

Assemblies of God

HERITAGE



The Legacy of Royal Rangers

2010

- Pentecostal Origins of Earth Day
- Italian American Pentecostalism
- Slavic Martyr Ivan Voronaev
- Pentecostals and Monasticism
- Robert Spence
- Gary McGee

Volume 30



Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center



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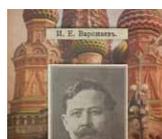
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Front cover: National Commander Johnnie Barnes with issues of *High Adventure* in the background.



From the Editor: Brushing away the Cobwebs

By Darrin J. Rodgers

“Why am I still Pentecostal?” The well-spoken young woman who asked me this question explained, “I seem unable at times to understand myself as I relate to my own past.” This sense of chronological dissonance — an apparent inability to understand why the Pentecostal testimony of previous generations should matter today — is widespread.

“Pentecostals were ahead of their time,” I replied. “You might be surprised by how early believers struggled with the same questions that you do.” She looked skeptical and said that she has become largely immune to Pentecostal history. “I don’t know what to think of the stories about ostensibly perfect people and past greatness. I can’t relate.”

This edition of *Assemblies of God Heritage* aims to brush away some of the cobwebs that may have obscured our Pentecostal identity from younger generations. My article on the lost message of “full consecration” — which I believe is Pentecostalism’s reason for being — shows how the various themes within Pentecostal history all arose from a deep commitment to Christ and His mission. These themes — including missions, miracles, passionate worship, spiritual disciplines, racial reconciliation, an affirmation of women in ministry, and a critique of extreme nationalism and war, among others — provide fertile ground for reflection about issues of import to all generations.

Early Pentecostals were anything but bland. They were visionaries and entrepreneurs, buoyed by a mission to restore what they deemed to be authentic Christian spirituality. They professed the highest of ideals, but also were troubled by their own human

frailties and weaknesses. They published profound insights on the spiritual life, and they established churches, schools, orphanages, and rescue missions. Several of these people and ministries are showcased here.

The feature story shows how Johnnie Barnes’ burning vision to turn boys into godly, responsible men developed into Royal Rangers. This discipleship ministry has now impacted over 2.5 million boys spanning the globe.

Many readers will be surprised to learn that the founder of Earth Day was a Pentecostal. The story of John McConnell and the Pentecostal origins of Earth Day will, no doubt, raise a few eyebrows. His story is one of a complex man whose devotion to Jesus led him to question political authorities, which landed him in jail, but also to commit himself to promote peace, justice, and care of earth. McConnell provides an example from Pentecostal history that one can love Jesus and care for creation; the two are not mutually exclusive.

It is essential that Pentecostals place themselves in the context of the broader Christian tradition. They did not suddenly emerge 100 years ago and create a new religion. I asked a Pentecostal scholar and Oxford-trained medievalist to write an article on the similarities between two renewal and

reform movements: Pentecostalism and monasticism. His article helps to show how Pentecostal spirituality fits within the larger tapestry of Christian history.

Articles about educators Robert Spence and Gary McGee offer warm appraisals of men who devoted their lives to impact emerging leaders in the Assemblies of God. Ethnic diversity in the Fellowship is evidenced by pieces on Italian American Pentecostals and on Slavic Pentecostal pioneer and martyr, Ivan Voronaev. Full consecration is exemplified in the life of Voronaev, who was forced to leave Russia after refusing to fight in the Tsarist army and then was killed in a Soviet concentration camp after he returned as an Assemblies of God missionary.

Gary McGee wrote, “I hope to inspire the younger generation with a past that is theirs too, even if it’s not in their memory.”¹ It is my desire that the following pages further that same goal, helping tomorrow’s leaders to resonate with the people and themes in our shared Pentecostal heritage. Then, perhaps, those who are questioning their Pentecostal identity, like the young lady above, will embrace and build upon it as each generation has done in the past.✠

Darrin J. Rodgers, M.A., J.D., is director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center and editor of *Heritage* magazine.

¹Gary McGee, *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004), 13.

A Call to Full Consecration: Rediscovering Pentecostalism's Reason for Being

By Darrin J. Rodgers

I sometimes wonder whether God is much interested in big movements. I know He is intensely interested in individual souls who are wholly consecrated to Him, and wholly devoted to His cause.¹

— Stanley Frodsham, editor of the *Pentecostal Evangel*

Early Pentecostal literature is overflowing with calls to full consecration — the insistence that Christians fully devote themselves to Christ and His mission. This call to full consecration — an essential part of the worldview of early Pentecostals — is now a faint echo in some quarters of the movement. Early Pentecostals offered profound insights concerning the need for a deeper spiritual life. A rediscovery of these insights — which focus on discipleship and mission — could reinvigorate the church by challenging believers to question the Western church's accommodation of the materialism and selfishness of the surrounding culture.

Full Consecration

What is “full consecration?” The term may be unfamiliar to many readers. Stanley Horton noted, in a 1980 *Pentecostal Evangel* article, “In the early days of this Pentecostal movement we heard a great deal about consecration.” Horton went on to explain that the Hebrew word, *kadash*, which means consecration, was later replaced in popular piety by similar words, such as dedication and commitment. He noted that *kadash* signified a “separation to the service of God,” calling for not merely a partial dedication, but for “a total consecration and a life-style different from the [surrounding] world.”²

Pentecostalism emerged about 100 years ago among radical Holiness and evangelical Christians who aimed for full consecration. They were very uncomfortable with the gap between Scripture and what they saw in their own lives; between *ought*-ness and *is*-ness. They wanted to practice an authentic spirituality; a genuine Christianity, not just in confession, but in practice. Yearning for a deeper life in Christ, they were spiritually hungry and desired to be more committed Christ-followers. These ardent seekers saw in Scripture that Spirit baptism provided empowerment to live above

normal human existence; this experience with God brought believers in closer communion with God and empowered them for witness.

According to Pentecostal theologian Jackie Johns, early Pentecostals embraced a worldview that, at its heart, is a “transforming experience with God.”³ According to this understanding, the experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit enables believers to consecrate themselves to God.

Results of the Consecrated Life

Various themes arose from this worldview that emphasized full consecration:

- **Mission** — Pentecostals have demonstrated a gritty determination to share Christ, in word and deed, no matter the cost. They had a vision to turn the world upside down, one person at a time. Delegates to the second general council of the Assemblies of God, held in November 1914, committed themselves to “the greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen.”⁴
- **Priesthood of all believers** — Pentecostals have put into practice a radical application of this Protestant ideal, affirming that God can call anybody into the ministry — regardless of race, gender, educational or social status, age, ability, and so on.
- **Spiritual disciplines** — Believers prayed, read their Bibles, fasted, avoided worldly entanglements that would dilute their testimony, and called for a lifestyle of self-denial for the sake of lifting Christ up to the world.
- **Expectation of the miraculous** — Believers practiced biblical spiritual gifts, experienced miracles, and viewed

life's struggles as spiritual warfare.

■ **Racial reconciliation** — Early Pentecostals at Azusa Street and elsewhere, realizing that full devotion to Christ precluded racial favoritism, committed themselves to overcoming the sin of racism.

■ **A conviction that heavenly citizenship should far outweigh earthly citizenship** — Most early Pentecostals critiqued extreme nationalism and war.

These themes (the above list is not exhaustive) all made sense within the worldview that called for full devotion to Jesus, no compromise with evil, and no distractions from the Christian's highest calling. Pentecostals, subject to human frailty and the confusion of surrounding cultures, have not always lived up to these ideals. Still, Pentecostal identity should not be defined by the shortcomings of individual members, but by the vision for authentic Christianity that captures the imagination of its adherents.

Early Pentecostals viewed tongues-speech as the evidence, but not the purpose, of Spirit baptism. The purpose of this experience with God was full consecration — to draw believers closer to God and to empower them to be witnesses. Spirit baptism helped enable believers to live with purity and power.

Early Pentecostals recognized that the consecrated life came at great cost, but yielded great spiritual riches. Daniel W. Kerr, the primary author of the AG's Statement of Fundamental Truths, warned against “the fading glory” on some Christians' faces, and instead called for a “deeper conversion” that is marked by desire for holiness.⁵ Quoting Hebrews 12:14, Kerr stated that holiness, “without



Artist's depiction of early Pentecostals being tarred and feathered.

which no man shall see the Lord,” is both a “product of grace” and “a life of self-denying and suffering.”⁶ Early Pentecostals insisted that the consecrated life is not inward-focused. Kerr averred that holiness “is a life of love for others, manifested in words and work.”⁷

Early Pentecostals were ahead of their time. It should be noted that they were not buying into modern political or social ideologies; their commitments arose from their devotional life. Some of their commitments — such as women in ministry, racial reconciliation, or pacifism — brought persecution 100 years ago, but the culture has shifted so that these stands are now considered respectable by many. This newfound respectability presents a challenge — it is possible to look like a Pentecostal by embracing historic Pentecostal themes that are now considered “cool,” without also seeking to be fully consecrated.

Pentecostalism without Consecration?

Living out and conveying authentic Christian spirituality from one generation to the next has often proven a difficult task. Carl Brumback, in his 1961 history of the Assemblies of God, expressed concern over the decline of the spiritual life within the Pentecostal movement. He wrote:

It must be admitted that there is a general lessening of fervor and

discipline in the Assemblies of God in America. This frank admission is not a wholly new sentiment, for down through the years in the pages of the *Pentecostal Evangel* and other periodicals correspondents have asked, “Is Pentecost the revival it was in the beginning?” As early as five years after Azusa, they were longing for “the good old days”! Nevertheless, it is vital to any revival movement to reassess not too infrequently the state of its spiritual life.⁸

Likewise, *Charisma* magazine editor Lee Grady recently lamented “the lost message” of consecration. He wrote, “Today's shallow, ‘evangelical lite’ culture focuses on self, self and more self. Christian books today are mostly about self-improvement, not self-sacrifice. We teach people to claim their ‘best life now’ — and to claim it on their terms.”⁹

Is it possible to be Pentecostal without full consecration? D. W. Kerr, in answering this question, propounded that “when we cease to [esteem others better than ourselves] we cease to live the Christ-life. We may still have the outward form, but the power is gone.”¹⁰ Those who identify with the Pentecostal tradition but who defend sinful or unwise activities are being inconsistent with the early Pentecostal worldview.

Need for Renewal

Self-centered spirituality seems to be the default setting for humanity. Pentecostalism arose as a renewal and reform movement within Christianity — and now the movement may itself be in need of renewal and reform.

How can Pentecostals rekindle a wholehearted passion for Christ and His mission? Stanley Frodsham suggested that Christians need to form a daily habit of reconsecration.¹¹ Rediscovering classic Pentecostal and Holiness devotional writings and hymns would be a good place to start. The popular Australian Assemblies of God worship band Hillsong United has done just that with its recent release, “Arms Open Wide,” which no doubt is patterned after the Holiness hymn, “Take My Life and Let it Be.”

“Take My Life and Let It Be” (lyrics below) is a prayer for full consecration. Read it, sing it, meditate upon it, and let God transform you. In doing so, you will rediscover Pentecostalism’s reason for being.

Take My Life and Let It Be

*Take my life, and let it be
consecrated, Lord, to Thee.*

*Take my moments and my days; let
them flow in ceaseless praise.*

*Take my hands, and let them move at
the impulse of Thy love.*

*Take my feet, and let them be swift
and beautiful for Thee.*

*Take my voice, and let me sing
always, only, for my King.*

*Take my lips, and let them be filled
with messages from Thee.*

*Take my silver and my gold; not a
mite would I withhold.*

*Take my intellect, and use every
power as Thou shalt choose.*

*Take my will, and make it Thine; it
shall be no longer mine.*

*Take my heart, it is Thine own; it
shall be Thy royal throne.*

*Take my love, my Lord, I pour at Thy
feet its treasure store.*

*Take myself, and I will be ever, only,
all for Thee. ✠*

**Darrin J. Rodgers, M.A., J.D., is
director of the Flower Pentecostal
Heritage Center and editor of
Heritage magazine.**

NOTES

¹Stanley Frodsham, *Wholly for God: A Call to Complete Consecration, Illustrated by the Story of Paul Bettex, a Truly Consecrated Soul* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, [1934]), 20. Frodsham served as general secretary of the Assemblies of God (1916), missionary treasurer (1917-1919), and as editor of all Assemblies of God publications (1921-1928; 1929-1949).

²Stanley Horton, “Consecration, Commitment, Submission,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 10, 1980, 20.

³Jackie David Johns, “Yielding to the Spirit: The Dynamics of a Pentecostal Model of Praxis,” in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: A Religion Made to Travel* (Carlisle, CA: Regnum Books, 1999), 74.

⁴*General Council Minutes*, April-November 1914 [combined], 12.

⁵D. W. Kerr, *Waters in the Desert* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, [1925]), 77.

⁶*Ibid.*, 34.

⁷*Ibid.*, 33.

⁸Carl Brumback, *Suddenly from Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961), 349-350.

⁹J. Lee Grady, “The Lost Message of Consecration,” *Fire in My Bones*, September 8, 2009. Online newsletter archived at: <http://www.charismamag.com>

¹⁰Kerr, 130.

¹¹Frodsham, 61.

¹²*Ibid.*, 27.

¹³John G. Lake, “The Power of Consecration to Principle,” unpublished manuscript edited by Wilford H. Reidt. FPHC.

¹⁴Stanley H. Frodsham, “Our Heavenly Citizenship,” *Weekly Evangel*, September 11, 1915, 3.

Paul Bettex, a Pentecostal missionary who was martyred in China in 1916, proclaimed:

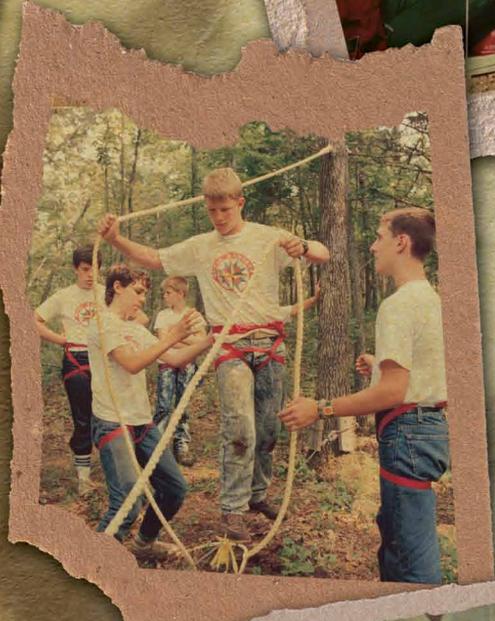
Full consecration is my battle-axe and watchword. You will find it in the tenth chapter of Matthew, and indeed from beginning to end of the New Testament... We have been forgetting that the Lord Himself, even before Paul taught that great doctrine of faith, heralded and proclaimed with no uncertain voice the conditions of true discipleship. These conditions are: *a full, absolute, unlimited consecration.*¹²

Early Pentecostal John G. Lake pointed to Christ as the Christian’s example for “absolute consecration,” even to the point of death. He wrote:

The real purpose of becoming a Christian is not to save yourself from hell, or be saved to go to heaven. It is to become a child of God, with the character of Jesus Christ....¹³

Stanley Frodsham, in a 1915 article, called upon Christians to be true to their heavenly citizenship:

When one comes into that higher kingdom and becomes a citizen of that ‘holy nation’ (1 Peter 2:9), the things that pertain to earth should forever lose their hold, even that natural love for the nation where one happened to be born, and loyalty to the new King should swallow up all other loyalties.... National pride [extreme nationalism], like every other form of pride, is abomination in the sight of God. And pride of race [racism] must be one of the all things that pass away when one becomes a new creature in Christ Jesus....¹⁴



The Legacy of Royal Rangers: Mentoring Future Men

By Alan Gell and Ryan Beaty

A new age is upon us! It is an age of jet travel, space consciousness, pleasure madness, and moral indifference. Our boys are growing up in this overpowering environment. They will be the victims of it unless our church men do something to guide the energies and thoughts of the boys into right spiritual channels. Action must be taken quickly.¹

It was with this urgent call that Johnnie Barnes introduced Royal Rangers, a new discipleship program for boys, to readers of the *Pentecostal Evangel* in 1962. Royal Rangers grew quickly, reaching across denominational, national, and ethnic divides, and by 2009 over 2.5 million boys across the world had been shaped through this program designed to turn boys into godly, responsible men. Royal Rangers was more than just a program; it developed into a community that helped to transform boys and men into more fully-committed followers of Christ. The story of Royal Rangers, until now, has largely been confined to oral history. This account will be of interest to those who lived the history, as well as to those who are concerned about the future of reaching and discipling boys in the church.

An Emerging Discipleship Crisis

By the 1950s, it became apparent to Assemblies of God leaders that young people were leaving the church, and that many who stayed were inadequately prepared to be strong followers of Jesus Christ.²

Responding to this discipleship crisis, leaders called for the development of a ministry that would inspire and also teach biblical doctrine and morals, Christian service, and the basic beliefs of the church.

A new discipleship program for boys and girls ages 9 to 12, called Christian Cadets, was launched by Robert and Mary Putnam. This resulted in the *Christian Cadet Manual*, which they self-published in 1954.³

Robert Putnam served as president of the Southern Missouri District's branch of the Assemblies of God youth organization, Christ's Ambassadors. Numerous Assemblies of God churches began adopting the Christian Cadets program. However, the introduction in 1956 of the girls-only

Missionettes siphoned many girls away from Christian Cadets. It is estimated that Christian Cadets had about 4,000 students in 27 states in 1957.⁴

In the summer of 1960, the Men's Fellowship Department launched a thorough study of various boys' programs, including Boy Scouts, Christian Service Brigade, Royal Ambassadors, and Christian Cadets, to decide whether one of those programs could be adapted for use in the Assemblies of God. In the end, the decision of the team was that none of these programs accomplished the goals defined by the team, and it was decided a new ministry needed to be developed. The Executive Presbytery, in conjunction with the Men's Fellowship Department, gathered a team to build a new ministry to meet this discipleship need. Burton W. Pierce, national Men's Fellowship secretary, stated unequivocally: "Our number one priority was to get men involved in the soul-winning and discipling of boys."⁵

Pierce began looking for the right man to launch this new ministry. In the fall of 1961 during a visit home, Rev. Marshall Callaway told Pierce of a fiery young Texan he had known for some years. That young man was Johnnie Barnes.

Johnnie Barnes

John Henry Barnes was the sixth of seven children born to a ranching family in Texas. Barnes, who came to Christ as a teenager, originally wanted to be a park ranger after college but felt a very strong call of God on his life. A Methodist at the time, Barnes enrolled at Texas Wesleyan College and began his ministry as a circuit preacher. Just a few short years later, not long after he met his future wife Juanita, Barnes was baptized with the Holy Spirit and joined the Assemblies of God. A talented writer, artist and speaker,

Barnes spent the next several years as an evangelist, pastor, and youth director.⁶

Barnes, an Eagle Scout recipient,⁷ had expressed a desire to develop a program for Assemblies of God boys, because he felt that Pentecostal boys who were involved in organizations such as scouting were often ridiculed for their religious beliefs. Johnnie thought it would be wonderful if Assemblies of God boys and men from across the nation could gather together and be encouraged in their faith.

Callaway suggested that Pierce contact Barnes, who was serving as president of the North Texas District Christ's Ambassadors. Pierce met with Barnes and was convinced he was God's man for the job.

When Barnes received the invitation to head the new ministry, he responded by engaging God in deep prayer for many days and nights. One



Johnnie Barnes wearing a buckskin outfit, racoon hat, and holding a rifle. He is standing in front of the cabin at Evangel College campus that later was moved to the National Royal Rangers Training Center; ca. 1970s.



A group of boys are participating in a low ropes course challenge under the direction of Paul Stanek (standing at right), national training coordinator; ca. 1990s.

night Barnes finally received answer — God showed him that He had been preparing Barnes his entire life for this role. He felt God was giving him an opportunity to do something few people ever get to do, and that God would be with him if he kept his eyes on Christ.

Barnes surrendered to the Holy Spirit's leading and prayed: "Lord, I'm available if this is what You want me to do. With Your help I will do it!!" Barnes moved with his family to Springfield, Missouri, and on January 1, 1962 he began his new work.⁸

Royal Rangers is Launched

Assistant General Superintendent Charles W. H. Scott suggested the new ministry be named Royal Rangers. "Royal" indicated belonging to the King of Kings, Jesus Christ. "Rangers" symbolized action and adventure. The name was an instant hit and started a buzz that began to move through the Assemblies of God, generating excitement and intrigue.

Barnes received permission from Boy Scouts, Royal Ambassadors (the Southern Baptist scout-like program), and Christian Cadets to incorporate portions of their manuals into the new

Royal Rangers curriculum. Within eight short months, Barnes wrote the *Royal Rangers Leader's Manual* and the handbooks for the three initial boys' groups — Pioneers (9-11 years), Trailblazers (12-14 years), and Air-Sea Rangers (15-17 years). That fall churches received literature on starting Royal Rangers in their communities, and the *Pentecostal Evangel* ran articles on the exciting new boys' program.⁹ In October 1962, Royal Rangers officially launched.

Almost overnight, dozens of churches started Royal Rangers ministries. Interested churches received a pamphlet on how to start a local outpost. Following those steps, churches recruited leaders, organized meetings, gained members, and filed the necessary paperwork to become a "chartered" outpost. The excitement and pride over having a Royal Rangers outpost was great. Pastors framed the charter certificate, proudly displaying it in their church foyers. Boys and men also frequently donned their Royal Rangers uniforms, which consisted of khaki pants, khaki shirts, and clip-on ties to match the color of each group.

