

THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY DARRIN J. RODGERS

Hispanic ministers and churches have played an important role in the Assemblies of God for over 100 years. The AG ordained its first Hispanic minister in 1914 and created a conference for U.S. Hispanic churches (Latin American District) in 1918.

The following vignettes offer a glimpse into the ministries of several Hispanic AG pioneers.

In 1914, Antonio Rios Morin (born ca. 1867) became the first Hispanic to be ordained as an AG minister. Many people were saved and healed under his ministry.

Juan Lugo (1890-1984) was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1913. He pioneered the first Pentecostal churches in Puerto Rico and later helped establish churches in New York, which became the foundation for the Spanish Eastern District.

Demetrio (1900-1976) and Nellie Bazan (1895-1995) were ordained together in 1920. Demetrio later became the first Hispanic to serve as Latin American district superintendent.

Jose Giron (1911-2001) succeeded

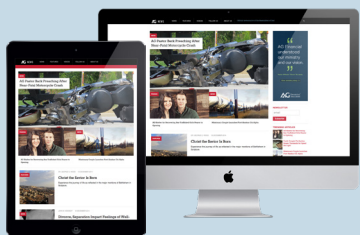


Juan Lugo

Bazan in 1959 as superintendent of the Latin American district, which grew to 403 churches, 827 ministers, and 21,000 members by 1970.


Read about the formation of the Latin American District in the article, "The Thirteenth General Council Meeting," on page 5 of the Oct. 19, 1929, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/oct191929.

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, OCT. 21, 2018

AG NEWS

A COLLECTION OF THIS WEEK'S STORIES FROM NEWS.AG.ORG

HURRICANE MICHAEL DAMAGES DOZENS OF AG CHURCHES

MOBILIZING MISSIONARIES

ONCE BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE

A COLD CUP OF WATER





HURRICANE MICHAEL DAMAGES DOZENS OF AG CHURCHES

BY DAN VAN VEEN

Of the 85 Assemblies of God churches in the Florida panhandle that were in Hurricane Michael's strike zone, 50 have reported damages. Of those, 20 churches were seriously damaged and five have catastrophic damages.

Tommy Moore, the West Florida district superintendent, shares that there's devastation for about 70 square miles from where the hurricane made landfall — Mexico Beach — which encompasses the heart of the district.

According to Convoy of Hope reports, the compassion organization had already unloaded more than 20 tractor-trailer loads of relief supplies. In addition to distributing more than 300,000 pounds of food, water, and other disaster relief supplies to thousands of victims from its central hub in Marianna, Convoy of Hope volunteers loaded dozens of police patrol cars with supplies to be delivered to devastated neighborhoods. Supplies have also been delivered to 18 surrounding communities.

The West Florida district has

also launched Project 2:20, a comprehensive effort aimed at a long-term recovery effort based on Nehemiah 2:20, with the tagline: "We His servants will arise and rebuild."

Moore explains that Project 2:20 divides the impacted area into three tiers, each with its own coordinator and central distribution point. The district office team will focus on assisting with church insurance and financial assistance, coordinating Convoy of Hope distribution, providing Serve Team (volunteer) coordination, and be home to the tier management coordinator.

The Project 2:20 plan of action states, "The objective is for every church to be able to do as much as they are able to do to serve the needs of their community as soon as the immediate needs are met at their facilities."

One of the key financial aspects of the plan is the request for churches to "adopt a church" that has been impacted to help pay the pastor's salary for the next three months. It is expected that with so many

OPIOID EPIDEMIC "FAMILIAR"

DAN VAN VEEN

Across the country, the abuse of — and addiction to — opioids is headline news. Each year, tens of thousands of Americans die due to drug overdoses. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 66 percent involve a prescription or illicit opioid.

Don Wilkerson, who co-founded Teen Challenge in 1958 with his brother Dave, has spent 60 years bringing the gospel message to gangs and drug addicts.

"When we first started out, our focus was on ministry to gangs," Wilkerson, 79, says. "But we noticed members began dropping out, which we learned was because of drug addiction."

But the Wilkersons offered those ensnared in addiction hope through a Christ-centered recovery center/home. No program has been more successful in helping people overcome their addictions than Teen Challenge International, USA.

