



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

Andrae Edward Crouch (1942-2015) was a gospel singer, composer, music producer, and pastor of New Christ Memorial Church of God in Christ (COGIC) in Los Angeles, but he also had connections with the Assemblies of God.

In 1965, Crouch was attending the annual COGIC conference when the speaker asked, "Is there anyone here that wants to be used of God?" After the service several young men came up to him and asked if he would come play for them at Teen Challenge, an Assemblies of God ministry. Crouch went with them but had no desire to work with them. But that night, Crouch felt God telling him to go to Teen

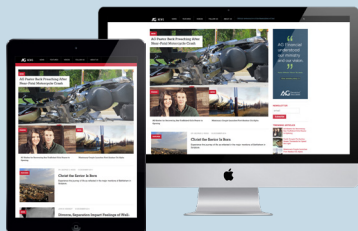
Challenge to start a traveling choir of former drug addicts.

Crouch started singing locally with a group of friends who called themselves "The Disciples." He left Teen Challenge and began traveling full time in music ministry. By 1973, he had recorded a live album at Carnegie Hall and in 1975 appeared with Billy Graham at a televised crusade.

Today Crouch's songs, such as *My Tribute (To God Be the Glory)* and *Through It All* can be found in most contemporary hymnals


Read more about Andrae Crouch on page 20 of the May 22, 1977, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/may221977/.

Read the full versions of these stories on news.ag.org



NEWS FOR, ABOUT, AND FROM
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

CONNECT WITH US ON

 FACEBOOK  TWITTER

 RSS AND OUR WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER

VISIT [NEWS.AG.ORG](http://news.ag.org) FOR MORE INFORMATION.

SUNDAY, MAY 27, 2018

AG | NEWS

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

EMBRACING THE OIL REBOUND

ONE DISCIPLE
AT A TIME

JACOB JESTER'S
COMPELLING CALL

FEMALE EXECUTIVE
SET TO START





EMBRACING THE OIL REBOUND

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

When Sheldon McGorman became youth pastor at Watford City Assembly of God in 2000, the North Dakota community had a population of 1,300 — and falling. The recent oil boom appeared over. Two homes seemed to be for sale on every block. Youth left never to return.

McGorman graduated from Trinity Bible College. After five years as youth pastor, he went to work in the Bakken oil fields, which experienced spurts of resurgence with hydraulic horizontal drilling and fracking around North Dakota.

"My hands were pretty dirty every day," remembers McGorman, who returned to Watford City AG as senior pastor in 2007. "God was preparing me so I could look a guy in the eye and tell him I knew how he felt."

Soon after McGorman moved back, the oil field renewal began in earnest. In less than a decade, the number of residents in the community ballooned to 10,000. Residents had to wait to fill up at the gas pumps. People couldn't

find a seat in restaurants. Bread and milk didn't stay long on shelves in grocery stores — where customers lined up 15 deep to pay.

Initially, most locals, including religious folk, didn't embrace the newcomers straining the infrastructure. Yet McGorman displayed a different attitude.

"I encouraged our congregation not to curse the blessing of God," says McGorman, 41. "God is sending people from all over the nation, and even the world, to our front door."

While 130 people attended Watford City when McGorman became pastor, that number has risen to 400, even though the number of residents has fallen to 7,000, given the cyclical nature of the refining business.

"A lot work heavy schedules and may only attend once a month, but they still sense that this is their church," McGorman says. Because of the boom or bust complexion of the oil industry, the pastor urges congregants to not squander this ministry opening.

FEMALE EXECUTIVE SET TO START

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

Although she will become the first female executive June 1 at the national office of the AG in Springfield, Missouri, Donna L. Barrett has much in common with the Fellowship's rank and file.

She leads an Ohio church of just over 100 attendees, in a denomination where slightly more than two-thirds of congregations are less than 100 adherents. As is the case with many credentialed ministers, she received her calling after starting another career, enrolled in Global University courses, and toiled in the trenches as a lifelong learner.

However, with 55 percent of AG adherents being female, the appointment is most notable because of Barrett's gender. As the incoming general secretary, she is the first female Executive Leadership Team member in the 104-year history of the AG.