It quickly became obvious that Royal Rangers was more than just teaching a class; it had become a

robust mentoring ministry to boys, and the leaders needed additional training. The national Royal Rangers office accepted the challenge by appointing Bob Reid to develop leadership materials. Under Reid's guidance, the Leadership Training Course (LTC), a correspondence course, was introduced in 1963 to better equip leaders to use the handbooks and to teach them how to lead boys to Christ, to counsel them through life's problems, and to mentor them into Christlike manhood.

From then until now, training has been an integral component of Royal Rangers. Only eight men have served as the national training coordinator: Bob Reid (1963-1965), Paul Feller (1965-1971), Don Franklin (1965-1974), Paul Stanek (1974-1999), Rick Dostal (1999-2003), Mike Laliberty (2003-2007), Perry Siddle (2007-2008), and Steve Schultz (2008-present).

Equipping Men to Disciple Boys

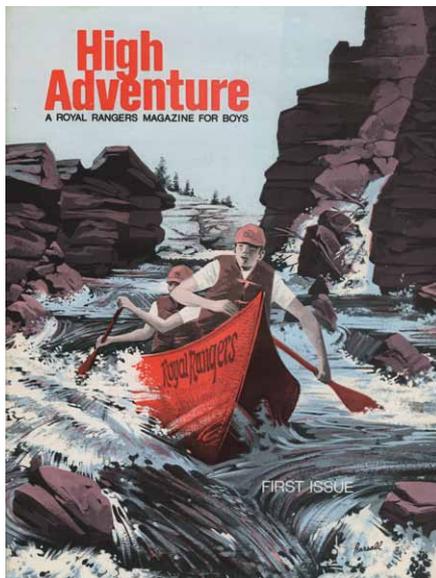
As Royal Rangers continued to grow, the national office developed specialized training to teach men how to conduct a wide range of activities with their boys. In 1968, four National Training Camps (NTC) were conducted in Missouri, Colorado, New York, and California. The camps were designed to give leaders the very best training possible. They were so well received that more camps were added the following year.

In 1970, to meet the further demand for outdoor training for leaders, four National Training Trails (NTT) were conducted on hiking trails in the Ozark Mountains, the High Sierra Mountains, the Rocky Mountains, and the Adirondack Mountains. In 1973, as a sequel to NTC, the Advanced National Training Camp (ANTC) was added. In 1972, Junior Leadership Training Camps (JLTC) were intro-



Farwell Chapel at the National Royal Rangers Training Center in Eagle Rock, Missouri, July 1994.

duced to provide leadership training for older boys. Many districts began conducting JLTCs, Junior Training Trails (JTT), and winter camping events for their boys. Additional camps were added throughout the 1970s: National Canoe Expedition (NCE) in



The first issue of *High Adventure* magazine introduced in 1971.

1973, National Aquatics Camp (NAC) in 1976, and Winter National Training Camp (WNTC) in 1977.

Barnes continued to lead and grow Royal Rangers throughout the 1960s,

'70s, and '80s, adding new program elements frequently.

In the summer of 1963, the first issue of *Dispatch*, a quarterly magazine for leaders, was published. *Dispatch* included a weekly Bible study course and a planning guide. It was designed to give leaders new ideas, devotions, and information. In 1974, Barnes shifted the editorial responsibility of *Dispatch* to John Eller.

In 1971, *High Adventure* was introduced as the quarterly magazine for boys. It was designed to challenge boys to higher ideas and spiritual dedication while providing worthwhile, exciting reading. In 1986, *Dispatch* and *High Adventure* were combined into one magazine with boys and leaders editions of *High Adventure*.

In 1964, the Gold Medal of Achievement (GMA), the highest award earned by a Royal Ranger, was introduced and immediately became the goal of boys across the nation. By design it required hard work and dedication to complete. Since its introduction, approximately 6,300 young men have earned this prestigious award, which constitutes less than 1% of the entire Royal Rangers membership his-

tory. Royal Rangers GMA recipients have gone on to become pastors, business leaders, missionaries, politicians, military officers, college professors, professional athletes, as well as the current national Royal Rangers director.

In about 1964, five districts began a big campout which they called a "Pow Wow." Since that time the idea has caught on so that every district now has at least one Pow Wow every year, and some have 2,000 or more in attendance! Thousands have been saved and filled with the Holy Spirit through the devotional services held at these campouts.¹⁰

In later years, day camps were started for the younger age groups of Straight Arrows and Buckaroos which now are called Ranger Kids Day.

The Frontiersmen Camping

Fraternity (FCF, later changed to Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship) was launched in 1966. FCF was designed to encourage advancement; cultivate the very best in Christian example and service; develop camp-

It quickly became obvious that Royal Rangers was more than just teaching a class; it had become a robust mentoring ministry to boys.

ing skills among older boys; encourage leaders to complete the leadership training program; stimulate Christian involvement; and preserve the historical primitive skills of our American forefathers. A highlight of this group has always been its colorful ceremonies, which feature members dressed in authentic historical clothing.

To help promote the FCF program, territorial representatives were

appointed in 1969. In 1970, John Eller was selected as the first president, and Fred Deaver was elected president in 1974. Deaver led FCF from 1974 until becoming national president emeritus in 2002. Since his retirement, great men like Rick Dostal (2003-2005), Jim Rounsville (2005-2009), and Paul Walters (2009-present) have led FCF into the early part of the new century.

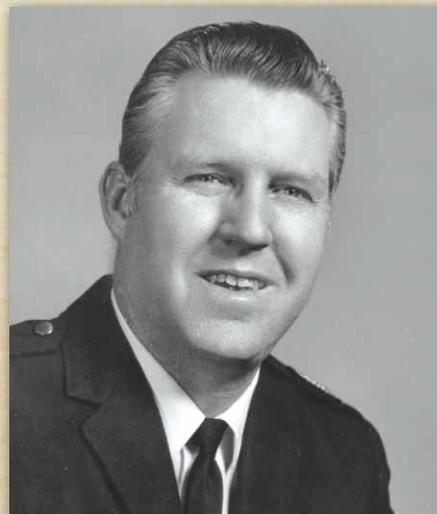
Fred Deaver, a nationally known western and wildlife artist, is considered to be second only to Johnnie Barnes when considering the contributions made to the Royal Rangers ministry.¹¹ He has traveled extensively around the United States as a trainer, camp speaker, and ambassador for Royal Rangers. He has encouraged countless men to be men and to lead their local Royal Rangers ministry as

Royal Rangers Founder Johnnie Barnes Recalls His Spirit Baptism as a Methodist Minister

It is rather amusing to me now as I remember the first night I went to the altar to ask God to fill me with the Spirit. I wanted to be sure that my actions were befitting my position as a Methodist minister. So I came to the altar with all my pride, poise, and dignity. Kneeling very carefully on one knee, I prayed something like this; "Here I am Lord. If you want me to have this experience, give it to me."

I soon found out that a person who comes to God without an humble spirit will receive nothing from Him. I did not receive this experience until I became humble, forgot about myself, and desired this experience with all

my heart. It took a few days of fasting and several hours of prayer before God could get my stubborn, haughty



Johnnie Barnes

and proud spirit into this condition. But thank God, one night I received the greatest experience, except for salvation, that a person can have.

On that wonderful night, I came to the altar wanting more than anything else for God to fill me with the Holy Ghost. I fell on my knees, raised my hands toward heaven, and began to make love to Jesus. As I did this, I became lost in the presence of Christ.

Soon my soul became flooded with heavenly glory, peace, and power. I had one desire and that was to love and praise the Lord with all my being. When I came to myself, I was speaking in a language that I had never heard before. Then I knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that this was the baptism of the Holy Ghost. God so revolutionized my life that night, I haven't been the same person since.

* Johnnie Barnes, *Why I Was Convinced as a Methodist Minister of the Reality of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost* (N.p.: the author, n.d.), 19.



Welcome sign for National Camporama (with flags and rangers in the background), held at Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, 1982.

well as their families, churches, and places of employment with integrity, honor, and faithfulness. “Mr. Senior Guide,” as he is well known, was an attendee of the first national training camp, immediately impressing Barnes and Feller. As a result, Deaver began a 40-year history of serving as senior guide, the crucial staff role, at NTC.¹²

In 1966, Royal Rangers branched out and became an international ministry, starting outposts in Latin America and the Caribbean and in Australia.¹³ That same year, a new auxiliary group for 7-8 year olds was formed, called Buckaroos, which had a cowboy theme. Following the wildly successful addition of Buckaroos, Barnes added Trail Rangers to Air-Sea Rangers (15-17 years), enabling boys to focus on specialized skills in camping and survival settings, air competencies, or sea proficiencies.

Royal Rangers also began expanding across denominational lines. In 1973, a delegation from the Congregational Holiness Church — Terry Crews, Ronald Wilson, and Charles Dial — came to Springfield to meet with then-general superintendent Thomas Zimmerman, Johnnie

Barnes, and Paul Stanek. As a result of those meetings, guidelines were created for chartering non-Assemblies of God groups as Royal Rangers outposts. The Congregational Holiness Church became the first denomina-



Johnnie Barnes (left) and Ronald Wilson at National Commanders Banquet for the Congregational Holiness Church, Atlanta, Georgia, 1983. Courtesy of Ronald Wilson

tion to charter groups in 1975. Wilson served as their national commander for seven years. Today, Wilson remains a staunch Royal Rangers supporter in his role as general superintendent of

the Congregational Holiness Church. Other denominations soon followed, including the International Pentecostal Holiness Church and the Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church.

The 1970s continued to be a decade of growth and excitement for Royal Rangers, seeing two new auxiliary groups introduced, a new national camp for boys and men developed, and international expansion flourished.

Chi Omega Rho, a program for college students, was developed in 1972. By 1982, there were active chapters at Central Bible College, Evangel College (now Evangel University), Southeastern Bible College (now Southeastern University), and Southwestern Bible College (now Southwestern Assemblies of God University). It was disbanded in 1999.¹⁴

Requests arose for the involvement of even younger boys, particularly 5-6 year olds. As a result, the Straight Arrows group, which had a Native American theme, was introduced and enthusiastically received in 1977.

Big, Loud, and Colorful!

The first National FCF Rendezvous was held in 1972 at Fantastic Caverns in Springfield, Missouri. Over 200 delegates gathered for food, fun, and fellowship while being challenged spiritually in the evening services. They played games, learned frontier crafts and skills, and worshiped God in His wonderful canopy of nature and in caves once inhabited by Native Americans.

The first National Camporama — a camping event sponsored by the national office for Royal Rangers from across the country — took place in 1974 in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on the grounds of the United States Air Force Academy, boasting an attendance of over 1,400. It was a fantastic setting and an unforgettable event

Clay in the Potter's Hand: General Treasurer Shaped by Royal Rangers

One does not need to look very far to find men who, while young, were shaped by the ministry of Royal Rangers. Doug Clay, current general treasurer of the Assemblies of God, credits Royal Rangers as having been pivotal in his development as a young man.



Doug Clay, age 9, posing with his Royal Rangers pinewood derby car and first place trophy at Bethany Assembly of God, Adrian, Michigan, July 1972.

A graduate of Central Bible College, Clay served the Assemblies of God as youth pastor, senior pastor, district youth director, national youth director, and district superintendent, prior to his current role at the national office. But it was the men of Royal Rangers whom he most credits for preparing him for life.

Clay, who grew up in a single-parent home with his mother states, "I never really realized I didn't have a father around because I had my Royal Rangers leaders. They came to my basketball games, helped me with my homework, and were there for me to talk to when I needed it. I needed a godly man's influence, and my Royal Rangers leaders filled that role. Truthfully, I always felt bad for the other kids because they had only one dad and I had six!"

that included the Air Force Marching Band and the governor of Colorado. Astronaut Jim Irwin, one of the speakers, kept the boys on the edge of their seats. Patch trading was initiated and spawned the design and proliferation of Royal Rangers patches across the country.

Since their inception, National FCF Rendezvous and National Camporama have continued on a four-year rotation and moved permanently to the National Royal Rangers Center in Eagle Rock, Missouri in 1986. National Camporama has grown to consistently attract some 5,000 participants, and the National FCF Rendezvous regularly draws 850.

The far-reaching influence of Royal Rangers began to be seen by the 1970s. Edwin Louis Cole, who became a leading authority on issues of Christlike manhood, got his start as a Royal Rangers leader in Northern California. Author of *Maximized Manhood* and *Courage*, Cole regularly attributed his time spent as a Royal Rangers leader as the major catalyst in his ministry to men. Cole founded the Christian Men's Network in 1977 and was integral in the founding of Promise Keepers; his impact is still felt today.¹⁵

In the 1980s, Royal Rangers continued its trajectory of growth with two major events. In 1986, the National Royal Rangers Training Center (now National Royal Rangers Center) in Eagle Rock, Missouri was dedicated. Nestled in the middle of the beautiful Ozark Mountains of the Mark Twain National Forest, Camp Eagle Rock, as it is commonly called, occupies 1,445 sprawling acres, complete with mountains, streams, and fields. The Johnnie Barnes Lodge serves as headquarters for the campground.

Since its opening, a number of permanent structures have been added to enhance the Eagle Rock experience,

including: shower houses, bunk houses, a trading post, a chapel, a communications building, an industrial kitchen, resort accommodations, and an amphitheater. Besides being the permanent home of National FCF Rendezvous and National Camporama, it is the location for annual national training events and frequently hosts campouts and retreats for churches and various other groups. It is also a regular meeting place for the National Royal Rangers Executive Committee.

On June 16, 1989, Johnnie Barnes, the founder of Royal Rangers and its

Barnes once said, "I have a dream of an army of Royal Rangers around the world lifting high the banner of Jesus Christ, making an impact on their generation for God."

leader since its inception 27 years earlier, went to be with the Master Ranger, Jesus Christ. The impact of Barnes' life was felt around the world, and his loss was heartbreaking to not only Royal Rangers leaders but also to religious leaders across the globe. The man whose FCF name was "Strong Heart" had exactly that, a strong heart for reaching, teaching, and keeping boys for Jesus Christ. His funeral was attended by hundreds of people in Springfield, Missouri.

Barnes was widely loved and recognized for his contributions to the kingdom of God. In 1975, he was recognized in Marquis' *Who's Who in Religion*. He received honorary doctoral degrees from Alabama

Bible College (1981) and Covington Theological Seminary (1982). At the 1981 General Council, General Superintendent Zimmerman presented Barnes with a special plaque of recognition that read in part "...with commendation for his distinguished leadership in establishing and developing this world-wide ministry to boys involving Assemblies of God Men." In June 1983, Barnes received the *God and Service Recognition Emblem*, which expresses appreciation for outstanding leadership and significant contributions by an adult to the spiritual, social, and physical lives of young people, from the Interdenominational Church Commission for Civic Youth Serving Agencies in Alexandria, Virginia.

Barnes once said, "I have a dream of an army of Royal Rangers around the world lifting high the banner of Jesus Christ, making an impact on their generation for God." He definitely saw that dream fulfilled in his lifetime. At the time of his passing, over 150,000 men and boys were participating in Royal Rangers in the U.S. with tens of thousands more participating worldwide.

New Leadership

In August 1989, Rev. Ken Hunt, who had been serving in the national Royal Rangers office, was appointed the second national Royal Rangers commander. Hunt, a kind and methodical leader, set out to walk in the footsteps of a legend. Following the pioneer of anything, especially a ministry as successful as Royal Rangers, is never an easy task, but Hunt handled it with grace and class.

As a result, the 1990s saw continued advancements in the Royal Rangers ministry. Under Hunt's leadership the National Royal Rangers Training Center's debt was liquidated. A new *Royal Rangers Leaders Manual* was



Royal Rangers outside at Kenya Academy in 2001. Left to right: Peter N’Jiri, general superintendent; missionary J. R. Gould; Men’s Fellowship director, Harris Gichuhi; and Jim Eubanks, Oklahoma District commander, standing at far right.

written, the first since the inclusion of Straight Arrows (1977). It included more extensive information than previous editions and included the Royal Rangers *Adventures in Camping*, a guide for outdoor adventures, which had previously only existed as a separate book.

Two other major strides were made under Hunt's leadership. For years, individuals serving on staff at national training events, such as NTC, were given only limited instruction. In order to better train men who would be training Royal Rangers leaders, the National Academy was developed. An Advanced Academy was added in order to give additional training to leaders serving as the camp commanders and senior guides, the key roles of the camps. These camps generated a significant increase in the quality of training at national training events.

The second major stride was the expansion of the advancement system. Additional awards were added to the Pioneer and Trailblazer groups to encourage more young men to earn the Gold Medal of Achievement. Air-Sea-Trail Rangers took on a new look

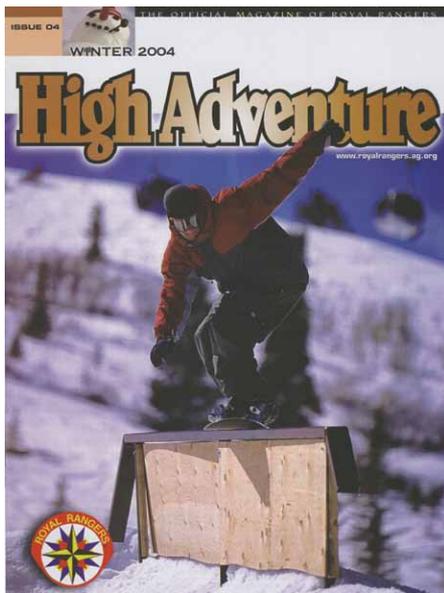
and the moniker of Challengers. These changes again laid the foundation for future improvements.

In 1998, Ken Hunt announced his resignation. Hunt guided Royal Rangers extremely well during his tenure. Perhaps his most lasting legacy came from General Superintendent Thomas Trask when he said that Royal Rangers was "the number one soul-winning ministry in the Assemblies of God."

New Program for a New Millennium

In 1999, Richard Mariott, the district Royal Rangers commander and Men's Ministries director from the Northern California-Nevada District, was appointed the third national commander. Mariott was charged with taking the expansion of the advancement system Hunt had begun and broadening it to reach a new generation of Royal Rangers.

In 2000, Royal Rangers announced restructuring and renaming the groups. Straight Arrows and the first year of Buckaroos were combined to become Ranger Kids. The second year of



The cover of the Winter 2004 issue of *High Adventure* magazine.

Buckaroos and Pioneers became Discovery Rangers. Trailblazers was renamed Adventure Rangers. Challengers was renamed Expedition Rangers. The advancement system of each age group became merit-driven, allowing boys new to Royal Ranger to begin advancing immediately. This new system contained annual medals for Discovery and Adventure Rangers and culminated with the GMA at the completion of Adventure Rangers. A new *Royal Rangers Leaders Manual*, *FCF Handbook*, and boys' handbooks were written.

Other new additions were introduced. Royal Rangers *Leader's Guides* were created for each age group and included all of the weekly meeting plans, games, devotions, and ceremonies. The *Leader's Merit Reference Guides* not only provided the answers to the merits the boys were earning, something never available before, but also teaching tips, a five-week lesson plan, and supplemental materials to help the commander teach the skills to his boys. Boys' workbooks were also created with worksheets and helps for the young men to learn the skills presented and earn their Bible and skill

merits.

Mariott and his team also revised leadership training. The LTC training, which had become a 16-week course, became the Leadership Training Academy. The requirements for training moved from one long, all-inclusive course to a combination of required and elective training modules. The national training events were also changed to reflect the new curriculum and training structure. Junior training adapted to the merit-driven system, and more camps were added to cover a greater variety of topics and skills.

In 2002, Mariott, in conjunction with John Bueno, the director of Assemblies of God World Missions, asked Doug Marsh, who had been working with Royal Rangers as a missionary to Latin America and the Caribbean since 1993, to return to the United States and launch Royal Rangers International (RRI). Marsh, the son of missionaries to Peru and Bolivia, was himself a GMA recipient and had extensive experience starting Royal Rangers in a number of countries from the time he was 14. RRI became a starting point for nations around the world to begin and resource Royal Rangers groups in their countries. When RRI was founded, forty-five nations had national ministries with active Royal Rangers groups. Today, Royal Rangers is ministering in eighty countries.

In late 2006, Mariott announced his resignation. He guided Royal Rangers through an important transition, oversaw the largest events in Royal Rangers history, and oversaw a state of the art expansion of Camp Eagle Rock. He returned to California with his wife, LeeAnne, where he is still actively involved in Royal Rangers.

Taking Royal Rangers to the iPod Generation

On January 26, 2007, Doug Marsh

became the fourth national Royal Rangers commander. Marsh immediately implemented an online survey that allowed boys, parents, leaders, and pastors the opportunity to voice their opinions concerning the strengths and limitations of Royal Rangers. The national office received over 2,200 responses in the first six months. Following the leading of the Holy Spirit and listening to the voice of the field, the national team set out to build on what Barnes, Hunt, and Mariott had established and to position Royal Rangers to adapt in a rapidly changing environment.

According to Marsh, Royal Rangers today aims to influence "more boys and young men than ever, more effectively than ever." Royal Rangers, he states, "seeks to be the premier, most sought after church ministry for the next generation of men in America."¹⁶

In 2008, *High Adventure* magazine became *RangersNOW*. *RangersNOW* is an annual magazine with a separate edition for each boys' group and leaders. Each edition includes information on program updates and articles, comics, games, or contests to pique the interest of that particular age group.

