

THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

"Never mind, it will soon blow over." These skeptical words greeted the enthusiasm of Christ's Ambassadors Director Ralph Harris when he recounted that Assemblies of God young people had given over \$100,000 in 1945 to the new missions fund, "Speed the Light." Not many adults believed that the youth of their churches could sustain their excitement for providing missionary transportation vehicles.

However, Harris knew the youth of America could identify with those who were without transportation. He also knew that the war had exhibited to young people the power of vehicles.

Harris set the astronomical goal of \$100,000 for their first year, 1945. It was greeted with skepticism on the part of some leadership, but the AG youth raised \$113,375.39. Their first major purchase was a small amphibian plane for the work in Liberia.

Appeals soon began to pour in from all over the world — boats, jeeps, mules, bicycles, and more!

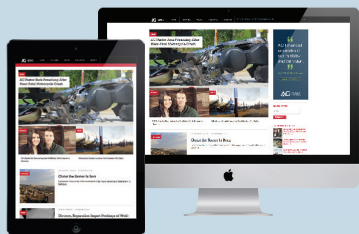
Since 1945, AG youth have given



\$312,870,885.76 to STL, including \$9,421,143.41 in 2017. The third Sunday of October is still STL Day in the Assemblies of God.



Read stories and view photos from "Dollar Day" in the article, "Keep 'Em Rolling," on page 7 of the Oct. 11, 1953, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/oct111953.

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SUNDAY, OCT 14, 2018

AG NEWS

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

TRINITY BIBLE COLLEGE'S TURNAROUND

YOUTH MINISTRY REACHING SCHOOL

WORLD RECORD BROKEN FOR BGMC

EMBRACING THE SENIOR CALLING



TRINITY BIBLE COLLEGE'S TURNAROUND

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

ELLENDALE, North Dakota — South African natives Paul and Carol Anne Alexander led institutions of higher learning on three continents before walking onto the subfreezing campus of Trinity Bible College in January 2012. Paul came to speak at spiritual emphasis gatherings on the campus of the Assemblies of God Bible college.

Trinity is located in Ellendale, a town of 1,280 residents on the southeastern North Dakota prairie. The nearest Walmart and McDonald's are 40 minutes away.

"I knew God wouldn't send us *here*," recalls Carol, who has lived in London and Johannesburg. "Ellendale is in the middle of nowhere."

Yet Paul agreed to the board's request to become Trinity's new president, not fully realizing the direness of the situation: student enrollment down to 170 from an all-time high of 400; deteriorating campus buildings condemned or closed; hundreds of thousands of dollars in invoices left unpaid; a school placed on academic probation; loss of regional accreditation.

Today, Trinity has new life: enrollment

up five consecutive years to a total of 268; a graduate school operating; recently hired fervent faculty and staff; curriculum guided by a missions emphasis; and five buildings renovated or constructed — all without incurring any further debt.

Alexander traces the turnaround to instituting a half-hour coffee break every morning for employees. Everyone from department chairs to custodians gathers in the Commons, an expansive area with comfy couches and voluminous chairs in the three-story Davidson Hall, a 107-year-old central administration building mothballed for a decade by the time Alexander arrived. Vibrant discussions take place, with an atmosphere akin to a postgraduate seminar every morning.

"This room healed our institution," Alexander proclaims. The school has an enviable student to teacher ratio of 11:1. Student after student on campus refers to the family atmosphere of the school.

The school is back on stable financial footing. New or renovated facilities include an arts building that includes a prayer chapel, a modern fitness

EMBRACING THE SENIOR CALLING

BY DEANN ALFORD

At an age when many ponder retirement, Rebeca Lucio De Leon received a challenging call. Templo Abarim, a Hispanic AG congregation in Hermiston, Oregon, had gone through a series of leaders. By 2010, the church again had no pastor. Attendance had dwindled to 40.

De Leon, then 60, had served as an interim pastor at the church before. Now Templo Abarim asked her to lead. Soon after she gave her life to the Lord at age 9 at an AG church in Tamaulipas, Mexico, God called her to preach. But while attending Bible school and serving as an assistant pastor of a church in Mexico, she met her husband, Noé, and the couple moved to Washington state.

For the next 31 years, De Leon raised their three children and ran a day care center. She served in lay ministry at El Sendero De La Cruz in Moses Lake, Washington. She sang, taught Sunday School, worked in the women's and children's ministries, and drove a church van. Occasionally, she preached.