"The brave step that General Superintendent Doug Clay and the Executive Leadership Team have taken by opening this door for me has already, as I've observed on



Facebook, breathed a fresh wind across our Movement that says everyone is welcomed at every level of leadership," Barrett, 58, tells AG News. "I hope the model that has been set at the national level will drizzle down throughout our districts with the message that men and women can work shoulder to shoulder as ministerial colleagues much like we see from our church members in the professional world."

"She is a solid, competent, gifted leader who happens to be a woman," says Ohio Ministry Network Superintendent John R. Wootton, 51. "She will be an encourager to multitudes of women and men. Donna has the ability to say truthful things, even hard things, in such a way that they are covered in grace."

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."

AG TEEN A VICTIM IN TEXAS SCHOOL SHOOTING; CHURCH RESPONDS

BY DAN VAN VEEN

In the small south Texas town of Santa Fe, Assemblies of God Pastor Brad Drake, who leads Dayspring Church, is preparing to bury one of their own.

Angelique Ramirez, 15, a member of the church's youth group, was one of eight students and two teachers shot and killed by another student at Santa Fe High School on May 18.

"I believe with all my heart, Angelique had a personal relationship with God," says Richard Pourchot, who pastors the youth with his wife, Amber, at Dayspring,

The Pourchots have known Angelique and her parents for years, having served as co-children's ministries directors at another local church. To the Pourchots, Angelique was family.

Richard describes Angelique as someone who deeply loved her family and would do anything for a friend. "Her parents raised her to be a very strong, independent person, and that's what she was growing into," Pourchot says. "You don't follow the crowd, you do you — and that's what she did. I never saw her peer-pressured into anything."

Drake, who helped set up food and rehab for first responders the morning of May 18, later drove to the junior high — the reunification location. He



says it was a difficult day as anxious parents waited to be reunited with their children.

Drake says the churches and community have come together to offer and provide whatever support is needed, including ongoing prayer.

On Wednesday, all local churches canceled services to hold a night of prayer for hope and healing at the Santa Fe Junior High football stadium. "We also brought in Kelly Ward, an AG U.S. missionary who is a licensed counselor, to be available to people," Drake says.

According to Drake, there has been a very strong and atypical response to the shooting.

"All of our leaders, from our local, mayoral, and school district to state representatives, senators, and the governor, as they have come, they all have pointed this community and our state to Jesus," Drake says. "He's our only hope."

GO NORTHWEST, YOUNG WOMAN

BY DEANN ALFORD

In 1997, Susana Palacios, a Salvadoran immigrant who served as president of her Los Angeles Hispanic church's youth group, traveled to Portland, Oregon. She bought a bus ticket, trusting that the Lord would reveal the next steps.

Pedro Renderos, a former congregant at the Los Angeles church who had moved to Portland, met her at the bus station. Soon, the church's youth treasurer, Ramón A. Aguilera, a Honduran, arrived in Portland and held a prayer vigil.

Some from Los Angeles remained with the Aguileras, who wed in 1999. They co-pastor Iglesia Roca De Luz Eterna, which started in Hillsboro, a suburb of Portland.

Initially, Latinos from Mexico constituted nearly the entire church. As the immigrant community has grown, the numbers of Central Americans in the Spanish-speaking congregation have risen. Attendees include workers in the construction, agricultural, and hospitality industries. Many own their own businesses, such as food trucks.

Two years ago, the Aguileras assumed the pastorate of Roca de Salvación (Rock of Salvation) in Portland, which now has its own pastors. Roca De Luz Eterna also planted two other Portland-area congregations.

"They believed God and got up and left," says Larry Garza, superintendent of the AG Northwest Hispanic District.

JACOB JESTER'S COMPELLING CALL

BY NATHAN HEATH

Jacob S. Jester's heart for evangelism began with his first exposure to ministry as a missionary kid in West Africa. He carried his passion for evangelism with him back to the U.S. in 1999. He attended Central Bible College and started Jacob Jester Ministries.

In a 13-year span, Jester engaged in evangelistic efforts in several states before moving to Arizona in 2012 to start Compel Church in Glendale. Compel has around 300 adherents.