In 2010, Royal Rangers began releasing many new and updated program elements to meet the needs and desires of local churches. The curriculum became more hands-on, fun, and experience based to hold boys' attention and to foster a mentoring environment. The Bible merits were rewritten to focus on godly manhood, taking boys on a journey through the Scriptures and teaching them what the Bible says about doctrine, sexuality, biblical worldview, cultural issues, and Christlike manhood. New leadership merits were released to focus on S.E.A.L.S. (social, equipping, attitude, leadership, and serving skills). These new Bible and leadership merits became the foundation for the Royal

Rangers advancement trails.¹⁷

Whenever curricular changes are made, adjustments to training must follow. National Training Camp, the cornerstone of Royal Rangers training since the 1960s, was reborn as National Rangers Ministry Camp (NRMC) in 2010. This new training models the boy-led, adult-facilitated approach Royal Rangers wants its leaders to follow to grow their local outposts. It demonstrates that fun, hands-on, experiential learning is the best way to mentor boys. A new edition of the *Royal Rangers Leader Manual: Inspire the Journey* serves as the backbone of the current training program and as a guide in all things Royal Rangers.¹⁸

In order to provide its organizational leadership with the best possible training, Royal Rangers partnered with Global University and created the Royal Rangers Organizational Leadership Diploma through Berean School of the Bible in 2009. This diploma consists of the courses necessary to become a licensed minister with the Assemblies of God plus additional relevant courses.

Ministering to the iPod® generation means leveraging the Internet. In 2010, Royal Rangers introduced an online curriculum delivery system, allowing for quicker curricular adaptations and making it more affordable to churches. Royal Rangers maintains an extensive web site and is active with online social networks, such as Facebook.

Almost fifty years ago, Royal Rangers was birthed as an answer to the discipleship crisis among boys in the Assemblies of God. Today, the continued cultural and spiritual decline of America is reflected in the pews, and the need for godly mentors for boys is greater than ever. The legacy of Royal Rangers — its proven effectiveness in mentoring boys to become respon-

sible, committed Christian men — is demonstrated in its history and in the lives of its over 2.5 million participants worldwide. ✨



Alan Gell is a former South Central Region Royal Rangers Coordinator and National Royal Rangers Council vice president. A member of Royal Rangers since 1962, Gell is a retired US Army officer who currently resides in Texas with his wife.



Ryan Beaty is Programs and Outreach Coordinator for the National Royal Rangers Ministry. A lifelong Royal Ranger, Beaty is a minister with the Southern Missouri District and a graduate of Southwestern Assemblies of God University and Assemblies of God Theological Seminary.

NOTES

¹Johnnie Barnes, “A Bird’s-eye View of Our New Boys Program,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 23, 1962, 9.

²The information in this article came largely from oral history. The authors express deep gratitude to Paul Stanek, Alan Gell, Fred Deaver, and Doug Marsh for helping to verify facts.

³Robert Gene Putnam and Mary Catherine Putnam, *Christian Cadet Manual* (Bismarck, MO: Christian Cadets, 1954).

⁴“Evaluation of Proposed Boys Work Report,” Men’s Fellowship Department, June 15, 1961.

⁵*Ibid.*; John Eller, “The Silver Anniversary Story,” *High Adventure* (Spring 1987): 7.

⁶David Barnes, “About our Founder,” *High Adventure* (Spring 1987): 3; David Summers, *Johnnie the Barefoot Dreamer: The Childhood Story of Johnnie Barnes, Founder of the Royal Rangers* (Dallas: Wisdom House, 1974);

Johnnie Barnes, *Why I Was Convinced as a Methodist Minister of the Reality of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost* (N.p.: the author, n.d.).

⁷Ryan Beaty, interview with Fred Deaver, 2009.

⁸Juanita Barnes, “Your Legacy,” 2004. See also Rodney Davis, “‘Just Call Me Johnnie’: Remembering Johnnie Barnes, the First Royal Rangers Leader,” *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Summer 1998): 22-24, 34.

⁹Howard S. Bush, “Introducing Royal Rangers,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 23, 1962, 8-9; Barnes, “A Bird’s-eye View of Our New Boys Program,” 9, 19.

¹⁰John Eller, “The Silver Anniversary Story,” *High Adventure* (Spring 1987): 9.

¹¹Deaver’s involvement with Royal Rangers began with his attendance at the first National Training Camp. It evolved through the role he played as Kansas District Aide-de-Camp. In the mid-1960s Johnnie Barnes began traveling the country attempting to get district superintendents to appoint pastors to serve as district Royal Rangers directors, in much the same manner some were already serving as DCAPs, although superintendents were initially reluctant. As a result, laymen, often with military experience, were appointed as district Aide-de-Camps to run the district ministry instead. Fred Deaver, along with a number of other very influential Ranger leaders from these early years came from these lay positions. It can be postulated that this is also the impetus of Royal Rangers remaining such a largely lay-led ministry to this day.

¹²Ryan Beaty, interview with Fred Deaver, 2009.

¹³John Eller, “The Silver Anniversary Story,” *High Adventure* (Spring 1987): 9.

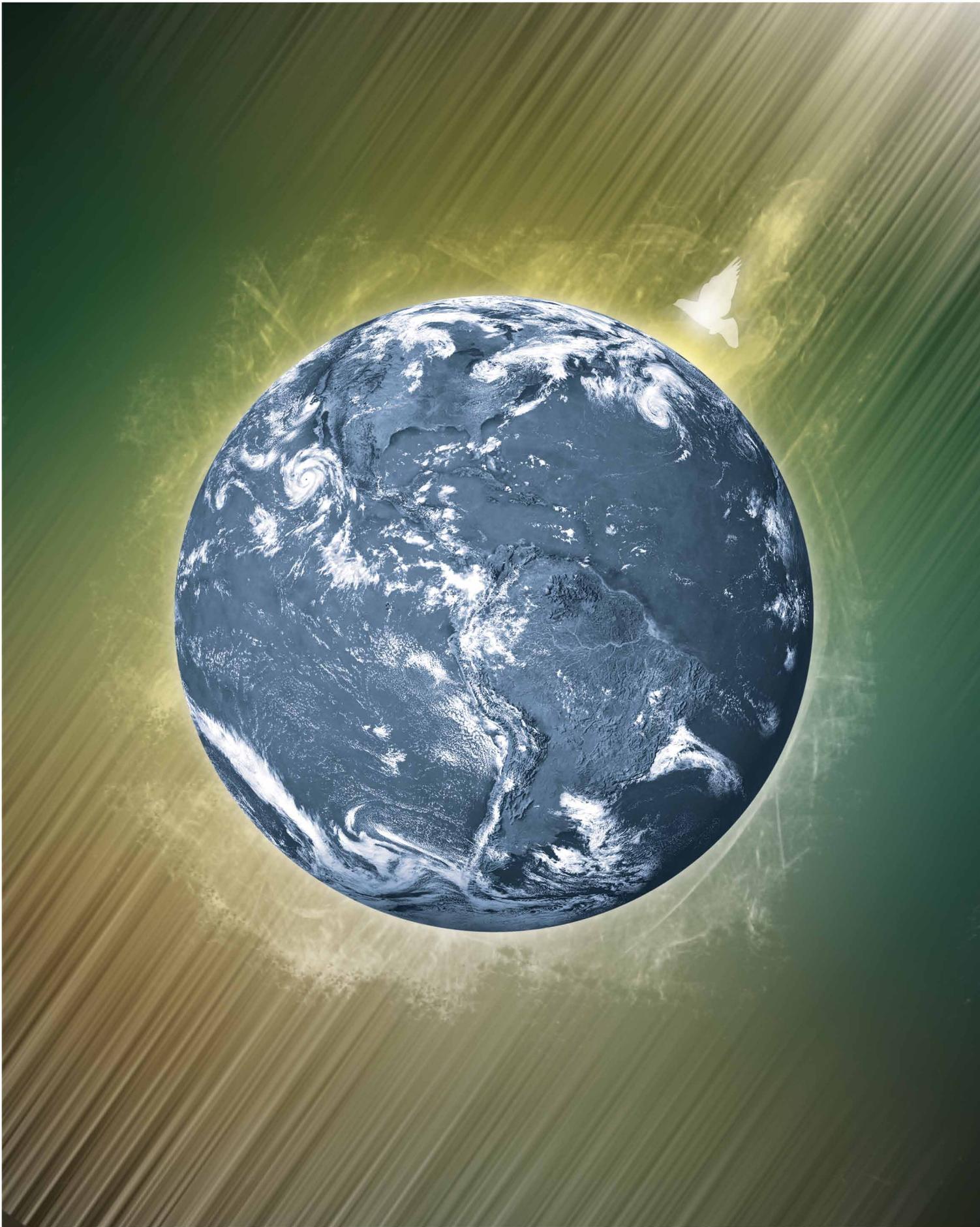
¹⁴Ken Hunt, Royal Rangers Executive Committee Minutes, March 1999.

¹⁵Ryan Beaty, interview with Joanne Webster, 2009.

¹⁶Doug Marsh, “Royal Rangers: A Visionary Organization,” *Seek and Save* (March 2007): 3. Available from Royal Rangers <www.royalrangers.ag.org>

¹⁷Ryan Beaty, “A Curricular Roadmap for Ministry to Next Generation Men,” *Seek and Save* (March 2007): 15. Available from Royal Rangers <www.royalrangers.ag.org>

¹⁸Steve Schultz, “Adult Leadership Training,” *Seek and Save* (March 2007): 19. Available from Royal Rangers <www.royalrangers.ag.org>



John McConnell, Jr. and the Pentecostal Origins of Earth Day

By Nicole Sparks and Darrin J. Rodgers

Many readers will be surprised to learn that the founder of the original Earth Day was a Pentecostal.¹

John McConnell, Jr., who is 94 and lives with his wife, Anna, in Denver, Colorado, is best known for his zeal for peace and earth-care, but few people realize that his life-work arose from his formative experiences in the Pentecostal church. McConnell has an impeccable Pentecostal patrimony — his grandfather (T. W. McConnell) was Spirit-baptized at the Azusa Street Mission, and his parents (John S. and Hattie McConnell) were founding members of the Assemblies of God. Their story provides insight into the lives of entrepreneurial pioneers in the rough-and-tumble world of early Pentecostalism. Perhaps more importantly, the life of John McConnell, Jr. demonstrates that one can love Jesus and care for His creation; these two attitudes are not mutually exclusive.²

Pentecostal Pedigree

The founder of Earth Day has a solid Pentecostal pedigree. John McConnell, Jr.'s grandfather, Theodore Ward (T. W.) McConnell, was a Baptist minister who identified with the Pentecostal movement at the interracial Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1906 — which was one of the focal points of the emerging Pentecostal movement.³ The first issue of the *Apostolic Faith* — the newspaper published by the Azusa Street Mission — shared his testimony:

About 28 years ago, I went into a meeting to break it up, and the Lord broke me up. My conversion I never could doubt. I was called to preach ... The Lord supplied my every need, and was with me in revival meetings and in healing many that I prayed for. But I heard of people receiving the Holy Ghost and speaking with tongues. I came to Los Angeles to investigate, and found it was a fact, and earnestly commenced to seek the Lord for the baptism with the Holy Ghost. And the Lord, knowing my heart, came and took possession of me and spoke with my

tongue. I want to say to every person, test God and you will never deny the baptism with the Holy Ghost.⁴

T. W. and Frances McConnell had five children, the youngest of whom, John Saunders McConnell (1892-1966), answered the call to become an evangelist in 1911 while attending the Stone Church, a prominent Pentecostal congregation in Chicago. One of the first things J. S. McConnell did as he launched into ministry was to purchase and rebuild an “auto express car” into a “gospel car.” This ministry mobile allowed the budding evangelist to venture beyond the reaches of the railroads and provided a home while on the road in the ensuing years.⁵

While holding revival meetings in Shannon, Texas, J. S. McConnell fell in love with the beautiful young woman who was his pianist — Hattie MacLaughlin (1892-1992). They were married on December 15, 1912, on the front porch of her parents' home. She later recalled that they had a working honeymoon: “We left the next day [after the wedding] in his “gospel car” headed for southern Texas, without appointments — just trusting God to lead us to wherever we could be of service and give the gospel message.”⁶

Despite his father's embrace of Pentecostalism at Azusa Street and his own involvement at Chicago's Stone Church, J. S. McConnell apparently had not himself experienced Spirit baptism until several years into his ministry. J. S. and Hattie began to seek their own personal Pentecost after a doctor's wife — whom Hattie called “a very dear and spiritual lady” — shared her testimony with them a few times while attending revival meetings held by the McConnells at a town near Houston, Texas. This lady just happened to be the daughter of Arch P. Collins, a leading Pentecostal pastor from Fort Worth who later became the second chairman of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. Impressed by this woman's walk with the Lord, J. S. remarked, “I think she has something that we need.”⁷

The McConnells headed to Houston and to seek the bap-

tism in the Holy Spirit. Hattie remembered, “We were made very hungry for more of God and our hearts were open. Yet we had reservations.” One Sunday morning, J. S. was asked to preach at Brunner Tabernacle, just outside of Houston, even though he had not yet received the experience. Hattie was concerned, but these fears were soon allayed:

I thought, “Oh, I hope he says nothing to offend.” Instead, he preached the best “Pentecostal” message I ever heard. At the close of his message he said, “Now this is what the Bible says. This experience is for me and as many as our Lord shall call. So I am going to this altar — not to seek — but to receive what God has for me.”⁸

J. S. and Hattie were each baptized with the Spirit and spoke in tongues that morning. This experience resulted in rejection by some of their former friends and ministry colleagues, who claimed that the McConnells had accepted heresy. However, J. S. and Hattie found acceptance in Pentecostal circles — ministering in prominent churches such as F. F. Bosworth’s Dallas congregation and Chicago’s Stone Church, as well as in storefront missions, schools, theaters, and tents.⁹ Hattie noted, “As my husband’s calling always seemed evangelistic or preaching in new fields where the Pentecostal message had never been heard, we were ready to move on, in a short time.”¹⁰ During the next decades, the McConnells would be involved continuously in church planting and town-to-town revivals. In April 1914, the McConnells attended the organizational meeting of the Assemblies of God in Hot Springs, Arkansas. They became founding members of the General Council of the Assemblies of

God.¹¹

Childhood

Less than a year after the Hot Springs meeting, on March 22, 1915, John McConnell, Jr. (John) was born in Davis City, Iowa, where his parents briefly pastored a church. The eldest of six children, John was raised in an environment thoroughly infused with the Christian faith.¹²

J. S. taught his children to memorize Scripture at an early age. John remembers that he accepted Christ at age seven or eight, and shortly after-

to offering, trusting God to provide, as evidenced by their lifestyle — living out of a donated automobile. J. S. McConnell never passed an offering plate to collect money, preferring instead to utilize a box in the back of the church where individuals could give discreetly. On one occasion, the family was in need of one hundred forty dollars to pay a bill. Rather than requesting help, he instructed his family to pray, because the recent offerings had been averaging only twenty-five dollars. When the young John collected and counted the money after



The McConnell family (l-r): Hattie, Hope, Ruth, John (tallest in back), Evan, Paul, Grace, and J. S., circa 1930. Courtesy John and Anna McConnell

ward experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit. John recalled that his experience of Spirit baptism, which occurred during one of his father’s tent meetings, was dramatic: “I fell over backwards and began speaking in tongues.” John said that this experience changed his life: “I remember my attitude and conversations changed as a result of my baptism.” John remembered that his mother agreed: “My mother later on said I was a changed person. She said I was doing much better and taking care of the dishes and things. She thought my experience was real.”¹³

During their years of ministry, the senior McConnells lived from offering

the service, it was — to the penny — the amount for which they had prayed. Nostalgically and with a hint of challenge, he remarks, “I wish we had the faith that was demonstrated back in those times.”¹⁴

In addition to counting offering money, “Johnnie” and his sister Grace were actively involved in their parents’ ministry. The family of four sang as a quartet in many of the services, and Grace even sang gospel songs on national radio. Additionally, the children preached on occasion, revealing their early intelligence and — in at least one specific instance — quick wit. In one town, Grace and John were speaking at a local theater on the topic

of “The Devil’s Partner,” but Grace had arranged the words on the sign to read, “The Devil’s Partner: John McConnell.” “Everybody laughed about that,” he ruefully admitted.¹⁵

The children’s early ability with words reflected the talents of their parents; both John and Hattie wrote prolifically across a wide field of genres: tracts, books, and hymns. When the airplane was invented, J. S. McConnell composed a song comparing Christ’s return to a “heavenly airplane”:

*One of these nights about twelve
o’clock,
This old world’s gonna reel and
rock,
Sinners will tremble and cry for
pain,
And the Lord will come in his
airplane.*

*Ho! Ye Weary of every tribe,
Get your ticket for the airplane
ride,
Jesus our Savior is coming to
reign,
And take us up to glory,
In the heavenly airplane.¹⁶*

Though he had seen photographs of airplanes, young John had never seen a real one until he was six. After it flew overhead, he ran inside the house to announce to Hattie, “Come quick, Mommy! Jesus is here!” — a story that she retold with a laugh many times throughout her life. J. S. McConnell’s acknowledgment of contemporary scientific progressions, as evidenced in the above song, proved to have a profound impact upon his son’s later focuses.¹⁷

During one church meeting, young John joined with a few other young boys in forming a chain with their hands and grasping a live wire to feel the divine “spark.” John remembers

J. S. McConnell was known as “the fighting, fiery Irishman” who presented, as one advertisement declared, “scorching, scathing, liquid lumps of burning truth to meet present needs.”

this shock of electric current vividly and relates it to the work the Spirit was performing in revival meetings — “sawdust and people falling and ... being healed,” he recalls.¹⁸

John recalled another instance from this period in his life that deeply influenced him. After arriving in a new

town, his father was full of the Spirit and began preaching in German, a language he neither spoke nor had studied. Afterward, a group of individuals remarked to him, “We didn’t know you spoke German. You spoke perfect German to us!” Such events strengthened the McConnells’ faith and encouraged them in their traveling evangelism. For John, such obvious miracles reinforced his childhood faith and belief in the miraculous.¹⁹

J. S. McConnell, Sr.’s Ministry

John recalled that his father, more than anything else, emphasized the teachings of Jesus. John states that his father summarized his beliefs in a book, *The New Covenant*, which largely consisted of Scripture verses containing Christ’s teachings, organized thematically.²⁰

J. S. McConnell’s emphasis on the teachings of Jesus became of central importance to John. He stated, “While in his book, Dad had catalogued 147 commandments of Jesus ... there was one commandment that fired my soul. This stood out in my mind at that time and as I grew older sustained me in times of trouble and uncertainty. This commandment of Jesus was: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness ...”²¹

J. S. McConnell regularly submitted revival reports to the *Pentecostal Evangel* and preached at an afternoon service at the 1925 General Council on the subject of love.²² He became a fixture on the Pentecostal evangelistic circuit. J. S. McConnell was known as “the fighting, fiery Irishman” who presented, as one advertisement declared, “scorching, scathing, liquid

Revival poster advertising J. S. McConnell, “The Fiery Irish Evangelist,” as the principal speaker at the seventeenth annual convention of Glad Tidings Tabernacle in New York City, with Robert A. Brown, pastor, circa 1920s.

lumps of burning truth to meet present needs.”²³

The charismatic J. S. McConnell possessed a strong mind and was a gifted communicator. However, these giftings, combined with a strong independent streak, prophetic personality, and a tendency to question various cultural and doctrinal shibboleths, resulted in friction between himself and leaders within the Assemblies of God.

McConnell allowed his ministerial credentials to lapse in 1928. When he reapplied for credentials in 1929, the Southern California District did not give their immediate approval, citing concerns regarding McConnell’s character and beliefs. Correspondence reveals that church officials were uncertain how to react to McConnell. His positions on various doctrinal issues were hard to pin down — he defied simple explanations. General Secretary J. R. Evans described McConnell this way: “he is very full of notions and always has some big project in his mind.”²⁴ Helen Stewart, a concerned church member, expressed confusion after hearing McConnell’s silver-tongued preaching that offered rebuke to Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal alike. She described his appeal, “[He] had such a wonderful flow of speech. He seemed to have a power over the people.”²⁵

Responding to Stewart, Evans offered a candid appraisal of McConnell, noting that he suspected the difficulties with McConnell did not stem from doctrine: “I really believe that Brother McConnell’s main trouble is that he considered himself to be a very popular evangelist and in the ordinary sense of the word we would say that he got a swell head.”²⁶ McConnell continued his ministry independently, although he still maintained fellowship with some Assemblies of God churches and members. The complex issues

and strong personalities of McConnell and the church leaders make it difficult to ascertain whether McConnell’s departure from the Fellowship could have been avoided.

