fellowship(NFB), and now mentoring a new generation of pastors.

After a CBC chapel speaker's recruitment plea, Jones, a rural Missouri native, agreed to spend three months in Chicago to establish one of the first AG churches in the Windy City. Three months became 38 years after Jones accepted a vacant pulpit position.

During his tenure, Southside Tabernacle AG grew from 28 adults to nearly 1,000 congregants. As he pastored, Jones received calls from the AG national office seeking help in finding African-American pastors for urban churches undergoing neighborhood demographic changes.

"They needed pastors to fill those pulpits and they had none," says Jones, who for the past two decades has been a U.S. missionary with Intercultural Ministries. "I began recruiting guys who were coming out of school, or who would go to school and train with me."

As he retired from his pastorate, Jones

started a new organization to continue equipping these pastors. People United to Save Urban America (PUTSUA) has planted 42 churches since its inception.

E. Charles Moodie, pastor of Chicago City Life Center, says the impact Jones has made is incalculable.

"Spencer Jones provides leadership, encouragement, financial assistance, and passion to see the lost saved," says Moodie.

NBF President Walter Harvey also considers Jones an African-American leader instrumental in forming the AG organization 39 years ago.

"Spencer is a Pentecostal pioneer and spiritual father to many," says Harvey, who pastors Parklawn Assembly of God in Milwaukee. "He has led countless numbers of people to Christ and epitomizes what it means to be an evangelist and church planter."

Malcolm Burleigh, executive director of U.S. Missions, likewise is an advocate of the longtime Chicago minister.

"Spencer Jones' influence has morphed into a realm of impact where he's been instrumental in helping the Holy Spirit plant over 20 churches throughout our inner cities," Burleigh says.

AGWM/COH REACT TO CYCLONE IDAI

BY AG NEWS

The horrific flooding in Africa following Cyclone Idai is being called "the Southern Hemisphere's worst such disaster in history."

Three African countries—Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe are suffering a major humanitarian crisis affecting at least 1.75 million people, with the death toll already surpassing 750 — and expected to rise.

In Mozambique, the hardest hit nation, hundreds of thousands have had their homes damaged or destroyed, and 110,000 are now living in makeshift camps. Boats and helicopters were used to rescue thousands stranded on rooftops or caught in trees. Now the fear of an outbreak of cholera and malaria looms.

As in most major disasters overseas, AG World Missions and Convoy of Hope are partnering in relief efforts. AGWM and Convoy have also issued a joint appeal to U.S. Assemblies of God churches for financial help in response to the immense crisis. AGWM has already disbursed emergency relief funds to all three countries for immediate relief needs.

To assist AGWM and Convoy of Hope in this relief effort, checks should be sent to the AG national office made out to AGWM and on the memo line indicate: "Africa Flooding—AGWM/Convoy Disaster Relief acct 410946 (52)" or give online at s2.ag.org/idairelief.

CHURCH PLANTERS EYEING OAKLAND

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

For the first time in a generation, Oakland is the focus of an AG church plant. Anthem Church, led by Tyler R. Hagan, will open this year.

Anthem will meet at Oakland High School, with the aim to reach young families, tech industry workers, and students from the nearby University of California, Berkeley.

"With the startup culture here, the idea of starting a church is intriguing to young individuals," says Hagan, 32.

As the oldest son of Karen and Scott A. Hagan — who is president of North Central University — Tyler comes from a church-planting heritage. In 1990, his parents founded Harvest Church in Elk Grove, California. They also launched Real Life Church in the Sacramento area in 2006.

During a Church Multiplication Network meeting for leaders, the seed for a new work in Oakland entered Tyler's mind. At the time, his knowledge of Oakland was limited to the city's rough-around-the-edges reputation he had witnessed on the way to A's Major League Baseball games. But he researched and discovered a city experiencing rebirth and attracting tech jobs and young families.

"The more we were here, the more we fell in love with this city," Tyler says. "It's an amazing place to raise a family, and it's in desperate need of Spirit-filled, life-giving churches."