Today, there are more than 1,400 Teen Challenge centers in 123 countries around the world.

Jimmy Jack, 60, founder of the Long Island, New York, Teen Challenge,

has had 51 family members go through Teen Challenge. He says that when he went through the program, most people were from rough neighborhoods. Today, addiction has penetrated every realm of society.

Wilkerson says the numbers abusing and/or addicted to opioids, and the ages of those becoming addicted are expanding, sets this epidemic apart.

But the men agree that opioid addiction causes the same problems as other addictions.

The problem facing Teen Challenge is they are limited by buildings and beds. There are plans to open six new centers next year, but that falls far short of demand. However, there is hope the government will recognize the program's success and turn to it for help.

To mark the 60th anniversary of Teen Challenge, the David Wilkerson library is being established at the Brooklyn Teen Challenge. It will share why Teen Challenge was birthed and keep the vision alive for present and future generations of Teen Challenge students and workers.

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



ONCE BLIND, BUT NOW I SEE

BY MARY J. YERKES

Philip T. Dunn, lead pastor at Valley Christian Assembly in Charleston, West Virginia, was blind for 14 years due to macular degeneration. Dunn also had cataracts in the front and the back of both eyes, which complicated his vision problems. But from the start, Dunn believed God would heal him.

A few months ago, Dunn received his miracle. Today, his vision is 20/30 in his right eye and 20/60 in his left eye. The macular degeneration, which blinded him for 14 years, is completely gone.

Now, Dunn is driving, playing football with his grandsons, and helping his granddaughter blow out the candles on her birthday cake. He recently returned from driving his wife, Suzette Marie, to Florida to celebrate their 40-year wedding anniversary.

"It's been a phenomenal few months," says Dunn. "Sometimes I just stop and weep at the goodness of God." Dunn's

healing came about unexpectedly.

In August, while working in his yard, he began experiencing pain in his left eye. He made an appointment with an ophthalmologist, who explained the cataract in his left eye had ruptured and the pressure in his eye had risen to dangerous levels.

Dunn required immediate surgery to remove the cataracts. Later that evening, Dunn removed the patch covering his left eye. Although his eye had swollen shut, he pried it open using his fingers. When he did, Dunn clearly saw the dining room table, the curtains, and even the folds in the drapes!

He got up, walked into the kitchen, and for the first time in 14 years, saw his wife's face. But God had more in store for Dunn. Two weeks later, the doctor operated on his right eye to remove the cataracts. As the bandages came off, Dunn could see out of his right eye.

A COLD CUP OF WATER

BY GINGER KOLBABA

Four years ago, Jack M. Sampier, senior pastor of Newbreak Hillcrest in San Diego, led the congregation in changing the worship service time to Sunday evenings so the church could minister during the day — offering free coffee, dog bowls filled with fresh water for pets, and a prayer canopy in the neighborhood which has a large LGBTQ population. Sampier is retired from pastoring and is the only U.S. missionary associate ministering to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

"This is tough and intense ministry," he says. Although Sampier never experienced sexual identity confusion, he could understand the deep emotional wounds many feel because he himself had a devastating childhood in which he had been molested.

His changed attitude didn't transfer to everyone in the church, however. The first Sunday he opened the doors to gays and lesbians, offering free water, restroom facilities, and a place to get out of the heat, some church members took offense, believing the pastor advocated their sexual behavior. Sampier cleared that up immediately.

"I explained that we love *people* and lead people to God, and it's His responsibility to change them," says Sampier, 79. "But no, we do not accept or affirm their lifestyle. We do, however, accept people. These are God's children — and He wants them back."

MISSIONARY GETS BEAT-UP STL CAR

BY AG YOUTH MINISTRIES

It's not every day that Speed the Light (STL), the youth missions program that provides transportation and creative communication resources for missionaries, receives a request for the oldest, most beat-up vehicle. But this was the case for missionaries Mike and Becky McGee.

In 2010, intense cartel wars broke out in Mexico in the same area where the McGees were ministering.

"Cars were burning in the streets, buses burning downtown, and semi-trucks were overturned and burning on highways," Mike McGee says. "The danger was a 10 on a 1-to-10 scale."