After his credentials lapsed with the Assemblies of God, McConnell spoke in a variety of churches — indeed, anywhere that would provide a platform — as he preached his fiery sermons with titles including: “The Greatest Love Story Ever Told,” “God Loving His Enemies,” and “The New Covenant.”²⁷ The denominations of churches in which he spoke varied broadly: Assemblies of God, Methodist,



John McConnell poses in his finest business attire in the hills overlooking Tujunga, California, 1940.
Courtesy John and Anna McConnell

Presbyterian, Baptist, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Church of God in Christ. McConnell strove to minister to a broad cross-section of Christians, not just to Pentecostals. John described his father’s attitude: “people should come together ... on what they agree on and accommodate their differences ... [H]e didn’t stress the differences; he stressed the gospel.” McConnell frequently attracted crowds of hundreds, and sometimes

thousands, of people.²⁸

One church that John remembered fondly is Philadelphia’s Tindley Temple Methodist Church, the world’s largest African American church at the time, where his father was invited to preach in the 1930s. When asked whether his father spoke at both black and white churches, John responded, “Oh, yes. My goodness ... He was, of course, totally against segregation.”²⁹

J. S. McConnell, like most early Pentecostals, maintained that the Christian’s heavenly citizenship far outweighs earthly citizenship, and that it is not morally justifiable for a Christian to kill on behalf of the State in war.³⁰ This pacifist position, which the Assemblies of God endorsed until 1967, proved costly for people such as John McConnell when they tried to adhere to it during wartime.³¹

War Woes

John McConnell felt conflicted when World War II broke out in 1939. He wanted to be a “loyal American,” but his father instilled in him a strong belief that Christians were not supposed to kill, even in war. John enlisted in the Merchant Marine in the summer of 1942 as a way to serve his country but to avoid fighting. Ministry was the only way of life that John had known, so it was quite natural that John would see his time in the Merchant Marine as an opportunity to minister. He held prayer meetings aboard the vessels, and also preached ashore in Brazil. He received an honorable discharge in August 1943. John returned to California, where he met and married Mary Lou Clark in 1944.³²

Soon after his marriage, John was drafted to serve in the army. He asked for an exemption as a conscientious objector and as a minister. However, the draft board did not accept his request, apparently because McConnell had lectured draft board

members on the need to promote peace and not war. McConnell stated, “They got angry, stopped the deferment and drafted me.”³³

The army sent John to Texas for basic training, where he was required to participate in target practice. While lying on the ground preparing to shoot at an image of a man, John had a shocking vision flash through his mind: “When I would look at it, the figure changed into the figure of Jesus.” John recalled Jesus’ words, “Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me” (Matt. 25:40). John laid down his weapon and walked off the rifle range. He later reflected, “Boy, if the soldiers would see Jesus every time they killed an enemy, we wouldn’t have any more wars.”³⁴

John’s refusal to shoot the target landed him in the stockade. Always willing to speak his mind, he began lecturing his guards about their participation in the war. As a result, he was placed in solitary confinement, called “The Black Box.” His new quarters consisted of an iron bed and nothing else. He refused to eat, spending his time reading his Bible, praying, and singing hymns. During his time in solitary confinement, John’s hair turned prematurely white. During this period of working in a base office for several months, John yearned for freedom. After he overheard a sergeant say, “McConnell’s file [seeking discharge] is going under the pile and won’t come up again until after the war,” he knew he had to find a way of escape.³⁵

John did escape from the military compound and, with Mary Lou, bought a 38-foot sailboat, which they christened *The Christian*, and fled the country. They landed on Roatán, a small island off the coast of British Honduras, where they found an idyllic, remote town with a nice church but no minister. John, along with Mary Lou,

settled into the community and became known as “Reverend Miracle.”

At this point, John claimed ministerial credentials with the International Fundamental Christian Association, a Pentecostal organization headquartered in Washington, DC, which had been founded in 1943 by former Assemblies of God evangelist Guy Shields. It did not take long until the US Federal Bureau of Investigation heard about the McConnells. The FBI, according to a communique, found that McConnell “occupies himself by preaching and maintaining himself by the collections he makes as a minister of the Gospel.” FBI records reveal that, after a six-month-long investigation, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover decided to leave the McConnells alone because they were not engaged in subversive activities.³⁶

The McConnells left their island paradise in late 1946 because Mary Lou, who was pregnant, wanted their child to be born in the United States. When John faced another draft during the Korean Conflict, he again asked to

be exempted as a conscientious objector and as a minister. As a result, he was given a psychiatric examination. The psychologist diagnosed John as “unfit for the army.” The psychologist later explained, “He was questioning everything. That’s why he didn’t fit in ... It was boot training. What do you do? You obey orders. You just take all the guff they hand out and you do it, that’s all. Well, he couldn’t do that. He was too brilliant for the Army.”³⁷

Mary Lou, unable to cope with John’s difficulties with the military, filed for divorce in 1954 and left their two children — Constance and Cary — with him. John’s pain from his struggles with the military was now compounded by his divorce. Seeking a new start, in 1956, he moved to North Carolina and became co-publisher of two local newspapers.³⁸

Seeking Peace

While in North Carolina, John began to more fully devote himself to the cause of peace, which arose from his desire to be faithful to the Prince of



General Eisenhower places a donation for Hong Kong refugees in the “share-bank” of Jimmie Tom, a second grader at Commodore Stockton School, Chinatown. Standing behind Tom is John McConnell, the coordinator for the Citizens Committee for Hong Kong Refugees. Ten thousand of these small milk carton share-banks were donated by five dairies. School children take them home, drop in 3¢ every time they wish to invite a hungry unseen guest to dinner. (Caption as it appeared in the Meals for Millions newsletter, Fall 1962.) Courtesy Skelton Photography, San Francisco; Freedom from Hunger, formerly Meals for Millions.

Peace. John spearheaded two nationally-recognized peace movements: the Star of Hope (1957) and the Minute for Peace (1963-present), and served as a leader in another: Meals for Millions (1961-1963).³⁹ In his Star of Hope campaign, John encouraged the United States to launch a satellite as a symbol of peace. This was in response to the concerns over possible Soviet aggression inspired by the launching of its satellite, Sputnik.⁴⁰ In 1961, John left his newspaper job in North



Anna and John McConnell stand before the altar at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church after their marriage on Christmas Day 1967.
Courtesy John and Anna McConnell

Carolina and moved to San Francisco, California, to start a chapter of Meals for Millions, a non-profit organization “dedicated to the relief and prevention of starvation.”⁴¹

John often thought about the link between prayer and peace. He recalled the miracles that occurred in response to prayer which he witnessed as a child while traveling on the evangelistic circuit. From his Pentecostal background, he knew that “There have been times of great spiritual awakenings, when people are awakened in their hearts and in their minds to true values, when more people pray and more people do the right thing.” With these thoughts in mind, in 1963 John launched the

Minute for Peace, an initiative which encouraged people to spend a minute in meditation or prayer each day. The Minute for Peace was first held on December 22, 1963, one month after John F. Kennedy’s assassination, and has since been widely observed. Short Minute for Peace messages, read by various heads of state, United Nations leaders, and other globally respected people, were broadcast by CBS, NBC, on shortwave radio, and on other stations around the world.⁴²

In 1965, John moved from California to New York, which offered more opportunities to network with leaders and to promote peace. A friend of John’s — local Lutheran pastor Richard John Neuhaus — was aware of John’s Pentecostal background and encouraged him to introduce the Minute for Peace to a charismatic prayer group that met at St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in Brooklyn. The pastor, Ervin Prange (Neuhaus’s uncle), was a charismatic renewal leader in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. At the prayer group, John met Anna Zacharias, the principal of an inner-city Lutheran school. They married two years later — on Christmas Day 1967. He was 52, and she was 36. Within the next couple of years, they had two children: John Paul (who had Down Syndrome and died at age 14 months) and Christa Marie.⁴³ Anna would become John’s most important confidant and advisor, believing in his idealistic visions, even when others did not. John McConnell, Jr. joined his wife’s church, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, soon after their marriage. However, he claims to be faithful to his father’s Pentecostal teachings. In a 2009 interview, he stated, “I definitely still believe what my father taught and preached.”⁴⁴

Earth Day

John McConnell, Jr. coined the

name “Earth Day” — now internationally recognized — in 1968. John’s vision for Earth Day arose from his passion to promote peace. He wanted to find a tangible symbol around which people from various backgrounds could come together in peace and unity, and the earth fit the bill as universally important. He began

“If there had been no Christian experience in my life there would be no Earth Day — or at least I would not have initiated it.”
– John McConnell, Jr.

searching for a suitable date for the new holiday. In 1969, after praying for guidance, the spring equinox (March 20 or 21) sprang to his mind as the most viable day, a time already internationally acknowledged and linked to the concepts of rebirth and renewal.⁴⁵

On October 3, 1969, McConnell proposed his Earth Day concept to San Francisco city officials, who placed it on the Board of Supervisors’ agenda. On February 3, 1970, the board voted to celebrate Earth Day on March 21, 1970 — the first governmental recognition of Earth Day. Celebrations of Earth Day on March 21, 1970 were held in San Francisco, Berkley, New York, and in others cities and universities across America. Politicians also began promoting Earth Day. California congressman Charles Teague introduced a bill before the House of Representatives to establish Earth Day as a national day of reflection. California Senator George Murphy presented the idea to President Richard Nixon. The United Nations adopted

the holiday the following year and has been celebrating Earth Day on the spring equinox since 1971.⁴⁶

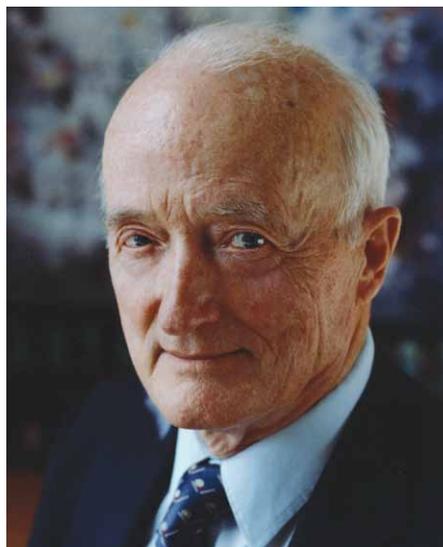
This original Earth Day was quickly eclipsed in prominence, however, by a second Earth Day (celebrated on April 22). McConnell described how this second Earth Day came to be:

I announced Earth Day at a UNESCO conference in San Francisco in November 1969. Present were people connected with Senator Gaylord Nelson. Gaylord Nelson had a wonderful program called Environmental Teach-In and he had called April 22 Environmental Teach-In Day. When I announced Earth Day for the March equinox, a representative from Gaylord Nelson came up to me and said, “This is a wonderful idea but you should change the date to April 22. We already have our Environmental Teach-In Day then and we can change the name to Earth Day.” I said, “Absolutely not. Earth Day on nature’s event is too important for this global occasion.”

So the next thing I knew they stole my name Earth Day and they used it for April 22. I was urged to sue, but I didn’t. I didn’t believe in suing. [Anna McConnell interjected: And that comes from his Pentecostal background.] San Francisco kicked it off and later on we had the United Nations. The Secretary General, who had backed my Minute for Peace, thought Earth Day was a great idea and the United Nations celebrates Earth Day on the March equinox.⁴⁷

McConnell’s biographer, Robert Weir, has documented the sequence of events that led Nelson to adopt the name Earth Day for his Environmental Teach-In on April 22, 1970. According

to Weir, Nelson admitted that he got the idea from others, but he did not specify from whom. In time, Nelson began to publicly claim full credit for the founding of Earth Day.⁴⁸ Weir described how McConnell and Nelson had different purposes and agendas for their respective Earth Day events.



John McConnell, ca.1990.
Courtesy John and Anna McConnell

McConnell’s purpose was to promote “a climate of peace and justice as a prerequisite for ecological preservation,” and he sought to achieve this by working with the United Nations. Nelson’s purpose was a political protest against pollution—he saw Earth Day as a means to force the environment onto the national agenda by mass demonstration. While McConnell was an idealist, Nelson was a pragmatist.⁴⁹

In the end, Senator Nelson achieved fame, fortune, and political action to preserve the environment through the successful promotion of Earth Day on April 22. In contrast, Weir noted in 2007 that John and Anna McConnell were “living their senior years in relative obscurity, poor in money, yet unflinchingly rich in spirit and unyieldingly strong in determination to demonstrate, as John continued to say, ‘April 22 is *not* Earth Day.’”⁵⁰

While McConnell laments that the Earth Day celebration on the spring equinox did not gain the widespread traction of the April 22 holiday, he nonetheless recognizes the latter day’s value in promoting awareness of earth-care. However, he feels the April 22 observance is too politicized, which alienates many people, including conservatives and Christians, whom John wanted to include in the Earth Day celebration. In addition, John noted that April 22 was the birthday of communist leader Vladimir Lenin. John maintained that the spring equinox was a preferable date, because it was politically neutral and was more likely to unite people.⁵¹

There is no doubt that John McConnell, Jr.’s lifework sprang from the influence of his parents and their faith. He boldly declared, “If there had been no Christian experience in my life there would be no Earth Day — or at least I would not have initiated it.”⁵² In addition, he noted, “I’m a peacemaker, and part of the reason was my father, who was, without question, the greatest influence in my life.”⁵³

John McConnell, Jr.’s interest in earth-care developed in part from his own lifelong study of Scripture. He explains his simple logic, stating, “We love God ... [and therefore should] have an appreciation for his creation.” To clarify and define this logical “appreciation,” McConnell, Jr. cites Psalm 115:16, “The earth has been given to the children of men.” He connects this promise to the command in Genesis 1:28, that humanity is to “subdue” the earth. “We’re caretakers upon earth.... ‘Subdue the earth’ — I think that meant to take care of it.... In other words, if you take care of it, it’s not going out of control.”⁵⁴ McConnell’s call is not for earth worship, but for responsible stewardship of the earth that all people share.

McConnell often found the

Christian response to the call for earth-care and environmental responsibility, however, to be less than encouraging. Challenging the apathy and dismissal of environmental concerns, McConnell, Jr. wrote:

Don't most evangelicals neglect responsibility and care of Earth because they are taught that Earth will soon pass away and is of relative unimportance in comparison with

participate), it provides a great opportunity for Christians to show the power of prayer, the validity of their charity and their practical concern for Earth's life and people."⁵⁶ McConnell encourages Christians to lead the way in living out the kingdom of heaven on earth. As McConnell, Jr. observes, "The cutting edge of freedom and order has often been people with a strong love for Jesus and what he taught."⁵⁷

The story of Earth Day's Pentecostal

Jr. were highly articulate visionaries whose independent personalities and views did not always mesh well with other Pentecostal leaders. After J. S. McConnell parted ways with the Assemblies of God in 1928, he seemed to fade from view in the mainstream Pentecostal press. When John McConnell, Jr. came into prominence through the *Star of Hope and Minute for Peace*, he had already ceased his active involvement in Pentecostal ministry. By the time he came up with the idea of Earth Day in 1968, he had already joined his wife's Lutheran church.

To some observers, it might seem improbable that a Pentecostal would play a role in the founding of Earth Day. However, when one considers some of the other themes that flowed out of the early Pentecostal worldview of full consecration to Christ and His mission — such as racial reconciliation, women in ministry, and a critique of war — it becomes easier to see how John McConnell, Jr.'s desire to promote peace and stewardship of the earth could flow from his Pentecostal roots. John's upbringing in an entrepreneurial, idealistic Pentecostal environment set him on a trajectory that would meld heartfelt faith with a desire to address pressing issues in the broader society. McConnell believed that, above all, he must be fully devoted to Christ and His teachings. He found that trying to live as a citizen of heaven earned him scars while in this earthly kingdom.

McConnell's call toward peace and care of the earth is not an entreaty to fanaticism; rather, it is a fusing of belief with appropriate action. Connecting belief with action is of second nature to the McConnells, and this mystery of faith and works is reflected in an early hymn, written by John's mother, Hattie McConnell:



Watch the founder of Earth Day discuss his Pentecostal roots on AGTV: <http://agtv.ag.org/McConnell2009>. John and Anna McConnell sat down for an interview with FPHC director Darrin Rodgers on July 15, 2009. This interview was made possible by Timberline Church (Fort Collins, Colorado) and Pastor Dary Northrop, who generously provided use of the church's recording studio.

heaven and eternity? Wouldn't a more Christ-like view be to recognize Earth as a precious gift that is our responsibility to protect and nurture?⁵⁵

The McConnells believe that they are now beginning to see churches become more receptive to the concept of earth-care as a Christian responsibility. John even views Christian participation in Earth Day as an opportunity to be a witness: "While Earth Day is non-sectarian and non-political (people of all religions and no religion par-

origins has remained obscured for various reasons. John McConnell, Jr.'s part in the founding of Earth Day was marginalized by historians as the April 22 celebration became more prominent than the original event on the March equinox. Those within the environmental movement who recognized McConnell's role tended to view his Pentecostal background as out-of-place within the broader environmental movement, which had become identified with non-Christian and left-wing political agendas. Both J. S. McConnell and John McConnell,

Oh, the faith that works by love
Will move mountains when we
pray.

Oh, the faith that works by love
Will turn darkness into day.⁵⁸

John McConnell, Jr.'s story provides a glimpse into the lives and worldview of early Pentecostals; it also gives an intriguing example to Pentecostals from within their own tradition of how one man loves Jesus and cares for His creation. ✨

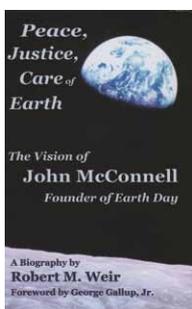


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McConnell Biography Available



Peace, Justice, Care of Earth: The Vision of John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day

By Robert M. Weir
\$27.95 (hard cover)
\$17.95 (soft cover)

Order from amazon.com or from the author (www.robertmweir.com)

NOTES

¹McConnell is the founder of the original Earth Day, which is celebrated by the United Nations, among others, on the spring equinox (March 20 or 21). However, another Earth Day, which is celebrated more widely in the US, occurs

on April 22. McConnell, came to identify the spring equinox celebration as International Earth Day, in order to distinguish it from the April 22 event. For more information about the relationship between these two days, see pages 22-23 of this magazine.

²McConnell's Pentecostal background was briefly noted in *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Summer 2000), 33. A biography of McConnell also includes a chapter on his Pentecostal roots: Robert M. Weir, *Peace, Justice, Care of Earth: The Vision of John McConnell, Founder of Earth Day* (Kalamazoo, MI: Press On Publishing, 2007).

³Weir, 3.

⁴"Evangelist T. W. McConnell's Testimony," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), September 1906, 3. See also T. W. McConnell, "Experience in Trusting God for Needs," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), September 1906, 4; "In Santa Cruz, Cal.," *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), February-March 1907, 3.

⁵"Sowing the Seed," *Latter Rain Evangel*, November 1911, 21.

⁶Hattie McConnell, "Reminiscing at Age 83," typewritten manuscript, 3. FPHC.

⁷*Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁸*Ibid.*, 4.

⁹*Ibid.*, 5-6.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹The McConnells were pictured in the well-known photograph of participants at the founding General Council, April 2-12, 1914, Hot Springs, Arkansas. Glenn Gohr, "Known Persons Who Were at Hot Springs," *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Spring 2004), 22.

¹²Weir, 5.

¹³John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview by Darrin Rodgers, Timberline Church, Fort Collins, Colorado, June 15, 2009.

¹⁴John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview with Nicole Sparks, Darrin Rodgers and Martin Mittelstadt, April 3, 2009.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶McConnell recounted all five verses of "The Heavenly Airoplane" in a letter to the editor published in *Assemblies of God Heritage* (Summer 2000), 33.

¹⁷John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

¹⁹*Ibid.*

²⁰John S. McConnell, *The New Covenant* (Walla

Walla, WA: The Author, [192?]), 17-18.

²¹John McConnell, Jr., "A Testimony of Faith," typewritten manuscript, 2. FPHC.

²²*General Council Minutes*, 1925, 60.

²³Various newspaper clippings announcing McConnell, Sr.'s meetings at the Portland Rose Tabernacle, New York City, June 1935. FPHC.

²⁴J. R. Evans, letter to Robert A. Brown, May 20, 1929. J. S. McConnell ministerial file.

²⁵Helen B. Stewart, letter to J. R. Evans, April 30, 1931. J. S. McConnell ministerial file.

²⁶J. R. Evans, letter to Helen B. Stewart, May 8, 1931. J. S. McConnell ministerial file.

²⁷Various newspaper clippings announcing McConnell, Sr.'s meetings at the Portland Rose Tabernacle, New York City, June 1935. FPHC.

²⁸John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

²⁹*Ibid.*

³⁰Weir, 24-25; McConnell, *The New Covenant*, 64; Stanley H. Frodsham, "Our Heavenly Citizenship," *Weekly Evangel*, September 11, 1915, 3.

³¹Paul Alexander, *Peace to War: Shifting Allegiances in the Assemblies of God* (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing House, 2009).

³²Weir, 24-27.

³³Weir, 27.

³⁴John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

³⁵John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009; Weir, 27-28.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 28-31; J. Roswell Flower, "Statement Concerning Withdrawal of Brother Guy Shields," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 23, 1943, 14.

³⁷Weir, 32.

³⁸*Ibid.*, 32-33, 36.

³⁹To learn more about these and McConnell's other projects, visit his websites: <www.earthtrustee.org> and <www.earthsite.org>.

⁴⁰Weir, 35-56.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, 57-62.

⁴²*Ibid.*, 63-91.

⁴³John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009; Weir, 92-96.

⁴⁴John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009.

⁴⁵John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell,

Continued on page 69



A Lively Heritage: Early Pentecost in Alabama

An Interview with Robert H. Spence

By Lois E. Olena

This article is based on an interview conducted at the Cardone Media Center in Springfield, Missouri on September 3, 2009, with Evangel University President, Robert H. Spence, and on his book, *The First Fifty Years: A Brief Review of the Assemblies of God in Alabama (1915-1965)*. The full video version of the interview is available at <http://agtv.ag.org/Spence2009>.