SLOW GROWTH IN LDS UTAH

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Few people had longer Mormon credentials than Drayton Bailey. Consider his two great-great-great-grandfathers: Lorenzo Snow, the fifth president of the Mormon Church, and Truman O. Angell, the architect who designed the Mormon temple in Salt Lake City. He also counts pioneer LDS prophet Brigham Young among his ancestors.

Virtually all of Bailey's living relatives remain in the LDS fold. But after Bailey married his wife, Ashley, in 2010, they went to visit Ashley's grandparents in Idaho. Wayne and Marjorie Root attended River City Church, an AG congregation in Boise. That interaction led Ashley to seek out an AG church near their home in November that year.

Initially, Drayton expressed skepticism. Although he no longer attended a Mormon church, he still believed he would return someday; he hadn't rejected the unique Mormon doctrines that clash with evangelical Christianity.

His first experience of the exuberant praise and worship at Abundant Life in North Salt Lake left him bewildered and yearning for the staid LDS meetings he remembered from childhood. He embarked on a plan to defend LDS teachings.

Nevertheless, Drayton agreed to meet with a couple from Abundant Life, Jorge and Courtnee Román, to discuss differences between Mormon and Pentecostal teachings.

"I arrogantly planned to show them how Mormonism was the truth," says Bailey, 31. "Then I got to the place of realizing maybe I was wrong. Little by little, my eyes were open to the fallacies and discrepancies of what was taught in the LDS faith."

The transformation didn't happen overnight. He didn't ask Jesus into his heart until a revival in April 2012. However, Bailey, who is a project manager with an electrical engineering firm, now serves as an elder at Abundant Life.

Salt Lake City native Alex Lucero, 59, has been Abundant Life pastor for three decades.

North Salt Lake remains dominated by Mormon thought. Of the 599 houses of worship in the county, 550 are LDS. More than half of Abundant Life's 225 attendees have a Mormon background.

"Time and consistency are the keys to reaching LDS culture," Lucero says. "There is much social and business pressure to stay. It may take years to break away."

courthouse for the ceremony. But for their final adoption, they wanted to make a powerful statement about God's heart for those who need a family.

They spoke to the leadership of Kenosha Christian Life School and representatives of the judicial system to arrange for the adoption to take place at the school.

"An adoption is an unforgettable experience," Wendy says. "Even when they reach adulthood, the kids will remember the day they saw a child adopted."

Children in attendance saw the judicial system at work and learned about their civic responsibility to care for

families. During the event, Bob had the opportunity to talk about the heart of God for adoption.

Griffith will graduate with a doctorate in April from Southeastern University, with the AG CompaCare foster care ministry as his project focus. He is involved in rallying other local congregations to stand in the gap to meet foster care needs.

Nine local churches are participating in training through the 1Hope organization using the CompaCare model.

"It's worked for us," Griffith says. "Now we are replicating that as a byproduct of our personal story of adopting."

AFRICA: PROPELLING JESUS FORWARD

CARROL AND GAYLE DEAL

AGWM missionaries Carrol and Gayle Deal issued the following report on West and Central Africa.

The Great Commission is accomplished when we all work as partners in the mission of God by praying, giving, and going. Such partnerships are thriving in much of Africa.

In the French-speaking Central African country of Gabon, the focus for 2019 is to partner with the national church to preach Christ and plant churches in new areas. Recently construction materials to build 10 tabernacles were loaded into a container and are en route to Gabon.

This will also be the year to partner with the national church in the northeastern corner of the Democratic

Republic of Congo. Partnerships are in place to build a Bible school to prepare church planters.

In neighboring Equatorial Guinea, 2018 ended with honoring God for what He has done in the 30 years since the Assemblies of God was established there.

The new Malabo campus of the Equatorial Guinea Bible School was completed by the November 2018 goal. The last windows and the final painting were done just days before the dedication service on Nov. 18. The celebration continued later in the day with a commencement ceremony for the graduates.

Please continue to pray for ministries across this region!