As the family's nest emptied, De Leon



often filled in as guest preacher for churches in the AG Northwest Hispanic District.

"I told the Lord, when the time is right, I want to once more pastor a church," says the 68-year-old recently widowed De Leon. She asked the Lord to place her where she could serve the remaining years of her life.

Today, the average Sunday attendance at Templo Abarim is 175. The 5 p.m. Sunday gathering is the sole Spanish-language service in Hermiston, which enables those who work mornings to worship.

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."

WORLD RECORD BROKEN FOR BGMC

BY DAN VAN VEEN



On Sept. 25, Guinness World Records confirmed that Perry Dissmore, children's pastor at Freedom Church in Tallahassee, Florida, had reclaimed his world-record free throw shooting title, sinking 2,395 free throws in one hour.

What's more, Dissmore, 47, and the church raised more than \$6,250 — and counting — for their Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge (BGMC) project: helping people in Puerto Rico recover from Hurricane Maria through Convoy of Hope.

However, this world-record effort almost never took place.

In 2009, Dissmore set the world record for free throws with 1,926 in an hour. In 2010, on national TV, Dissmore made 1,968 free throws in an hour. During both those attempts, he was serving as an AG senior pastor.

But in 2011, Dissmore's record was crushed when Bob Fisher made 2,371

free throws. Dissmore attempted to regain the record for BGMC in 2013, but fell far short. He gave up the pursuit.

"In 2013 I had taken a missions trip with David Boyd (the AG national BGMC director)," Dissmore recalls. "I just started talking about life with him, and suddenly, David tells me, 'You know, Perry, you'd make an incredible children's pastor.'"

From a senior pastor to a children's pastor? The words stuck in his mind.

Perry, his wife, Nicole, and their three children moved to Florida later in 2013 to be closer to family. However, a door to pastor a church didn't open. So, they attended Freedom Church.

Dissmore went to lunch with the church's children's pastor, and for some reason, shared what Boyd had told him. That message was relayed to senior pastor Larry Perry. Unknown to Dissmore, the children's pastor was preparing to be a missionary. Perry offered Dissmore the job.

For the past four years, Dissmore has served as children's pastor. In August 2017, after praying, he felt he should pursue the world record for BGMC once again. With a score of volunteers, he practiced for months to develop the stamina and routine that allowed for the record-breaking effort.

Through the experience Dissmore's belief was reaffirmed in what can be achieved with the support of others, and more importantly, through obeying God.

JEWISH MINISTRY RESOURCE CENTER

BY JOEL KILPATRICK

Messianic Jew Felix Halpern served as vice president of a precious metals company in New York City, working daily among Orthodox Jews, when he sensed God's call to give up his career and enter full-time ministry to the Jewish community. Halpern says God told him to resign his position and liquidate his retirement and savings so that He could teach him a new level of faith.

With the consent of his wife, Bonnie, Halpern gave up his 25-year career and eventually launched Metro Jewish Resources, a ministry that creates resources to help churches build bridges with the Jewish community.

The Halperns, U.S. missionaries with Intercultural Ministries serving in the New Jersey District, create books and manuals. They also assist congregations in hosting film festivals featuring works on Holocaust remembrance, Jewish history, and Israel's independence. The events help Christians see history through Jewish eyes, and present opportunities for Jewish outreach.

Halpern's own father accepted Jesus as Messiah during the Holocaust of World War II, when everyone else in Halpern's paternal line was killed. His father escaped with the help of Christians in the Dutch underground.

"The process of a Jewish person coming to faith is much more prolonged than for a non-Jewish person," says Halpern. "There are a lot more cultural barriers to overcome."

MANGKHUT RELIEF UPDATE

BY KRISTEL RINGER ORTIZ

On Sept. 15, Typhoon Mangkhut battered the northern Philippines, affecting millions of residents. Winds of up to 200 miles per hour were part of the typhoon, which bore the strength of a Category 5 hurricane. Roofs were torn from buildings, homes destroyed, roads blocked, trees uprooted, and unharvested fields flooded. More than 50 landslides also occurred as a result.

Typhoon Mangkhut's death toll sat at 81 only a few days after the storm, with dozens still missing.

AG World Missions immediately sent emergency relief funds to the AGWM missionaries and national church leadership in the Philippines to purchase emergency relief supplies.

Sam Bowdoin, AGWM missionary and director of ICI Philippines (an affiliate of Global University), immediately partnered with Filipino pastors to bring relief to the battered islands.