Streams of Pentecost Flow into Dixie

In the first decade of the 1900s, both sets of Robert Spence's grandparents found themselves immersed in the Pentecostal movement in Alabama. At the same time believers there were experiencing a "spontaneous 'outpouring of the Holy Spirit,'" as three streams of Pentecostal ambassadors were making their way south into Dixie: "from three directions: the northeast — from the Carolinas into Birmingham; the northwest — from Memphis into Clanton; and the southwest — from Texas into the Gulf coast area and Mobile."²

Students from Charles Parham's school in Houston, Texas had traveled along the Gulf Coast spreading the Pentecostal message and eventually came to Mobile, Alabama where the family of Lucille Everett, Spence's mother, lived. Lucille's father, Tom Everett, and his three brothers — Henry, Jim, and George — received the Pentecostal message in that initial revival and formed a congregation in Mobile in the first decade of the 1900s.

In 1914 these four brothers learned of an important gathering of Pentecostal leaders that was to take place in Hot Springs, Arkansas in April of that year. Because Tom worked for the railroad and could travel by rail on a pass, his brothers thought he should be the one to go find out what was happening. So he ventured north to Hot Springs, Arkansas — on what would turn out to be a historic journey — to serve as a lay representative at the first General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Left Alone

While being actively involved in the church in Mobile,

Tom and his wife Eva were busy raising six children. One of them, a son, passed away before he was two years old. In spite of their grief, the young couple continued to serve in the church and raise their other three little boys and two girls. Eventually Eva was expecting another child, but at some point during her pregnancy she developed kidney poisoning, and in just a matter of hours passed away.

Tom was devastated. A devout believer in divine healing, he wrestled with how such a thing could have happened. In spite of this tragedy, though, Tom held on to his belief in healing the rest of his life, not even taking an aspirin. But the death of his wife had completely overwhelmed him, leaving him with five young children; his daughter Lucille, Spence's mother, was then just two years old.

Responding to Tragedy

This tragic story served as the backdrop for a devotional message President Spence shared with Evangel faculty on August 20, 2009. In that message, he spoke about the "prisons" in life Christian believers sometimes find themselves in, and how different people respond to those prisons in different ways. "Some people," he said, "curse their prison, some rehearse the details surrounding it, and others respond by nursing the situations in their lives that have imprisoned them. Yet others, through the grace of God, reverse that prison and come to a place of healing in their lives."

The Scripture Spence used for that devotional was Paul's experience in prison, Philippians 1:12-18. Without question, Paul certainly did not look on prison as his destination of choice; he would much rather have been traveling from city to city, sharing the gospel. And yet there he was. All believ-

ers at times find themselves facing undesirable circumstances, and when dealing with those issues they tend to ask, “Why?” But, Spence notes, perhaps the more important question is, “O.K., how should I deal with that?”

Spence shared with the faculty how his grandfather let that terrible experience become his prison. “The lights went out, as it were, for him,” he recounts sadly.

He continued to serve God, but it was without the joy of life. I do not ever remember hearing my grandfather laugh, or tell amusing or funny stories. He was just very serious. Every night it was just him and his Bible. He did things in the work of the Lord; he expended himself — his energies, his resources, devoting his life to serving others, but life for him became a restrictive experience. And his response had an effect on the whole family — certainly on his children.

Some of the children responded negatively to that situation as they grew up, but in Lucille’s case, it seems she was able to *reverse* that prison through the grace of God. All through her preteen and teen years, she was thoroughly involved in the church and found great delight in it. She was musically talented, as were her siblings, and she used her talents for the Lord. While still a teenager she met the man she would marry, and the two of them devoted their lives to the work of the church. She seemed to find in her life experience something she could turn into a blessing, using her energies to reach out and help other people.

Lucille’s family in Mobile was influenced more by their Baptist background, but those in the area where Spence’s father’s family had settled were of a Methodist background.

Having come out of the Holiness tradition and revivals, they came into the Pentecostal movement as a result of those carrying the message down through the Appalachians and into the area midway between Montgomery and Mobile. The two primary religious influences on Robert Spence’s life were quite different but, remarkably, converged in one place.

Mississippi Pastor’s Kid

Before Robert’s father (Thomas H. Spence, more commonly known as “T. H.” Spence) married Lucille, he left the Pentecostal Holiness church in which he was raised and joined the Assemblies of God. The couple was



Thomas and Lucille Spence with son, Robert, age four. Taken while pastoring First Assembly of God, Montgomery, Alabama, about 1939.

married in Mobile, where Thomas was already involved in ministry, later serving as the district youth leader for the Mississippi district of the AG (and eventually as the superintendent of the Alabama district). Years later, in 1935, Robert was born while Thomas and Lucille were pastoring in McComb,

Mississippi. When he was two, the family moved to Montgomery, Alabama to establish a new church; they stayed there five years. When asked how life was for him as a PK growing up, Robert replied:

Well, quite frankly, I cannot tell you when I accepted the Lord. As far back as I can remember my three sisters and I had been taught to trust the Lord and ask forgiveness for sin; and when you’re four and five years old it’s not very deep sin, but it is sin! My parents carefully taught us about being obedient to the Lord and to His voice. They read *Edelman’s Bible Stories* to us, and I remember as a small child being so impressed with the story of Samuel responding to God.

I received the baptism in the Spirit when I was eight. I was just sitting on the front row in church at a special service, and at the conclusion of the message, the minister, Gay Benson from Philadelphia, gave a salvation invitation. Nobody responded. So then he said, “How many of you have never received the baptism in the Holy Spirit?”

Though I grew up in church, that was the first time that question really registered with me, and so I responded. He invited those who responded to come forward for prayer. So I took just three or four steps from where I was to the altar. He came over, knelt in front of me, and said, “Now son, God wants to baptize you in the Holy Spirit. And what you need to do is ask Him to do that. Just raise your hands and thank Him for it.” And with those simple instructions, I raised my hands and began to speak in a language I had never learned.

This experience shaped Robert

Spence's ministry. From that time, at the age of eight, until he was in college, he never remembers hearing anyone say to him — whether in church, Sunday school, youth camp, or a youth convention, "Now *this* is what needs to be happening in your life now that you have received the baptism." The question was always, "Have you received the baptism?" "Yes." "O.K., good." And then they would move on to something else. As a result of that, he has always tried to do what he could to help people understand from Scripture what should be taking place in the life of a person who has received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Following the Call of God

As Robert moved through high school and college, although (as he put it) he was "certainly not a perfect person ... nor the greatest student," he did dedicate himself to following the Lord. Through those years he felt confident that God's plan and will for his life was to be a physician. So in 1952 he enrolled at the University of Alabama as a pre-med student. In the concluding weeks of his sophomore



Pioneer Alabama preachers Daniel J. DuBose (left) and William F. Hardwick (right) leaving for an evangelistic tour, ca. 1910.

year the Lord definitely gave him a change of direction. It was then that his Pentecostal heritage and experiences began to come into focus in a different dimension than they had prior.

Upon sharing that sense of God's call, some people assumed Robert would leave the university and go to an AG Bible college. But Robert did not feel that was the Lord's direction

for him. He did change his major from biology to history and changed from the school of Arts and Sciences to Education because he believed education would provide a good base for him as he made plans to go on to seminary.

As he moved along on his spiritual and academic journey, Robert began to feel he should devote his life to pastoral ministry. Within just a few months, in the providence of God, a small rural church close to the university called him. Without a pastor and not able to support one on a full-time basis, they initially asked him to temporarily fill their pulpit. Not long after, though, nineteen-year-old Robert Spence became Pastor Spence.

Robert never did go on to seminary but kept pastoring that church since he felt the Lord wanted him there for that time. While also holding down a teaching job at the local public school, he stayed on as pastor even after graduating from the University of Alabama with a B.A. in History.

Spence began his graduate work in School Administration at the University of Alabama in the fall of



Robert and Anne Spence, with sons Tom and Jon, during their pastorate at First Assembly of God, Tuscaloosa, Alabama.



Camp meeting group at Geneva County, Alabama, 1913.

1956, and soon afterward the AG district asked him to stabilize a new church in Tuscaloosa. He and his new wife Anne accepted that invitation. To support the family he also went back into public education — this time accepting a principal's job. Each step of the way, Spence witnessed the providence of God. His experience as a principal for three years served him well ten years later pastoring a church with a Christian day school.

The AG in Alabama, 1915-1965

In the midst of numerous commitments — pastoring the university church, serving as a chaplain at the local hospital, conducting a daily radio program, and raising a family — in

1964 the Alabama District Presbytery asked Spence if he would write a history of the AG in Alabama, in honor of the district's fiftieth anniversary.³ Spence said yes. One or two days a week he would research and write on

Pentecostalism in Alabama, concludes Spence, was the result of a profound and sovereign move of God. It wasn't worked up. Those God used were just ordinary people hungry for God.

the early days of the Pentecostal movement in general and the Alabama AG in particular. The resulting book, *The First Fifty Years: A Brief Review of the Assemblies of God in Alabama (1915-1965)* provides an important history of early Pentecostalism in the state as well as key developments within the district.

Spence discovered that many who received the baptism in the 1890s and early 1900s simply did not attach the theological significance to speaking in tongues that Parham did. They looked on such phenomenon simply as an encounter they had with the Lord. But they did not preach it as a doctrine or say to others, "You should have this same kind of experience." This was particularly true of Miss Irene Stuckey,⁴ a woman Spence interviewed during his research. Stuckey was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1902 at a Holiness tent meeting. "Though there was no preaching of the Pentecostal doctrine Miss Stuckey experienced a spiritual baptism and 'spoke with other tongues.'"⁵

Early Pentecostalism in Alabama, concludes Spence, was the result of a

profound and sovereign move of God. It wasn't worked up. Those God used were just ordinary people hungry for God. "It's so easy," he says, "when a sovereign move of God takes place, for people to say, 'Well, O.K., what did we do to make this possible, and how can we reproduce it?' We sometimes overlook that such a move just happens when people really get hungry for God and seek Him. It's not singing this or that song. It's not getting in this or that posture. It's a profound hunger for God."

A Lively Heritage

Robert Spence's father's family was introduced to the Pentecostal movement in a divinely ordained way around 1906-07. Though the family had felt the influence of the ministry of influential preachers such as Mack M. Pinson,⁶ G. B. Cashwell,⁷ and Walter B. Jessup,⁸ the story of a young woman out of Greenville, South Carolina is most striking. This woman had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and as a result her family gave her a choice: "Either disassociate yourself with those people, or we will disassociate you from our family." She chose to just cast herself on the Lord and soon felt Him directing her to buy a train ticket and leave home.

Midway between Montgomery and Mobile, when the conductor came through saying, "Evergreen," she felt the Lord saying, "This is the place to get off," so she did. There she stood, in a little community with just a handful of stores. "Now, walk this way," she sensed. So she walked about five miles to a certain house, walked up on the porch and introduced herself, saying the Lord had sent her there. She did not realize that within this community a group had been praying for God to do something special. That woman became a catalyst for a real outpouring of God's Spirit in that community.

Out of her meetings came what is now the Brownville Pentecostal Holiness Church — from which over the years have come more than 100 ministers, including those in the Spence family. Robert's paternal grandfather (Thomas J. Spence) was a farmer and a strong lay leader in the church. He had two brothers who became preachers — L. D. Spence, and James Elijah Spence — the latter of whom went on to serve as an Alabama district superintendent⁹ and also as superintendent of the Southern Missouri District. An even greater testimony for Robert is that his paternal grandparents had 11 children, 9 of whom grew to maturity — and all 9 served the Lord.

James Elijah Spence was a minister with the Methodist Church in Brownville when the Spirit of God began to move. When the bishop heard what was going on, he labeled it heretical and sent a retired minister to go straighten them out. As the church began its worship service, a little girl — about twelve years old at the time — began to speak in a language the people didn't know. This retired minister, Rev. Hicks, became quite animated. At the end of her message in tongues, he asked, "Who is this girl? And where did she learn to speak like that?"

"That's Mary Ellen Pines," they said.

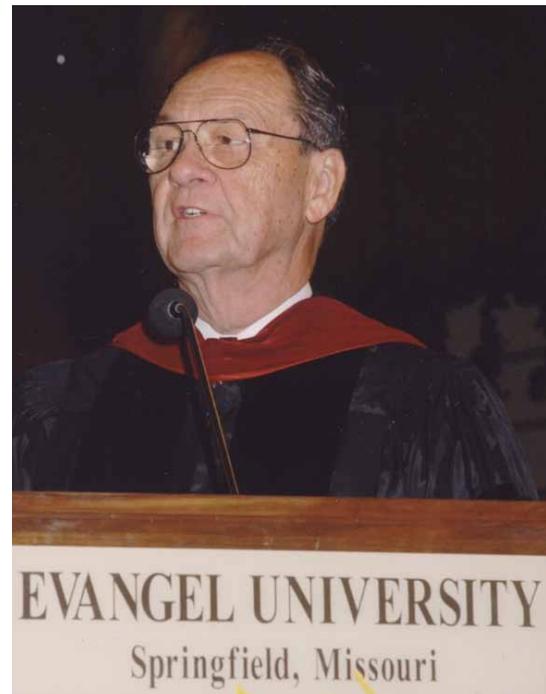
"Well," he said, "this girl has just spoken to me in classical Greek and told me that what I'm seeing here is of God and that I had best not put my hand on it. Furthermore, she said that if I would ask you to pray for me, God would heal me of my crippling arthritis!"

That little girl — who had never been out of that community and who had had little formal education — was Robert Spence's great aunt. Stories like this one seasoned Robert's youth and helped shape the trajectory of his

spiritual journey.

The Road to Evangel

As a pastor in Alabama, Spence always had a passion for Christian education and seeing children established in the Word. In 1957, he had accepted the invitation to pastor the church in Tuscaloosa, anticipating that he would serve there perhaps three to five years — not realizing at the time how God would take him on a journey



President Robert Spence speaking at Evangel University commencement, May 7, 2004.

that would ultimately lead to serving at Evangel University.

One year while in Tuscaloosa, Spence invited the great missionary statesman, Charles Greenaway, to speak at his missions convention. At the end of the convention, knowing Spence's background in education and the work he'd done, Greenaway said, "Would you be open to using overseas what God has given you in education?"

"Yes, if that's where the Lord wants to use me," Spence replied.



Robert and Anne Spence at their wedding, August 11, 1956.

Greenaway had an immediate need and mentioned a nation in Africa where Spence's skills were just what they needed. "Would you be open to that?" Greenaway asked. And Spence replied, "Yes."

Soon the field secretary for Africa invited Robert and Anne Spence to

God calls *every* one of His children to a place of ministry — whether behind a pulpit, in a business career, a teaching career, or as a homemaker.

Springfield for the School of Missions. While there they met with the committee, outlined the work, and were appointed as foreign missionaries. Then they went back to their church to wrap things up, but even as they went

back, Spence did not feel at liberty to resign. The committee understood. "Don't try to force anything," they said. "God's timing is the important thing."

After a year, both parties agreed that this was not the direction in which to go. Eleven years later he was still pastoring there in Tuscaloosa, and the Lord had blessed the work. They relocated the church, expanded the ministry in the city significantly, and then were invited to Crichton Assembly in Mobile, one of the older churches in the state that had grown out of the early Mobile Pentecostal outpouring. He pastored there six years before the Evangel Board of Directors invited him to come to Evangel to serve as president.

Spence had always believed in the mission of Evangel, even serving for six years on the Board of Directors before becoming president of Evangel College in 1974. His own academic experiences had given him a helpful perspective that God calls *every* one of His children to a place of ministry

— whether behind a pulpit, in a business career, a teaching career, or as a homemaker. "When we know we're where God wants us, we can work as unto Him."

Years later, in 2008 when Spence was invited to speak for the commissioning service for the School of Missions, he stood before the candidates and reflected to himself on the remarkable leading of the Holy Spirit in their lives:

You know, there was a time when I was ready to go. I really wanted to. And that was not the Lord's time or His plan. But for these thirty-five years as president of Evangel I've found great satisfaction in helping prepare multiplied thousands of students to go places I could never go. I have participated in something I could not have had I gone in that other direction.¹⁰

Anne

Side by side with President Spence these thirty-five years at Evangel University has been his wife Anne. Anne's grandfather, Jimmy DuBose, came into the Pentecostal movement in southeast Alabama under the ministry of Mack M. Pinson in 1907.¹¹



Jimmy DuBose, a Methodist evangelist, came into the Pentecostal movement in southeast Alabama under the ministry of Mack M. Pinson in 1907. DuBose was the grandfather of Anne Spence.

DuBose was one of the AG pioneer ministers. His brother, Dan, was Mary Greenaway's father. These two DuBose brothers — Methodist evangelists — while still in their teens, were called of God, filled with the Spirit, and mightily used for the Kingdom. They saw tremendous results in their ministry, with many people coming to know the Lord; the Pentecostal manifestations in their meetings, however, began to create discomfort within their Methodist denomination, and soon the doors of the church were closed to them.

The father of these young men was a man of some means and resources. So he said, "Well, if the Methodist church will not allow my boys to preach in their church, I'll just build them a church!" So he did, and that church became what is now the El Bethel AG church in New Brockton — probably the oldest AG church in Alabama.

Robert had heard about Anne in the context of various youth events, and the more he heard, the more convinced he was that she was a person he really needed to meet. So he made a little deal with the district youth director, who was preparing to conduct a series of youth rallies throughout the district to promote youth camp. Robert would go along with him and take care of all of the logistics of showing his promotional films if the director would introduce Robert to this girl he hoped would be there! So Robert ran the director's equipment, and sure enough, Anne attended a rally. The director introduced Robert to her, and that night Robert asked her for a date. Fifty-three years later, the rest is history!

The Spences have three adult sons — Jon, David, and Steve — and eight grandchildren. In their second pastorate they were blessed with a little girl, who had some physical problems for which she required surgery but sadly

did not survive. Their first son had a heart murmur and also required surgery when he was about six years old, but he too did not survive. So their two oldest children are with the Lord.

Robert and Anne's Pentecostal forebearers were careful and obedient; their hunger for God drove them forward and made it possible for them to see the kind of things that they saw. Truly the Spences have carried on that heritage in many ways, not the least of which is not allowing the tragedies of life to imprison them but to respond in such a way as to make the most out of a life dedicated to bringing glory to God.¹² ✝



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authored Holocaust curriculum, poetry in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust* and other venues, a chapter on the history of AG race relations in *We've Come This Far: Reflections on the Pentecostal Tradition and Racial Reconciliation*, and most recently coauthored a biography of Dr. Stanley Horton called *Stanley M. Horton: Shaper of Pentecostal Theology* (2009).

NOTES

¹Robert H. Spence, *The First Fifty Years: A Brief Review of the Assemblies of God in Alabama* (1915-1965) (Montgomery, AL: Alabama District Council of the Assemblies of God, 1965), 5.

²Ibid.

³The "Southeastern District," as it was then called, convened in Hartford, Alabama on December 1, 1915, and initially consisted of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. After 1926 it included Alabama, Georgia, and only West Florida. In 1930, Florida became its own district. At the 1935 district council, although

the step was not done "without engendering some feeling," the Alabama district decided that the "total area of the State of Alabama would comprise the Alabama District" (Ibid., 72). Spence's book provides an invaluable resource for Pentecostal history in Alabama; many of the notable names in AG history (J. W. Welch, E. N. Bell, W. T. Gaston, E. S. Williams, J. Roswell Flower, Ralph Riggs, Wesley Steelberg and others) are listed among the council speakers who ministered over the years. Within its 118 (small print, single-spaced) pages lie golden nuggets of Pentecostal history, revealing stories about such important topics as women in ministry, doctrinal developments and issues, the trials and triumphs of various ministries and churches, early efforts at various Bible training facilities, miraculous moves of God, and more!

⁴Irene Stuckey later went on to marry Owen N. Todd, Sr., "a respected and influential leader with the Pentecostal Holiness Church in Alabama" (Ibid., 5).

⁵Ibid., 5.

⁶Ibid., 5-12.

⁷Ibid., 7.

⁸"Jessup's Pentecostal indoctrination had come from none other than Charles F. Parham" (Ibid., 13).

⁹James Elijah (J. E.) Spence served as Alabama District Superintendent from 1928 to 1929 and Southern Missouri District Superintendent from 1923 to 1926. His nephew and Robert's father, Thomas Herman (T. H.) Spence, served as Alabama District Superintendent from 1948 to 1973. (Ibid., 6).

¹⁰Robert H. Spence has served as president of Evangel University since May 1, 1974. Evangel was founded by the Assemblies of God in 1955 as a national college of arts and sciences. In 1998, with the addition of graduate studies, the name was changed to Evangel University.

¹¹Spence, 8-13.

¹²For more on the life and accomplishments of President Robert Spence, see "Community-Focused Faith: An Interview with Evangel University President Dr. Robert H. Spence," Evangel University (January 7, 2009), <http://www.evangel.edu/News/PressReleases/2009/0105Spence.asp> (accessed October 24, 2009). See also: "Speakers: Robert Spence, President, Evangel University," AG World Congress & 2000 Celebration (August 7-10, 2000), http://www.agcongress.org/04_schd/spence.html (accessed October 24, 2009).