During the midst of these cartel wars, the Holy Spirit spoke clearly to McGee, telling him to visit all their churches to "supply them with food, Light for the Lost literature, Bibles, and to pray and anoint them with oil."

To protect the lives of his family and team, McGee asked for an old, run-down STL vehicle. He explained that anything nice would likely result in the vehicle being stolen by the cartel. So, he wanted the oldest, junkiest car to reduce that risk.

STL provided the McGees with a 2000 Toyota Camry that was missing a hub cap, dented in on one side, and seemingly "useless." It was perfect!

Since the cartel wars have cooled, STL has also provided the McGees with a late-model Ford Expedition.



TINY HOMES, BIG GOD

BY RACHEL ELLIS

A year ago, Pastor Donald W. Foster asked the Terrace Heights Assembly congregation in Yakima, Washington, if anyone in the community would even notice if the church closed?

At about the same time, Foster met Andy Ferguson, co-founder of Transform Yakima Together. Ferguson subsequently asked if Terrace Heights would consider constructing a pair of tiny homes on the church property as a pilot program to combat homelessness. Foster thought it would be a perfect fit.

Ferguson says residents find homelessness more manageable if churches are willing to take on a couple of homeless people rather than shuttling the problem to a specified area of town.

"That's huge because part of the problem for homeless people is their isolation," Ferguson said. "Putting them in a healthy community of the church that can embrace them is good for the homeless person and good for the church."

Terrace Heights Assembly voted

unanimously to allow the two tiny homes, owned by Transforming Yakima Together, on the church property.

A year later, after setbacks in construction and delays from government codes, a mother and infant have been selected for the first home. Another mother with children ages 1 and 2 soon will live in the other dwelling. Ferguson says the residents of the tiny homes, which measure 10-by-20 feet, will have a care manager working with them to assess what they need to move forward with their lives. The residences include a bathroom, shower, and kitchen area that contains a small refrigerator, microwave oven, and hot plate for cooking.

The church, which has only 30 attendees, also built a laundry room in another building on campus, that includes a 24-by-30-foot area with couches, tables, and a microwave for social gatherings. Church attendees plan to invite the two families to game nights, events, and dinner in individual homes.

homes impacted, attendance will drop dramatically in some areas, and especially if the church building itself also has significant damage.

A miracle of sorts was reported by Moore. The tidal surge from the hurricane came to the very front door of the New Beginning AG in Port St. Joe/Highland View and stopped, leaving an approximately 6-foot wide and over 1-foot-high bank of debris along the edge of the building. "The tidal surge moved inland several blocks beyond the church in other areas of the community, but for some reason, stopped at the very edge of New Beginning," Moore says.

According to the Georgia district office, Hurricane Michael damaged several churches. So far seven AG churches have reported damage from the hurricane.

There were no reports of additional damage in the South Carolina or North Carolina districts.

For more information about the Georgia efforts, contact the Georgia district office. To learn how to help the West Florida district, connect through its website or, to volunteer, send an email to: Melissarenee88@gmail.com (put "Hurricane Michael volunteer" in subject line) or call/text 480-773-3577.

MOBILIZING MISSIONARIES

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

The Center for Missionary Mobilization and Retention has opened at Trinity Bible College and Graduate School in an effort to keep career missionaries on the field.

The center, in partnership with AGWM, is the brainchild of David P. Jacob, missionary in residence at Trinity.

"The goal of the center is to resource pastors, missionaries, and mobilizers to send and sustain more missionaries," says Jacob. "It's also designed to generate interest in students who hadn't thought they were called."

Greg Mundis, AGWM executive director, welcomes the connection with the Center for Missionary Mobilization and Retention.

"Having an online resource for millennials or anyone else searching the

internet is extremely important," Mundis says. "Awareness of the center among pastors and adherents will help it to grow exponentially."

An important initiative of the Ellendale, North Dakota-based center, which launched Oct. 4, involves mobilization workshops that will equip pastors to create environments where would-be missionaries can clearly hear their calling. For a variety of reasons, fewer are heeding a long-term tug to foreign lands.

Since 2008, the overall number of long-term missionaries sent from the U.S. has been dropping. The number of AGWM career missionaries peaked at 2,100 in 2008, but has been falling ever since, down to 1,968 at present.