Though some areas, like Cagayan, Baguio, and Benguet, are still inaccessible and without electricity, reports of damaged churches, and homes and root crops of AG congregants being destroyed are coming from other areas. As the northern Philippines are rural and rely heavily on farming for livelihood, lost crops are no small thing.

AGWM is also helping to fund relief packets being assembled by Convoy of Hope.

MISSIONARY, MARSHAL, CHAPLAIN, AND MORE

BY DAN VAN VEEN

When Detective Dan Walls retired from the Terre Haute, Indiana, Police Department in 2012, having served 25 years, including being the chaplain for a decade, it seemed that his years of interacting with officers and dealing with the lost of society were ending.

But God had other plans.

Walls, 61, and his wife, Felicia, attend Cross Tabernacle in Terre Haute. Walls was the coordinator and facilitator of the Global University Study Center at his church until leaving for the U.S. Mission field. When the church launched HonorBound (HB) Motorcycle Ministry, Walls taught a Global course to riders as part of their HB training.

At the time, Walls had no interest in motorcycling, however Senior Pastor Keith Taylor and the HB local chapter president, Mike Budnik, persuaded him to get a motorcycle.

In 2012, Walls attended a motorcycle ride to honor an officer who was killed in the line of duty. Walls was asked to join in as the police chaplain. During that ride, he met the Blue Knights.

The Blue Knights are made up of active and retired officers and have over 650 chapters in 29 nations worldwide. Indiana Chapter X approached Walls about needing a chaplain — he accepted.

Being a Blue Knights chaplain dovetailed into his ministry calling as Walls was already serving law



enforcement and prisons as a U.S. Missions chaplain.

In 2014 Walls was selected as the Great Lakes Chaplain of Blue Knights overseeing some 80 chapters in six states and part of Ontario, Canada.

"I believe the most important thing I do," Walls observes, "is to allow the power of the Holy Spirit to move through me to reach the men and women of the Blue Knights."

As a former police officer and as a missionary, a chaplain, and a college course teacher and preacher behind bars, Walls wears many hats and, in 2015, he became the town marshal of nearby Seelyville.

In July 2018, Walls received another surprise. He was named the Blue Knights international chaplain, which includes more than 19,500 members worldwide.

Walls smiles and laughs — he knows that God has everything under control.

center, updated classrooms, and a just-opened student union with a coffee bar. This school year, for the first time, all classrooms are connected by enclosed walkways so students don't have to face bitter-cold winter air.

The missions emphasis at the school is rousing parents, students, alumni, and benefactors. Every Trinity student goes on a mission trip — every year.

Go Trips are global ventures voluntarily led by faculty or staff. The campus shuts down for 10 days in the spring as students scatter from Australia to Egypt. Students must finance trips themselves.

Carol Alexander leads the school's innovative graduate school,

implemented in 2014 and growing every year. Now there are 68 Trinity graduate students. A master's in global theology exposes students to divergent political and religious views in the United Kingdom, South Africa, India, and Jordan. The majority of those registered in the global theology program already are pastors and ministry leaders.

In addition, Trinity Graduate School offers a master's in missional leadership, which meets on campus quarterly for four days, as well as a unique master's in rural ministry, quarterly gatherings in various bucolic settings.

After six-plus years, Carol appreciates Ellendale. "I certainly don't feel like I'm missing out on anything living here."

YOUTH MINISTRY REACHING SCHOOL

BY ANA ELLIOTT

At just 20 years old, Austin B. Rains found himself moving from the Dallas area to become a student pastor in rural Highland, Arkansas.

His most recent church experience had been at The Oaks in Red Oak, Texas — a megachurch known for creating its own school of leadership and operating at a high level with the resources of a larger support staff and volunteers.

Rains, now 22, and his wife, Taylor, arrived at Highland Assembly under the leadership of Chris and Tricia Clem, Taylor's parents. Rains has worked to build up the youth ministry.

Highland Assembly's largest annual event is known as a "Backpack Extravaganza," which is modeled after a

carnival atmosphere, where the church provides free backpacks, wellness exams, and haircuts. This year, Highland distributed 900 pairs of shoes and 1,000 backpacks.

"The biggest thing we're known for is our backpack event, but God keeps opening the doors at the schools for us to be there for students," Rains says. That includes Taylor working as the career coach helping students try to determine what jobs they might be interested in after high school.

"There's a relational connection we have with these students now because Taylor was able to naturally interact with them in their own environment," Austin says.