Top: Italian District Council meeting at Schenectady, New York.
 Right: An unidentified man promoting Speed the Light in 1954 as he looks at a map of Italy that says, "Millions of Italians For Christ."
 Bottom: Philip D'Angelo (left) and Brother Tarantino (right) holding up a national award of merit for missionary contributions to the Italian District at the Italian Assemblies of God Council at Schenectady, New York.



Inni e Salmi Spirituali



PUBBLICATO DALLA
Assemblea Cristiana
 DI
 1350-52 West Erie Street
 Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.
 1936



A Brief History of Italian Pentecostalism in America

By Joseph J. Saggio

Introduction

The Azusa Street revival (1906-1909) in Los Angeles — a focal point of the emerging worldwide Pentecostal movement — encompassed countless ethnic and cultural groups. Although not as prominent numerically as some groups, Italian Americans represent an influential component of the ethnic mosaic within early Pentecostalism. This article serves to present a brief historical overview of Italian Pentecostalism in the United States by placing it within its broader historical context.

Indeed, many are surprised to even learn that Pentecostalism has played an important role among Italian Americans, since many religious historians and sociologists tend to associate Italians worldwide with Roman Catholicism.¹ Notwithstanding, there is actually a rich tradition of Italian Protestantism that has been largely overlooked.

Connection to the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles in 1906

The pivotal role of the Azusa Street revival has been the subject of much discussion by many historians and eyewitnesses to these occurrences.² Those events that began on Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles under the ministry of William J. Seymour, subsequently moving to Azusa Street and beyond, are essential to an understanding of the modern Pentecostal and charismatic movements. However, in order to appreciate the true global impact of this revival, engaged students of modern religious history need to view not only the full spectrum, but also focus on the activities of the Holy Spirit in the context of subgroups within the broader Pentecostal community.

Italian Pentecostalism in North America can be traced to 1907 when William H. Durham of Chicago's North Avenue Mission returned home from Los Angeles, having experienced his own Pentecostal infilling on March 2nd of that year while visiting the Azusa Street revival. Back

home, Pastor Durham began to expound the biblical reality of Pentecostalism to an ever-increasing crowd of spiritual pilgrims and curiosity seekers. Among those early visitors were Italians in quest of a deeper experience with Christ.³ Pentecostal historians regard this as the beginning of Italian Pentecostalism in the United States.⁴

One of the earliest recipients of the Pentecostal outpouring was an Italian mosaic artist and Presbyterian elder by the name of Luigi Francescon. Francescon had previously heard of the Pentecostal outpouring taking place at the North Avenue Mission after attending an open-air meeting where he had heard an anonymous person testify to having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.⁵ Curious, he attended the services and sensed "... that this was indeed the work of [God's] hands."⁶ Returning again, he brought with him fellow Italians who were hungry for a deeper spiritual experience with Christ. Their diligence was soon rewarded as recounted by Francescon:



Italian Americans represent an influential component of the ethnic mosaic within early Pentecostalism.

In the month of July my wife was the first among the Italians to be sealed by the Holy Spirit with the gift of speaking in the Swedish tongue; sister Dora DiCicco was second, speaking Chinese. On the twenty-fifth of August, it pleased our Lord to confer a like gift upon me.⁷

Immediately, Francescon began to testify to his fellow Italian immigrants. Soon thereafter, Peter Ottolini, a fellow mosaic artisan and his family (along with a host of others) were also ushered into Pentecost.⁸ Ottolini would later become the first Italian Pentecostal missionary to Italy. The message of Azusa Street was now taking visible hold of members of the Italian community in Chicago through the efforts of Durham, Francescon, Ottolini, and others.

Peter Ottolini had previously come to Christ through the ministry of Guiseppe Beretta who was saved in a Free

Frank S. Passetti

Francesco Severino “Frank” Passetti¹, son of Vincenzo and Teresa Passetti, was born on July 22, 1881 in Frontone, Italy. In 1901 he immigrated to America arriving in Eynon, Pennsylvania. On April 28, 1908 he married Santina Gambucci, also an Italian immigrant, in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Together they had ten children. Like many immigrants in the northeast, Frank worked in the coal mines. From 1920-1935 he was employed by both the Riverside Colliery (Scranton Coal Company) and then the Johnson Colliery (Penn Anthracite Coal Company).

During this time Santina began to attend Pentecostal prayer meetings and as a result was saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. Excitedly, she shared the news with her husband, who also committed his life to Christ and was then baptized in the

Holy Spirit while working in the coal mines. Frank Passetti soon felt called to full-time ministry, and he spent



Frank and Santina Passetti in Peckville, Pennsylvania, ca. 1940s.

the rest of his life in pastoral work. A man of godly character, he was often sought out for spiritual counsel and prayer.

With little formal education, Frank used the Bible to teach himself to read, and in 1937 he was ordained as a minister, transferring to the Italian Branch of the Assemblies of God in 1949. He pas-

tored in Peckville, Pennsylvania and later the Italian Full Gospel Church in Newark, New Jersey. During his

retirement Brother Passetti served as an elder at Bethel Assembly of God in Newark, New Jersey. He passed away at Maplewood, New Jersey, on June 5, 1972 after a brief illness just prior to his 91st birthday.

¹My cousin, Santina L. Siena, and Glenn Gohr of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center provided information about Passetti.

Methodist Church. Beretta reported having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues sometime subsequent to his conversion in 1887, but was unaware at that time of what the experience meant. Ottolini, hungry for that same experience was baptized in the Holy Spirit on September 9, 1907, reporting: “On September 9th in my own bedroom, the Lord answered my prayers and sent the Holy Ghost upon me. The following day the Lord baptized my wife.”⁹

As an interesting side note, roughly contemporaneous with the outpouring of Pentecost on Italians in Chicago, eleven Italian Presbyterians in Hamilton, Ontario in Canada also received the Baptism in July 1913. Although not directly related to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among Italians in Chicago, the timing of this

event is significant for two reasons. First, the close chronological proximity of the Canadian Pentecostal outpouring only six years after the events of 1907 is in itself worthy of note. Secondly, after hearing of the spiritual growth in Hamilton, Ontario, Luigi Francescon quickly dispatched two Italian church elders from Chicago to provide spiritual and organizational assistance to their fellow Italian Canadian brethren.¹⁰ Thus, a fraternal bond was quickly established between Italian Pentecostals in both the United States and Canada, although the groups remained under separate organizational auspices.

Montreal also saw a great spiritual awakening in 1920 when Eustachio D’Ercole, an Italian immigrant from Toronto received a vision to preach to the Italian community in Montreal. Within a decade, a nucleus of six con-

verts grew to two congregations with an aggregate total of nearly 300 adherents. Evangelists Charles “Daddy” Baker and Aimee Semple McPherson were also greatly used in bringing the full gospel message to Montreal. Their respective ministries attracted thousands of seekers — including many Italian immigrants.¹¹

Events Leading up to the Pentecostal Outpouring on Italian Americans

Luigi Francescon, was born in Cavasso Nuovo in the Italian province of Udine. He left his native Italy in March 1890 after completing military service, settling in Chicago to ply his trade as a mosaic artisan. Like many early Italian Pentecostals, Francescon came from a Roman Catholic background and later embraced Presbyterianism. Francescon recounts



A mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the Azusa Street Mission in downtown Los Angeles influenced leaders such as William Durham, Luigi Francescon, and Peter Ottolini.

that a handful of Italians formed the first Presbyterian church comprised largely of Italian congregants in 1892.

An elder in the Presbyterian church, Francescon left the fellowship in 1904 after a doctrinal disagreement about the mode of baptism they employed. As early as 1894, Francescon had sensed a direct command from the Lord to be baptized by immersion per the Apostle Paul’s words in Colossians 2:12. Francescon recounts:

Then one evening in the year 1894 while working in Cincinnati, Ohio, it fell out that as I was kneeling and reading the second chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, and having come to the twelfth verse, I heard a voice which addressed me, saying, thou hast not obeyed this my commandment, and I answered and said, Lord none spake unto me.¹²

Faced with an ethical dilemma, Luigi Francescon had to decide whether to follow the established denominational teaching or obey what he sincerely believed was Paul’s scrip-

tural admonition on the correct mode of baptism. Despite his best efforts to present his newfound scriptural beliefs, he was rebuffed by others — including the church’s pastor:

As a member of the governing body of our church, I had now and then spoken concerning the scriptural baptism and of how our Lord himself bade me to hearken unto him. But all set themselves against me, that pastor himself who I had informed by letter that very night, of how the Lord had spoken unto me.¹³

In the following years, Francescon struggled with his doctrinal beliefs, finally leaving the Presbyterian church shortly after consenting to be baptized by immersion himself.

After departing from his fellowship in 1904, Francescon, along with the families of N. Moles and Alberto DiCicco met together on Sundays for worship until they heard about the events at Durham’s North Avenue Mission. In 1907 they joined in fellowship with that group and soon thereafter, joyfully accepted and received the Pentecostal message.¹⁴

Establishing the Italian Pentecostal Message in America

Although the Italians received the Pentecostal outpouring at Durham’s church, many felt an immediate, intense burden to reach out to their own people with this new revelation. Stanley Frodsham recounts the receptivity of many Italians to the Pentecostal message at the North Avenue Mission:

A large number of Italians came to this North Avenue Mission and received the Baptism in the Spirit. They were encouraged to start a work of their own and

God marvelously visited this Italian Pentecostal Mission, and many remarkable miracles took place among them. One day a mother brought her dead baby to the church. The prayer of faith was uttered, and God gave life back to that child whose spirit had departed. From this Italian work many missionaries went forth to South America to labor among the Italians there.¹⁵

On September 15, 1907, the Sunday after Peter Ottolini received the Holy Spirit, the power of God was manifested at the Grand Avenue Mission, which would later come to be known as *Assemblea Christiana*. Many among Ottolini’s followers came to be filled with the Holy Spirit and soon thereafter, the Mission was under the leadership of Luigi Francescon and Peter



Luigi Francescon
Courtesy ADI Media

Ottolini. Their ministry was marked by many salvations, healings, and Pentecostal baptisms. Focusing largely on reaching Italians, over the next thirty years this church served as a virtual lighthouse to the Italian-speaking community, working to establish hundreds of congregations in over thirteen states as well as to Italy and the Italian diaspora found throughout South America. Through these efforts thou-

sands of Italians were converted to the Pentecostal message.¹⁶

Historian Louis De Caro faithfully records the reflections of Ottolini, rejoicing over the burgeoning growth of Pentecostalism among the Italian people:

“I rejoiced in the Lord, seeing how the work of God was progressing with great rapidity.” Again he states: “It was amazing to see how the Pentecostal work among the Italians was rapidly spreading. In fact in every major city in the United States there was a representation.”¹⁷

Indeed there was much to rejoice in! Many within the Italian American community eagerly accepted the Pentecostal message and found

new life in the full gospel message of Christ’s teachings. Thousands of Italians worldwide began to see themselves as “players” in a spiritual movement that was much larger than they were.

Early Sociological Dimensions of Italian Pentecostalism in America

Some might be surprised to see that an ethnic group with strong historic religious ties to Roman Catholicism would suddenly show receptivity to a faith tradition anchored in Protestantism. Citing sect theory as a possible reason, Joe Colletti identifies socio-cultural alienation and language as contributing factors to the growth of Italian Pentecostalism in Chicago. As poor immigrants living in the slums of the Near North Side of

Chicago, some Italians may have felt socially marginalized from society, including the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, many other Catholics were gaining social respectability while the Italian immigrants remained firmly ensconced within the working class. Maintaining a “hard scrabble” existence, they served as laborers, meat packers, truck farmers, shoe makers, and tailors.

Although not the “poorest of the poor,” Italian immigrants were certainly not members of an elite cadre of society. Perhaps the Pentecostal message that promised spiritual empowerment and an eschatological promise of Christ’s imminent return attracted eager converts. According to Colletti, sect church theory “recruit[s] their membership primarily among the economically deprived classes of society.”¹⁸ In

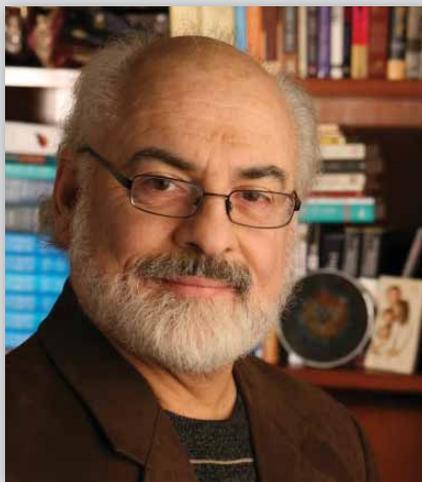
The Macchia Family

In 1928 some Italian families attending First Assembly of God in Gary, Indiana (founded in 1917) decided to establish a separate Italian Pentecostal fellowship, thus forming the Christian Assembly Church (now located in Hobart, Indiana). The church began as an independent congregation, but later affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Michael DeAngelo served as founding pastor until 1931 when he launched into radio ministry.

Antoinette Macchia¹, mother of Michael D. Macchia, Sr., and grandmother of present-day pastor Michael D. Macchia, Jr. was the first Macchia to serve as senior pastor beginning in 1942. During her tenure as pastor, church services continued in the Italian language.

In 1956, Michael Macchia, Sr.

became the pastor, serving over forty years in that role. Services were no



Frank Macchia

longer exclusively in Italian, and by 1977 services were held in English. In 1979 the church became affiliated with the Indiana District of the Assemblies of God, receiving General Council affiliation in 1983. Since 1998, Michael D. Macchia, Jr.

has served as pastor, becoming the third generation of the Macchia family to serve as church pastor. Michael Macchia, Sr. continues to serve as Pastor Emeritus.

Another son, Vanguard University professor Frank D. Macchia remembers growing up at Christian Assembly and later pastored Hansen Park Jesus Church, an independent work in Chicago. A systematic theologian and a leading Pentecostal scholar, Macchia recounts: “Those churches formed me in deep and permanent ways. Growing up, I heard testimonies from Italian immigrants who came to America with little sustenance and had to depend on God for everything. This made an enduring impact on my faith development.”²

¹Frank Macchia provided information about the Macchia family.

²Frank Macchia, e-mail to the author on 27 October 2009.

other words, Italian Americans were receptive to the Pentecostal message because it promised them a better life and emancipation from an endless spiral of hopelessness.

The early Italian Pentecostals fostered a cohesive community through both their religious practices and the preservation of the Italian language within their tight-knit community.¹⁹ Services were often conducted in Italian, and by 1927 when some Italian Pentecostals began to formally organize, an Italian hymnbook was produced. The use of language reinforced within the context of preaching and worship served to galvanize the early Italian Pentecostal community, helping it to maintain its distinctive identity.

Preserving the essential ethnic and cultural dimensions of their cultural heritage became increasingly important as Italian Pentecostals suffered from their own “double minority status.” As an ethnic minority in America, Italians already endured a measure of sociological marginalization. However, with the added dimension of their rejection of the Roman Catholic belief system, Italian Pentecostals found themselves further cut off from many of their own people. Thus, they developed a strong holiness ethic that further fostered their unique distinctiveness from others they came into contact with.²⁰ In respect to their relationship to the larger Italian enclave population “they were at once a part of, yet decisively apart from it.”²¹

Church members met three to five times weekly for services while attendance at movies, dancing, gambling, sporting events, and (in some cases) even reading the newspaper were included in the list of forbidden activities.²² Like many other Pentecostals, the Italians took seriously their responsibility to live a life of separated holiness. Abstaining from any appearance



Louis Iannettoni of the Italian District baptized this group of people in water at Naples, Italy on July 12, 1951.

of worldliness became normative behavior.

The Need for Organizational Structure *Christian Church of North America*

Although many early Italian Pentecostals eschewed any formal organizational structure, by the 1920s it became readily apparent that some type of organizational umbrella was needed to deal with three pivotal issues: handling doctrinal controversy, facilitating foreign missions activities, and also balancing the competing priorities of home and foreign missions needs.

The doctrinal dissension issue involved the correct interpretation of eating meat with blood drained from it (see Acts 15:13-29). As a result, in 1927 Luigi Francescon, Maximilian Tosetto, and Joseph Petrelli combined their efforts to establish the Unorganized Italian Christian Churches of the United States (later renamed the Christian Church of North America or CCNA.) Established in Niagara Falls, New York, the CCNA developed twelve articles of faith which provided the first official written articulation of its theological position. The CCNA also adopted an official hymnal. In 1929 the CCNA created a missions fund to facilitate overseas evangelism, primarily among Italians.

However, in later years (1961-

1963) funding priorities were restructured to correct the imbalance that resulted in neglect of many home front needs.²³ Since 1961 the CCNA has expanded efforts to reaching beyond the spiritual needs of Italians and today 20-25% of its ministers are non-Italian and 75-80% of its members are also non-Italian (including Koreans, Hispanics, African-Americans, Vietnamese, Haitians, and others.)²⁴ In 2008 the CCNA adopted a new name. It is now called the International Fellowship of Christian Assemblies (IFCA) with headquarters in Transfer, Pennsylvania.

Assemblies of God

The Assemblies of God also made an effort to organize Italian Pentecostals into an established group within its organizational structure, including Italian churches in both the United States and Italy. In 1947, General Secretary J. Roswell Flower sent invitations to over 250 Italian ministers in the United States and Italy inviting them to come together and form a group within the General Council of the Assemblies of God known as the Italian Branch of the Assemblies of God (IAG).²⁵

Although only thirty delegates were actually able to attend, this resolution met with unanimous support from the brethren who gathered together at Grace Tabernacle in Syracuse, New

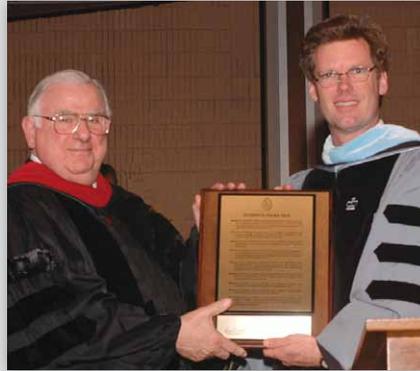
Anthony D. Palma

Anthony D. Palma¹ was born into a nominal Roman Catholic household to Philip and Maria Palma on December 22, 1926. One of five children, he spent his early childhood in an Italian neighborhood in Hoboken, New Jersey.

At age twelve, Anthony's family moved to Jersey City. Residing nearby were three Italian immigrant ladies who attended a local Italian Pentecostal church. Because of their encouragement and evangelistic efforts, Anthony, his parents, and older sister Susan came to Christ.

Graduating from Central Bible Institute in 1949, Palma joined the Navy in 1950. During that time he felt the call to a teaching ministry and has taught at several AG institutions including: Central Bible College, Evangel University, AGTS, and American Indian College. Palma holds a Th.D. from Concordia

Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. Having also proudly served as a reserve naval chaplain, Palma still



Anthony D. Palma, is a former president of the Society for Pentecostal Studies and has written four books, including *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective*. Here Academic Dean Joe Castleberry from AGTS (right), is presenting him with a plaque in recognition of being named professor emeritus in 2004.

considers his teaching ministry as a professor of New Testament, Theology, and Greek his biggest

highlight — especially his work at AGTS.

A prolific writer, Palma has authored a number of books and articles, including *The Holy Spirit: A Pentecostal Perspective* published through Gospel Publishing House (Logion Press) in 2001. In 1993, Palma was honored by the General Council with the Distinguished Educator Award in recognition of his distinguished service to Christian higher education. From 1993 to 2004 he and his wife, Betty, served as volunteer, short-term teachers at overseas Bible colleges and seminaries, making two or three trips each year.

In August 2009, the Palmas celebrated their fiftieth anniversary in Pennsylvania with close friends and family, including their son Michael, daughter Catherine, and a granddaughter, Gabriella. They currently reside in Springfield, Missouri.

¹Anthony Palma provided information about his life and ministry.

York on January 15-17, 1948. Other invitees, unable to attend, sent letters and telegrams lending their support to this venture. Quirino Grilli was elected as the first superintendent and served until 1963. Other original officers elected were Dominick Lisciandrello, Secretary, and Alexander Mauriello, Treasurer. On December 8, 1951 the IAG was incorporated in the state of New Jersey.²⁶

The IAG operated similar to a district within the Assemblies of God and experienced a measure of success. By its third annual convention in May 1950 the IAG had seen a 50% growth of its ministerial roster, increasing from 44 ministers to 64.²⁷ In the years to come, that growth trend would continue. By 1952 the IAG had 135 credential holders and 55 cooperating churches, located primarily in north-

eastern states. The IAG established a Bible institute in Rome, Italy as well as Pine Crest Bible Institute (Salisbury Center, New York), which opened in 1959. In 1962, Pine Crest merged into Eastern Bible Institute, which later became Valley Forge Christian College (Phoenixville, Pennsylvania).²⁸ The 1973 General Council gave district status to language branches, and the Italian Branch became the Italian District.

The IAG experienced growth in both numbers and influence, but the IAG leadership began to note that the usage of the Italian language declined in church services while other cultural assimilations were also taking place, thus greatly reducing the cultural distance between Italian Americans and other segments of society. Moreover, the need for a separate district to over-

see the needs of Italian Pentecostals had clearly passed. Under the leadership of the last superintendent of the IAG, Nicholas J. Tavani, the Italian district was dissolved on November 30, 1990. The remaining churches and ministers became members of the respective districts in which they were located.