Jester is passionate about engaging with local schools. Compel ministers to more than 150 refugee children in a primarily Muslim housing complex via gifts, singing songs, and playtime.

The 37-year-old Jester believes the local and global components of evangelistic outreach complement each other well. The style of evangelistic outreach, however, differs from the mass evangelism models commonly used by his parents in Sierra Leone.

"Never underestimate the power of a personal invitation," Jester says. He sees a clear connection between his background in international evangelism and leading Compel to support missional efforts around the world. The church currently supports 10 individual missionaries in various places, but also contributes to numerous ministries such as FeedOne.



LABI COLLEGE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

For 91 years, LABI College (also known as Latin America Bible Institute) in La Puente, California, has graduated pastors and missionaries from and for the Hispanic community. Today, LABI College is moving confidently into the future, securing academic program accreditations, winning major grants, and making strides in promoting women into key positions of leadership.

When Marty Harris became president, LABI College faced challenges with accreditation, funding, and morale. Four years later, the college is in a stronger position in all those areas. In recent years, the college has received various grants totaling more than \$1 million for programs and campus upgrades.

"A lot of our students and graduates are bivocational — pastors who are also plumbers, construction workers, or teachers," Harris says. "How do we translate their faith and testimony into the rest of the week?"

Most of LABI College's programs

are conducted in English, while Latin American Theological Seminary, of which Harris is also president, is designed for Spanish-speaking pastors. About half of LABI College's graduates go on to be AG pastors. Its extension program serves 1,200 students at 60 church-based sites.

Recently, LABI College launched the Grace Morales-Scott Women's Leadership Institute, the only center of its kind dedicated to Hispanic women leaders.

"It is important to cultivate an environment for women leaders, especially in Latino cultures with all the stereotypes and machismo," Harris says. "Hispanic women are going to take things to new levels, and we want to help guide them to be great leaders and pastors."

Today, more than half of LABI College's administrative leaders are women, including the dean of spiritual formation, the dean of spiritual life, the head librarian, the dean of enrollment, and the campus pastor.

"Watford City could be a ghost town tomorrow," McGorman says. "We have a timed window of opportunity to give our best while they are right in front of us. We don't know when the parade will end."

One of those opportunities is a Tuesday night Oilfield Christian Fellowship Bible study at the church, started seven years ago. An average of 25 men attend the gatherings, which begin with an hourlong meal and conversation.

McGorman believes Watford City AG has no choice but to embrace the rough and ragged newcomers, although some church members left over that stance.

"We want to reach people who are far from God," says McGorman. "We try to minister to those with a lot of hurts and baggage."

Similar to the strain on military families that face long separations, an oil field worker may not see his wife and kids for weeks. McGorman and his wife, Jen, have six children, ages 6 to 19.

"God has called us to see people's lives transformed, not to be the safe, old country church we once had," McGorman says. "God planted this church and knew there was oil underground. The reality is Jesus always ended up in the most broken places, like the oil fields."

ONE DISCIPLE AT A TIME

BY ASHLEY B. GRANT

When Nick D. Callaway and his wife, Becky, started dreaming of planting a church, they realized that slow, deliberate one-on-one discipleship would be the best way to grow Go Church in Denver.

With an extensive Chi Alpha Campus Ministries history dating back to 2002 when Nick served as a U.S. missionary at Louisiana State University, the Callaways' approach to starting a congregation looked a little different than traditional church planting strategies.

With a church planter's heart, a Chi Alpha mindset, and the support of the Church Multiplication Network, Callaway launched Go Church in 2016.

"Our mission is and always has been 'Live Local. Go Global. Live Like Jesus,'" says Callaway, who is now a U.S. missionary with Missionary Church Planters & Developers. "We knew that starting a church in such a liberal area was going to require us to 'live local' and build the church one relationship at a time."

Person by person, the Callaways networked within their community. In two years, Go Church has grown to about 200 attendees every week. The Callaways have continued their one-on-one discipleship.

"We are reaching and discipling the lost," Callaway says. "We are not doing Christian catering."