The influence of the IAG is far from forgotten. Outstanding leaders such as Quirino Grilli, Philip D'Angelo, Samuel Totaro, and a number of other Italian District leaders have served with distinction.²⁹ Also, local church pastors such as Frank S. Passetti have had a great influence. Passetti faithfully served congregations in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, creating a legacy of Christian service beginning in the early part of the twentieth century that continues

to this day.³⁰ Within the mainstream body of the Assemblies of God, several Italian Americans have risen to positions of influence in Pentecostal higher education including Anthony D. Palma, Augustus Cerillo, Jr., and Frank Macchia.

Conclusion

From its inception in 1907, the Italian Pentecostal movement within the broader Pentecostal/charismatic wave has influenced the broad tapestry of American society and beyond with the gospel of Jesus Christ. From its humble origins up to the twenty-first century, Italian Pentecostals have made an indelible impression on the international religious landscape. Although the CCNA/IFCA is no longer exclusively Italian and the IAG has been absorbed into the institutional fabric of the Assemblies of God, both groups that began as organizations to reach Italians progressed far beyond the original vision and have a legacy that only eternity will be able to measure. ✝



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NOTES

¹See for example Joe Colletti, "Sociological Study of Italian Pentecostals in Chicago, 1900-1930." A paper presented at the annual

meeting of *Society for Pentecostal Studies* in 1986 in Costa Mesa, California. Colletti notes that many sociological studies on Italian immigrants contextualize their social and religious inclinations within the Roman Catholic tradition. Moreover, he disputes the contention that Italians in Chicago were largely untouched by Protestant influences in the early twentieth century by showing that the inception of Italian Pentecostalism in 1907 took place in Chicago.

²Cecil M. Robeck's *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006) serves as one (of many) recent examples of very readable accounts of the early influence of the Azusa Street revival. For those wishing for a "bird's eye view," Frank Bartleman's *Azusa Street: An Eyewitness Account* (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 2006) is an insightful firsthand participatory summary of those events.

³It is interesting to note that several issues of the *Apostolic Faith* from Azusa Street mention people speaking in the Italian language (which would mean someone in the audience had to at least understand Italian to make this determination). One article also reports on two Italians who had attended services at Durham's mission and then started an Italian Pentecostal mission in Chicago (presumably this was Luigi Francescon and Peter Ottolini). See "Italians and Indians Receive the Holy Ghost," *Apostolic Faith* 2:13 (May 1908): 4.

⁴See Enrico Carlson Cumbo, "'Your Old Men Will Dream Dreams': The Italian Pentecostal Experience in Canada, 1912-1945," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 19:3 (Spring 2000): 39; Louis De Caro, *Our Heritage: Christian Church of North America* (Sharon, PA: General Council, Christian Church of North America, 1977), 4-5, 11-12; E. B. Robinson, "Christian Church of North America" in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van Der Maas, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 525-527.

⁵Colletti, 15.

⁶Luigi Francescon, untitled testimonial [tract] (Oak Park, IL: the author, 1952), 5.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid., 6.

⁹Peter Ottolini, *The Life and Mission of Peter Ottolini* (N.p.: N.p., 1962), 11.

¹⁰Cumbo, 40.

¹¹Ibid., 42.

¹²Francescon, 2.

¹³Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁴Ibid., 4-5.

¹⁵Stanley H. Frodsham, *With Signs Following: The Story of the Pentecostal Revival in the Twentieth Century*, (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1946), 44.

¹⁶Colletti, 4; Robinson, 526.

¹⁷De Caro, 50.

¹⁸Colletti, 5.

¹⁹Ibid., 8.

²⁰Cumbo, 37.

²¹Ibid., 35.

²²Ibid., 44. Here Cumbo cites the account of a young woman who was caught reading the comics in the newspaper and therefore her father forbade any further newspapers to come into their home, deeming the reading of comics as an inappropriate activity.

²³See De Caro, 68 and Cumbo, 43.

²⁴Robinson, 526.

²⁵The reason that Italian churches in Italy were invited to join the Assemblies of God in America was that prior to 1960 the Italian Pentecostals were not given official recognition and could not operate under their own covering in Italy; they had to operate under either the Italian Branch of the Assemblies of God or the Christian Church of North America. See "Italy Assemblies of God Get Official Recognition," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 1, 1960, 10.

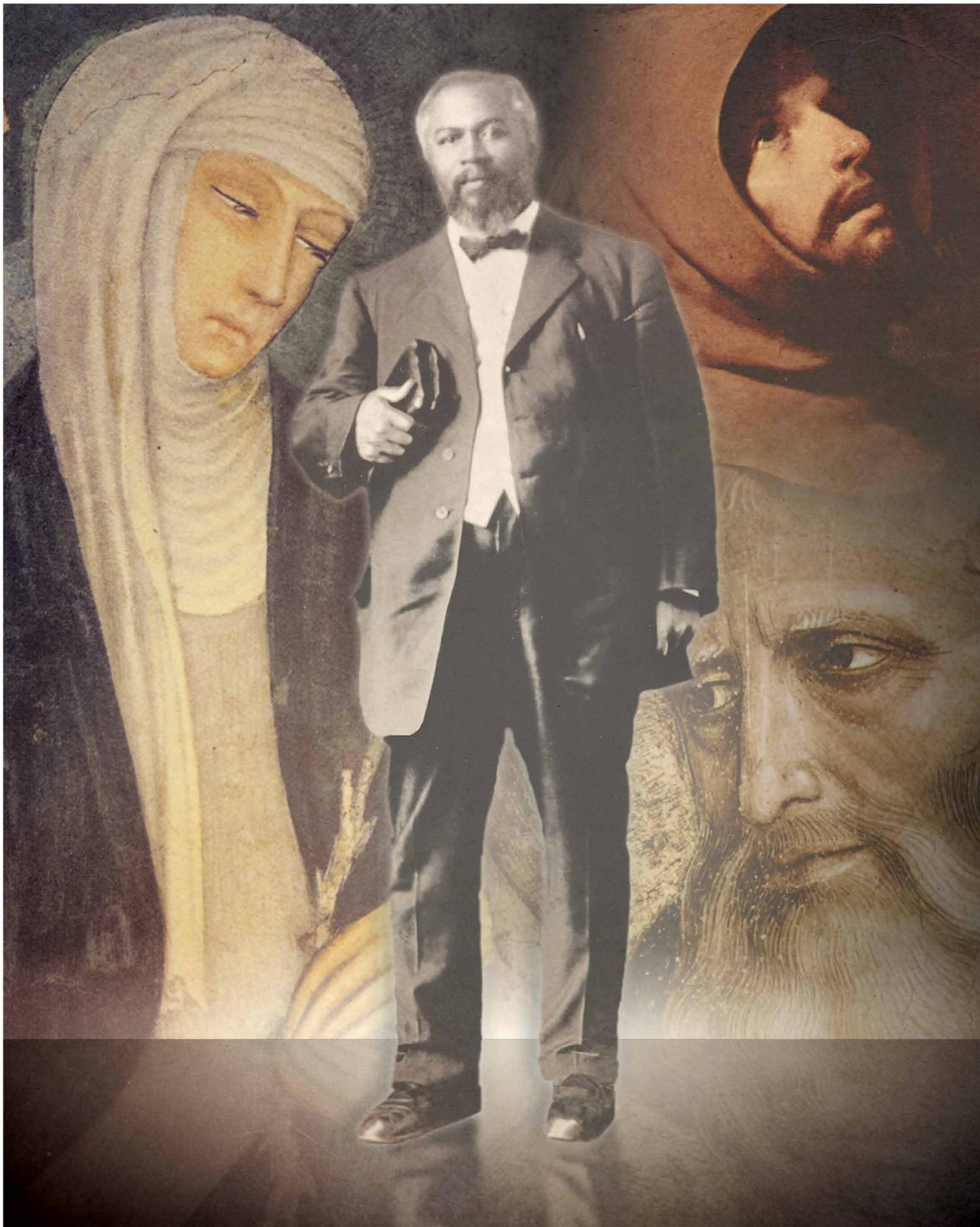
²⁶See Francis Bottarel, "History of Italian District of the Assemblies of God," unpublished research paper submitted to the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, March 1994. See also: "Italian Ministers Organize," *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 14, 1948, 13.

²⁷"Reports from our Branches: Third Annual Italian Council," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 22, 1950, 11.

²⁸Even though Pine Crest Bible Institute merged with what is now Valley Forge Christian College, it has sometimes been confused with a school called Pinecrest Bible Training Center, also located in Salisbury Center, New York, founded by Wade Taylor in 1968. This is not the same school.

²⁹Bottarel, 3-4.

³⁰I am the proud great-grandson of Frank S. Passetti. I have heard many accounts of his life and ministry, and was privileged to meet him just prior to his death in 1972. (See sidebar article.) My two cousins, Frank and Jim Passetti, continue that legacy. Frank serves as a youth pastor in South Abington Township, Pennsylvania. His brother Jim serves as a missionary involved in linguistic work and training related to indigenous peoples in South America.



Pentecostals and Monasticism: A Common Spirituality?

By Dale M. Coulter



Assemblies of God historian Cecil M. Robeck once observed that monastic spirituality, with its emphasis on love, is not far afield from Pentecostal spirituality.¹ Discovering the common ground between Pentecostalism and monasticism

may initially seem odd to many Pentecostals. There are a variety of explanations behind this reaction, some of which may relate to differences like “they’re Catholic, we’re Protestant,” or the dress and lifestyle of those who belong to religious orders, among other things. Such comparisons can obscure the shared spiritual threads that weave both groups together, not unlike the way in which thickets conceal the beauty of ancient cities. When one removes the debris of history, a common spirituality emerges that is centered upon three interrelated threads: 1) an emphasis on the spiritual life as a warfare; 2) the need for conscious experiences of conversion that fuel a journey into ever-deepening degrees of relationship with God; and 3) the desire to bring reform and renewal to the larger Christian church.

Connecting these threads was an overarching concern within Pentecostalism and monasticism to view miracle-working power and power to live holy lives as a vocational whole. This inseparable connection between the charismatic and the sanctified lives created and sustained the entire fabric of Christian life. By rediscovering what they have in common with monasticism, Pentecostals can begin to locate themselves within the larger tapestry of Christian tradition whose waters even now supply life and energy to the century-old movement.

Monasticism: A Brief Overview



Monasticism emerged as the final waves of persecutions subsided within early Christianity. It quickly evolved into two dominant forms with monks either living in community within

a monastery or living by themselves as hermits. Within a century, monasticism had grown into a movement that had adherents in the eastern and western halves of the Roman empire as well as communities in Persia.

Amidst the political upheavals of the lands that eventually became Europe, monasticism proved to be flexible, adapting to the various political and pastoral challenges that emerged. Ultimately, a host of different forms of the religious life evolved, with each form attempting to call the larger church back to the way of Christ through the radical commitment that monasticism had always represented. An example of these new forms is the mendicant friars, who were groups of itinerant evangelists that took vows as a means to more effectively proclaim the gospel. By the 1300s in the medieval West, there were such large numbers of diverse kinds of religious life that they became the one of the primary vehicles of vocational ministry much like para-church organizations function within contemporary Protestantism.

Early monasticism generated a movement that became the mother of all religious orders, that is, those forms of Christian existence in which men and women shared a calling to an *ordo*, a particular way of living for Christ in the world. Although today the term monasticism relates to a particular group of religious orders that refer to themselves as monks or nuns (e.g., Benedictines or Cistercians), in its broadest sense, it encompasses all religious orders regardless of when those orders came about historically. It is the broad meaning of the term that I use in the present article.

Spiritual Life as Warfare



For many early Christians, those who suffered or died for the faith represented what it meant to be “sold out” for Jesus. While the term *martyr* means witness (cf. Heb. 11 and 12), it came to be used in the first three centuries of Christianity to refer to an extreme form of witness. Those who died for

the faith were “martyrs” or a special class of Christians whose witness for Jesus was so impassioned that it led them to imitate Jesus to the point of death. A closely related group was known as “confessors” because their faithful confession of Jesus brought intense persecution and suffering even though they did not ultimately lose



Evagrius of Pontus
Source: Image copied from ms. 285 of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem, created in 1430

Evagrius of Pontus (d. 399), an early monastic theologian, wrote extensively about spiritual warfare.

their lives. These two groups defined radical Christianity at a time when the church was under assault by political forces that were seen as emissaries of darkness.

Just like the Book of Revelation, early Christian martyrs saw Rome as allied to demonic powers and the Roman amphitheater as the arena of combat. To enter the amphitheater as a Christian was to engage in spiritual warfare in the most intense way possible. These martyrs saw themselves as spiritual gladiators who battled hostile forces of darkness. They described themselves as “noble athletes,” and “combatants” because a gladiator was both an athlete and a soldier at the same time. Holiness or sanctification was about training in godliness (cf. 1 Tim. 4:8) in order to come against

those forces that would seek to kill, steal, and destroy the Christian.²

In the new age of peace that dawned in the first quarter of the fourth century, what did it mean to be “sold out” for Jesus? Where was the spiritual battle to be waged now? Monasticism answered both of these questions. The monk was the new spiritual warrior who continued to engage in spiritual combat against the enemy. The arena of this struggle was now the “battlefield of the mind,” to borrow a phrase from a popular charismatic speaker.³ Rather than fighting principalities and powers in the form of political might, this wave of attacks came from sinful thoughts implanted into the mind that, in turn, trigger sinful desires to destroy the individual.

Early monks were driven into the desert sands of Egypt and other remote locations so that they could train themselves for godliness by a strict regimen of fasting, prayer, and reading. The point of these “spiritual exercises” was to learn how to recognize and resist the enemy who masqueraded as an angel of light. Following Paul’s admonition to “cast down all thoughts (*logismous*)” and to “bring every conception (*noēma*) into captivity” (2 Cor 10:5), these monks saw a close connection between thoughts and desires. The power of temptation stemmed from the way in which desires and emotions could carry the individual away into self-destructive behavior.

An early monastic theologian, Evagrius of Pontus (d. 399), provides an apt description: “All the demonic thoughts (*logismoi*) import concepts (*noēmata*) of perceptible things into the soul”⁴ and in this way “the demons wage a veritable war against our hungering appetite. They employ for this combat the images. . . that show. . . all kinds of things. . . calculated to produce delight.”⁵ Evagrius draws directly on Paul’s own language in his



Evangelist Smith Wigglesworth preached messages on spiritual warfare.

analysis of how demons war against the soul. Temptation concerns the way in which principalities and powers use the human body as a weapon against individuals.

Like their monastic counterparts, early Pentecostals saw the spiritual life as one of continuous warfare against the forces of darkness. As the Pentecostal evangelist Elizabeth Sisson (d. 1934) noted in her testimony to divine healing, there were times when her body and soul “seemed the tramping ground of demon hosts. The enemy hissed into my soul, how I had failed God and got off his ground, else I would be healed, or taking another tack, how God had failed me, and broken all His promises.”⁶ Two decades later, Assemblies of God pioneer, Ernest S. Williams (d. 1981) described the journey of a “consecrated Christian” as involving a struggle against “spiritual forces of darkness.”

In this struggle, fighting the “good fight of faith” involved acquiring God’s perspective by “looking up” amidst the struggle against doubt and other forces at work.⁷ For these and other early Pentecostals, entry into the Christian life meant engaging in combat with principalities and powers

that only intensified as the Christian went deeper and deeper into the life of Christ.

This battle also involved a conflict of divine, human, and demonic wills that occurred on a mental and spiritual plane. This is why metaphors like “slain in the Spirit” came to be employed. Such phrases encapsulated an encounter with God that was a battle for the very soul of the individual. In this battle, the Spirit could break the stronghold of the enemy by overcoming sinful thoughts and desires in a way that caused the individual literally to fall down under the power of God. Thus “breaking through” and “being slain” were simply two sides of the same experiential dynamic of deeper conversion. They placed initial conversion and ongoing conversion into the context of a spiritual battle in which the enemy fought against the Pentecostal saint to keep him or her from receiving the “victory” by breaking the enslaving grip of a destructive desire, emotion, pattern of behavior, affliction, or other need.

Finally, the conflict of wills related to the implanting of thoughts and their association with desires. In a sermon preached at the Union Pentecostal Meeting in Chicago, Smith Wigglesworth (d. 1947) warned his listeners to beware of “deceiving voices” because the devil comes as an angel of light. The entire sermon deals with how the devil places thoughts and ideas in the minds of Christians to deceive them.⁸ Wigglesworth makes explicit what was implicit to Sisson’s testimony of her struggle to receive healing.

Living a holy life, immersing oneself deeper into God’s presence, receiving healing in the body, and other dimensions of the Christian walk were all viewed as skirmishes in the larger war against hostile forces. Early monasticism and Pentecostalism both

draw on the common stream of New Testament teaching that describes Christ’s life, death, and resurrection in terms of a battle.

Consequently, a full-orbed description of the impact of sin upon the human condition cannot ignore the role of warfare and the way in which principalities and powers use the bodily desires and emotions against individuals. The early Pentecostal doctrine of healing in the atonement only makes sense within this framework. Christ’s atoning work is primarily about liber-

Like their monastic counterparts, early Pentecostals saw the spiritual life as one of continuous warfare against the forces of darkness.

ating individuals from sin, death, and the devil. His crucifixion cannot be severed from his earthly ministry in which he went about establishing the kingdom by casting out demons, healing the infirm, and opening blinded eyes, all of which signal that the Light has shown in the darkness.

Journey into Relationship with God



Within the monastic life, the Christian journey was not simply a spiritual dogfight against hostile forces. The path of holiness, with its spiritual struggles and skirmishes, was also the path to deeper relationship with God. This is because the more the individual became Christ-like in character, the closer he or she drew near to Christ. Rather than the primary pur-

pose of one’s journey, the battle served the larger goal of relationship. The living union with Christ both gave rise to battle on his behalf and was itself deepened by the victories achieved in the midst of these battles. In this sense, Christianity was first and foremost a vital relationship followed by a walk that strengthened and deepened that relationship.

Catherine of Siena (d. 1380), a nun who joined the Dominicans, provides a good description of the Christian life as a relational journey in her *Dialogue*. The Dominicans were one group of mendicant friars that emerged in the early thirteenth century. As the title suggests, Catherine views the Christian life as a continuous conversation with God in which “the soul . . . restless and aflame with tremendous desire because of the unspeakable love she had conceived in God’s great goodness” presses deeper and deeper into God’s presence through prayer and encounter.⁹ Driven by the fire of divine love poured out through the Spirit, the soul seeks to be cleansed by this same fire so as to grasp the height, depth, and breadth of this love (Eph. 3:17-19).

For Catherine, the holy fire of divine love both propels the soul toward Christ and transforms the soul in Christ. Occurring in the context of prayerful worship, the encounter catches the individual up in the passion and presence of divine love so that “the soul is united with God, following in the *footsteps* of Christ crucified, and through desire and affection and the union of love he makes of her another himself” (my emphasis).¹⁰

Relationship is central to the journey of following Christ and thus the individual only comes to know Christ as love transforms him in Christ. This same love causes the soul to reach out “in loving charity to the whole world’s need for salvation.”¹¹ Prayer is the



Saint Catherine of Siena, ca. 1400
Author: **Andrea Vanni**
Location: **Fresco in St. Dominic's Basilica, Siena, Italy**

Catherine of Siena (d. 1380), a Dominican nun, taught that the holy fire of divine love both propels the soul toward Christ and transforms the soul in Christ.

form in which dialogue occurs, love is the passion driving the dialogue, and deeper intimacy is the result of this dialogue. Within this structure, the primary purpose remains of cultivating the spiritual life through a transforming journey.

Early Pentecostal writers like Azusa Street Mission founder, William J. Seymour (d. 1922) saw the connection between Spirit baptism, holiness, and relationship. Like Catherine of Siena, Seymour implicitly understood this connection in terms of love. In the *Apostolic Faith*, the answer to the question of the “real evidence” of Spirit baptism was “divine love, which is charity.”¹²

Similarly, Assemblies of God writer, Alice Reynolds Flower testified, “All I seemed to sense was a deep craving for the overflowing of His love in my heart. . . This is what the baptism of the Holy Spirit should be — the opening of the door to vital and

continuous communion with God for effectual worship, prayer and service to Him.”¹³

Charles H. Mason (d. 1961) of the Church of God in Christ testified that when he knelt at the altar in Los Angeles, God “showed me this was wedlock to Christ.” For Mason, Spirit baptism was marriage and union with Christ so much so that he interpreted his singing in tongues and groans as “the voice of my Beloved. . . in me.”¹⁴

It was because of such testimonies that Azusa Street participant, Frank Bartleman proclaimed, “divine love was wonderfully manifest in the meetings. . . The message was the love of God. It was a sort of ‘first love’ of the early church returned. The ‘baptism’ as we received it in the beginning, did not allow us to think, speak, or hear evil of any man.”¹⁵ Each of these writers placed tongues-speech within the broader matrix of the Spirit’s transforming presence.

The power to witness given in and through Spirit baptism was wrapped up in the passion of love that early Pentecostals experienced as they were caught up in the presence of God. This same fiery passion drove them out in



Evangelist Elizabeth Sisson wrote in her testimony about overcoming evil.

mission and evangelism. The evidential character of tongues was only a small part of a much larger transforming encounter, which Seymour and

others at Azusa likened unto being ushered into the holy of holies. Both in the form of a diagram and in articles, the tabernacle became a symbol

The first altar call I went forward in earnest for my Pentecost. I struggled from Sunday till Thursday. While seeking in an upstairs room in the Mission, the Lord opened up the windows of heaven and the light of God began to flow over me in such power as never before. I then went into the room where the service was held, and while Sister Lum was reading of how the Holy Ghost was falling in other places, before I knew it, I began to speak in tongues and praise God. A brother interpreted some of the words to be, “I love God with all my soul.” He filled me with His Spirit and love, and I am now feasting and drinking at the fountain continually and speak as the Spirit gives utterance, both in my own language and in the unknown language. I find that all has to be surrendered to God, our own language and all, and He speaks through us English, German, Greek or any other tongue in His own will and way.

G. B. Cashwell, in his testimony published in the *Apostolic Faith* (Los Angeles), interpreted his own Spirit baptism as having light flowing in and love flowing out.

of the spiritual life. The Christian life was a progressive journey from justification to Spirit baptism, and beyond, in which the believer became suffused with the divine presence.¹⁶

As a climactic moment in the journey, Spirit baptism immersed believers into the glory of God and filled them “with continual light.”¹⁷ This is how G. B. Cashwell (d. 1916), who brought the Pentecostal message from Azusa Street to the Southeast, interpreted his own experience of Spirit baptism as first light flowing in and then love flowing out.¹⁸ Knowledge and passion in the context of a relational encounter was the culmination of a journey into God’s presence.

One can see from Catherine of Siena and early Pentecostals how the Christian life was a journey into deep union with God. Like their monastic counterparts, Pentecostals attempted to hold together knowledge and love or head and heart. While Spirit baptism marks a distinctive way in which Pentecostals sought to achieve this goal, one cannot miss the connection to Catherine’s own thought of dialogue

with God through encounter.

Genuine knowledge of God is a result of a transformational journey fueled by love into the center of God's presence. Believers receive power in the presence of God, and this power is nothing less than love filling the soul and inflaming the heart. The evidentiary nature of tongues resides in how they signify the complete immersion into that presence and the filling with that power.

Desire for Reform and Renewal



While monasticism first emerged in part to fill the vacuum left by the loss of martyrdom as a kind of radical form of Christian commitment, during the Middle Ages it played an important role in ongoing reform and renewal. New religious orders like the Franciscans came into existence in order to call the church back to a more faithful form of New Testament Christianity. The rise of religious orders was an important way in which the church experienced renewal.

Within the religious orders stemming from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, renewal and calling went together. The source of renewal was the internal call of the Spirit to recover a facet of Christianity that had been lost. Sometimes this involved a closer imitation of Jesus such as with Francis of Assisi (d. 1226). Francis saw the poverty of Christ as paramount and took to heart Jesus' instructions to take only a cloak and sandals as one evangelized. By embracing the same kind of poverty and evangelistic practices he found in the Gospels, Francis' desire to follow Christ provided the original impetus for the Franciscan order. As he states, "No one showed me what I should do, but the Most High Himself revealed to me that I

should live according to the form of the Holy Gospel."¹⁹ His new-found vocation produced a movement that remains part of the Catholic Church to this day.

One finds the same emphasis on renewal in early Pentecostalism. Many scholars of early Pentecostalism point out that the Pentecostal movement was restorationist from the beginning.²⁰ The Apostolic Faith Mission at Azusa proclaimed that it stood for "the restoration of the faith once delivered unto the saints." Grant Wacker describes this characteristic as the "primitive impulse" or "a determination to return to first things, original things, fundamental things."²¹ Rediscovery of Spirit baptism became part of a larger attempt to recapture the primitive church as revealed in the Acts of the Apostles. Azusa Street was interpreted as the latter rain outpouring that took one back to Pentecost and the primitive pattern of Christian existence.

Both Pentecostalism and the different kinds of religious orders birthed out of monasticism bear witness to the role of the Spirit in bringing about renewal. Renewal occurs as individuals receive a new calling or fresh insight from the Spirit that stirs them to recover a feature of Christianity forgotten or no longer emphasized. This is the gift of such movements to the larger body of Christ, and it may be one of the ways in which the Spirit continually reminds the Church of what it means to be the Church.

The Fabric of Christian Existence



The basic material shaping the entire fabric of Christian existence was its charismatic and sanctifying dimensions. These two dimensions formed the ethos of monasticism and Pentecostalism, giving each movement its spiritual vitality. Whereas the

sanctifying dimension is best viewed through the prism of spiritual warfare and transforming journey, the charismatic dimension refers to the ongoing miracle-working power and revelatory activity of Christ through the Spirit. For both movements, the continuity was expressed in the abiding charismatic ministry of Christ evidenced in miracles, prophecies, and visions.

When Gregory the Great (d. 604) composed his *Dialogues* sometime in 593, he was attempting to address an issue that may be all too familiar to Pentecostal ears: is the miracle-working power of God still present in the church? Gregory's dialogue partner, Peter, confesses that "I do not know of any persons in Italy whose lives give



Alice Reynolds Flower felt an overflowing of God's love in her heart when she received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

evidence of extraordinary spiritual powers."²² One of Gregory's primary aims is to inform Peter that there were many Italian saints whom God had used both to prophesy and perform miracles. The first three books of the *Dialogues* are taken up with offering testimonies that seek to underscore the continued presence of the miraculous and its connection to holiness. As Gregory states, "The soul that is really filled with the Spirit of God will easily be recognized by its miraculous

powers and humility. Where these two signs of holiness are found to perfection they show beyond a doubt that

Wigglesworth's sermons, there is a strong emphasis on power in relation to the Spirit's work. As he asks, "Have

the miraculous, receive revelations, and proclaim the name of Jesus. It is no mistake that in a sermon on Spirit baptism, Wigglesworth told a story of healing a lame man, concluding "when the power of the Holy Ghost is present, things will happen."²⁶

This power is nothing less than the inflowing of divine life that brings the living Christ within. As he states, "There must first be the inner working of the power of God. It is He who changes the heart, and transforms the life, and before there is any real outward evidence there must be the inflow of divine life."²⁷ Holiness, miracles, and prophecy stem from the same life-giving power of the Spirit at work within the person. As a manifestation of God's energizing and life-giving power in the individual, the gifts of the Spirit were a small part of a dynamic whole to which the Spirit-filled life led.²⁸

Smith Wigglesworth and Gregory the Great's depictions of Benedict maintain the charismatic and sanctifying dimensions through the language of power. The power to live the Christian life and the power to proclaim the Christian life reside in the Spirit who makes Christ continuously present in the Church. It is the insistence on the abiding presence of Christ in and through the Spirit's charismatic and sanctifying activities that calls both Pentecostals and their monastic counterparts to proclaim the permanent validity of the gifts.

Conclusion



Pentecostals must see themselves as part of a larger tapestry that the Spirit has been weaving since the Day of Pentecost. By tracing the threads that connect monasticism with Pentecostalism, one can begin to see how both movements represent gifts to the larger Body of Christ.

"The soul that is really filled with the Spirit of God will easily be recognized by its miraculous powers and humility. Where these two signs of holiness are found to perfection they show beyond a doubt that God is truly present." – Gregory the Great

God is truly present."²³

While many of the persons Gregory mentions are either monks or were monks before becoming bishops, Benedict of Nursia (d. ca. 550), the famous founder of Benedictine monasticism, is the dominant figure of the work. Gregory devotes the entire second book of the *Dialogues* to Benedict's life. Benedict exemplifies the charismatic holy man who engages in mission through spiritual warfare. He first subdues his own flesh in the battle for a holy life and then performs miracles in the battle to establish the kingdom. At one point, Gregory notes that Benedict "began to manifest the spirit of prophecy," one of which was a word of comfort that "Rome will not be destroyed by the barbarians."²⁴ Benedict becomes a symbol of the intertwining of the charismatic and sanctifying dimensions.

Throughout the *Dialogues*, Gregory employs the Latin term *virtus* for miracle-working power. The term has the basic meaning of strength, but it can also mean virtue. Thus holiness or virtuous living and the miraculous were two aspects of a whole fabric because the power or strength of God produced both.

Early Pentecostalism evinces this same concern to hold together the charismatic and sanctifying dimensions. Throughout many of Smith

you received the Holy Spirit since you believed? Are you filled with divine power?"²⁵ For Wigglesworth, the power that comes in and through Spirit baptism is the power to perform



An advertisement for Wigglesworth, Leak-Proof Anointing Bottle from about the 1920s. Evangelist Smith Wigglesworth was a promoter of divine healing and made these special bottles available to anyone who needed anointing oil to pray for the sick.

Their common focus on spiritual warfare invites other Christians to reckon with the overarching way in which sin cripples life. Humans are enslaved to all kinds of hostile forces that constantly work against them. Abundant life involves a life freed from the grip of sin, death, and the devil. Likewise, both groups identify an important connection between holiness and an ever-deepening relationship with God, attempting to hold together “grace and human effort” as an ongoing partnership.

Finally, these common threads are supported and nourished by an overarching emphasis on the charismatic and sanctifying dimensions of the Christian life. It is this emphasis that prompts both groups to resist any attempt to place the gifts in a bygone era and to serve the larger Body of Christ by their common call to go “back to the pattern” of primitive Christianity. By looking beneath the debris of history that clouds such common threads, Pentecostals can glimpse a richer hue, a larger tapestry to which they belong and share a common spirituality. ❀



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³See Joyce Meyer, *Battlefield of the Mind* (Tulsa, OK: Harrison House, 1995).

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⁶E. Sisson, “Miss Sisson’s Miraculous Healing,” *Confidence*, March 1909, 55-56. See also E. Sisson, “The Lord’s Healing: Raised to Health from the Valley of Death,” *Latter Rain Evangel*, April 1909, 2. Sisson gave her testimony in both periodicals because *Confidence* was printed in England and *Latter Rain Evangel* was printed in the US. Sisson received credentials from the newly-formed Assemblies of God in 1917 at the age of 74. See C. M. Robeck, Jr., “Sisson, Elizabeth” in *New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van Der Maas, eds. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 1071-1072.

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¹⁵Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street: An Eyewitness Account*, The Centennial Edition (Gainesville, FL: Bridge-Logos, 1980), 61.

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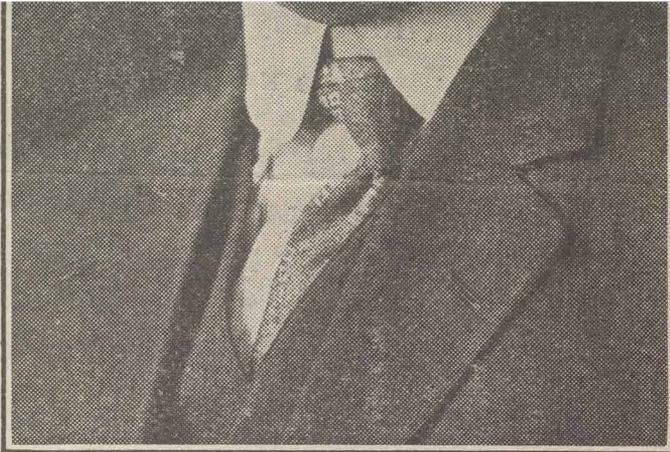
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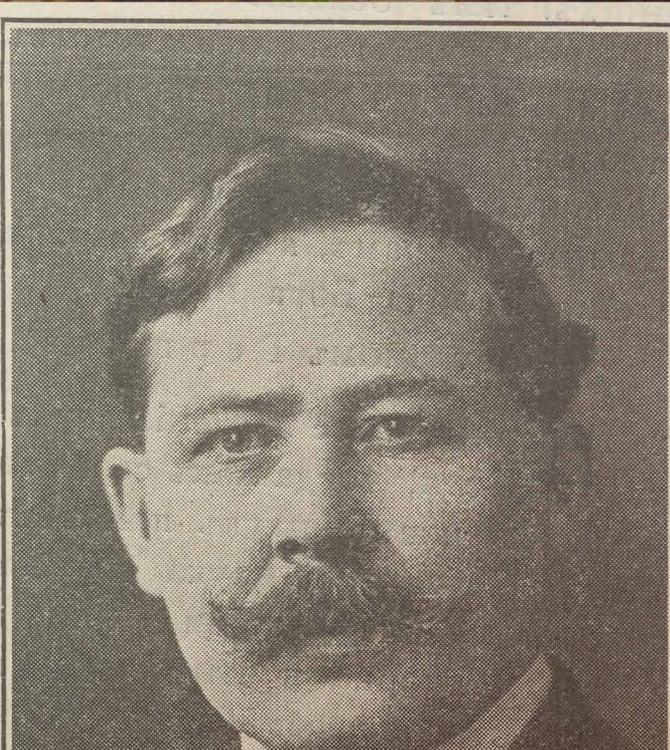
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И. Е. Варонаевъ.



Ivan Voronaev: Slavic Pentecostal Pioneer and Martyr

By Dony K. Donev

Ivan Efimovich Voronaev (1886-1943?), the most prominent Pentecostal pioneer in communist Russia and its Eastern European satellites, began his life under another name and lost his life in a Soviet prison camp.¹ Between these two events, his life seemed dominated by difficult choices. Voronaev accepted Christ while serving in the Russian military, but his new Christian convictions conflicted with his work as a professional warrior for the Tsar. The budding Baptist minister was forced to flee the country under threat of court martial and possible execution.

In 1912, he immigrated through Japan to the United States. Voronaev ministered in Baptist churches in California, Washington, and then New York, where he was baptized in the Holy Spirit in 1919. He pioneered a small Russian Pentecostal congregation, and ultimately returned to his homeland as an Assemblies of God missionary. Undertaking the difficult journey across the Atlantic, through Constantinople and Bulgaria, to reach his native land, Voronaev established Pentecostal churches along the way, which helped to lay the foundation for Pentecostalism in Eastern Europe. Later when he was imprisoned for over a decade in Stalin's prison camps and separated from his family, Voronaev came to symbolize Soviet anti-religious persecution. Although the details surrounding Voronaev's death have yet to be uncovered, he is remembered as a Pentecostal martyr who gave up everything to be faithful to Christ and His calling.

Voronaev's story has been told many times, but little has been documented about his life prior to becoming a Pentecostal. Using newly-discovered documents, this article examines Voronaev's early ministry, his missionary work in Eastern Europe, and his martyrdom. But before he found his place in the ministry, Ivan Voronaev began with his personal quest for identity by searching for a name.²

The Man with No Name

Ivan Efimovich Voronaev was born in 1886 under the

name of Nikita Petrovich Cherkasov.³ His birthplace was the Cossack station of Nepluevskaia, located in the Orenburg province of the Ural Mountains.⁴ While he was a good student, his family's financial situation did not allow him to continue his education. Helped by his neighbor, a Kazak ataman (station officer), Cherkasov enlisted in the military at age twenty. He spent the next several years of his life in military service.⁵ He first served at the Velikopetrovskaya station, but after an incident there, he was reassigned to the Fifth Cossack Regiment in Tashkent.⁶ Serving at the colonels' office in the city, he was allowed to take night classes at the local school. Cherkasov became active in the Baptist church in Tashkent. He first attended a service at the church on April 23, 1907,⁷ and it was there that he later met Ekaterina Bahskirova, who would become his wife and partner in the ministry.

Cherkasov accepted Christ as his personal savior and was baptized in the Salare River on August 19, 1907, by Peter Nikitevich Korneev, who ministered as an agent of the British Bible Society.⁸ But serving in the Tsar's army required the use of weapons, which the young convert refused to do for conscientious reasons. One account recorded, "the young officer [Cherkasov] declared to his superiors that he had become a Christian and could no longer carry arms. His weapon from then on, he said, would be the Word of God — the Gospel of Jesus Christ."⁹ As a result, he was court-martialed in January 1908.¹⁰

To escape what increasingly seemed would be a politicized trial, Cherkasov was provided with the passport of "a Christian brother from the Tashkent Baptist Church,"¹¹ whose name was Ivan Efimovich Voronaev. Cherkasov accepted the passport and took this name for the remainder of his natural life.¹²

Under this new identity, and with the help of a Baptist brother by the name of Morozov, Voronaev traveled to Ashabad, Turkmenistan.¹³ This was the beginning of a four-year journey as a fugitive, traveling with his family and

ministering throughout Siberia.¹⁴ The Voronaevs ministered in Turkmenistan with a short stay at Blagoveshchensk on the Amur River.¹⁵ Their first child, Vera, was born in Irkutsk on May 9, 1909.¹⁶

Sometime in 1910, a Baptist member by the name of G. I. Mazaev reported Voronaev's illegal status to the authorities.¹⁷ Because of this, Voronaev was forced to cross the Chinese border into Manchuria.¹⁸ He ministered in Baptist churches in the area, while working in a bank owned by a church member by the name of Shubin.¹⁹ The Voronaevs' second child, Paul, was born on December 1, 1911, in Manchuria.²⁰

... My Heart in San Francisco

Meanwhile, Russian Orthodox persecution of Protestants grew stronger, pressuring Protestant families to travel further east. In 1912, the Voronaevs moved to the city of Harbin, Manchuria²¹ with the intent to immigrate to the United States.²² After receiving a proper visa through the consulate in the Japanese port city of Kobe, Voronaev arrived in San Francisco on August 25, 1912.²³ His family followed him four months later.²⁴ Voronaev began working with First Russian Baptist Church of San Francisco,²⁵ where he received training for the ministry and developed his preaching style.

First Russian Baptist Church was founded in 1907 on Rhode Island Street by approximately thirty Russian immigrants who had been baptized by immersion in the Pacific Ocean after leaving the local Russian Quaker Church.²⁶ Shortly before Voronaev's arrival, the church had been pastored by S. K. Kunakov, and it was comprised of about 100 Russian immigrants who came from nine different denominations including Seventh-day

Adventists, Molokans,²⁷ Jumpers,²⁸ Dry Baptists,²⁹ and Baptists.³⁰ Voronaev became the Sunday school superintendent under S. Gromov, who was serving as church clerk.³¹ Ivan was first mentioned in the annual report of the Northern California Baptist Convention as a minister entering the Convention in November 1912.³²

In about February 1913, a revival broke out in Los Angeles among the Russian Baptists, who requested that Voronaev, well-known in the Russian immigrant community, be sent to minister among them.³³ Voronaev frequently traveled back and forth, ministering in both Los Angeles and San Francisco. He would later recall that he first heard about the teachings of Pentecost in Los Angeles during his ministry there.³⁴

The September 1913 directory of the San Francisco Baptist Association listed Voronaev as the pastor of First Russian Baptist Church of San Francisco.³⁵ And on September 18, 1913, the San Francisco Bay Baptist Association held its meeting at Voronaev's church and ordained him to the ministry.³⁶ Meanwhile, Voronaev's second son, Alexander, was born on December 2, 1913, in San Francisco.³⁷ Voronaev left the church in 1914 for unknown reasons, and he was followed by Brother Gromov, the church clerk, who assumed the pastoral position.³⁸

Sleepless in Seattle

Voronaev moved to Seattle in about November 1915 and set out to establish a new Russian church. He also worked as a typesetter and published a magazine, *Truth and Love*,³⁹ for Russian-speaking immigrants, apparently with the help of the American Baptist Home Mission Society.⁴⁰ By 1916, Voronaev was serving as a Baptist missionary to Russian speakers in Seattle.⁴¹ While in Seattle, Voronaev

became acquainted with Pentecostal pastor Ernest S. Williams, in whose church the Russian congregation met. Williams would later serve as the general superintendent of the Assemblies of God (1929-1949).⁴²

New York, New York

In November 1917, Voronaev accepted an invitation to move to New York City and pastor the local Russian Baptist Church.⁴³ Some converts from Seattle decided to move east with him. Voronaev opened a second Baptist church in Brooklyn and continued to publish his periodical.⁴⁴ He lived next to a Pentecostal family by the name of Siritz, and through them became acquainted with Robert and Marie Brown, who pastored a large Assemblies of God congregation, Glad Tidings Tabernacle.⁴⁵

Voronaev was faced with a spiritual crisis in 1919 when his daughter, Vera, was Spirit-baptized and spoke in tongues while attending Glad Tidings Tabernacle with her new friend, Anna Siritz. Voronaev began to study Scripture and became convinced that supernatural gifts of the Spirit were biblical. Spiritually hungry, he began to privately pray for a similar experience.⁴⁶ In June 1919, Voronaev received his personal Pentecost.⁴⁷ Less than a month later, on July 1, 1919,⁴⁸ accompanied by about twenty Russian believers, the newly Spirit-baptized Baptist pastor formed a new congregation — the Russian Christian Apostolic Mission in New York.⁴⁹ The congregation was an independent branch of Glad Tidings Tabernacle,⁵⁰ and they met at the Emmanuel Presbyterian Church located at 735 6th Street.⁵¹

Near the end of 1919, Voronaev received a prophetic message that would change the trajectory of his life. During a home prayer meeting, Anna Koltovich, the wife of his closest coworker, gave an interpretation



Ivan and Ekaterina Voronaev, in 1922.

to a message in tongues: “Voronaev, Voronaev, go to Russia!” He ignored it at first, but when he sensed the same words in his personal devotions a short time later, Voronaev was quick to obey.⁵²

The final decision was made on November 26, 1919, when several families committed to embark on the missionary journey: Ivan Voronaev, Dionissy Zaplishny, V. R. Koltovich, V. Klikibik and N. Kardanov.⁵³ Voronaev then wrote to E. N. Bell, chairman of the Assemblies of God, inquiring whether Pentecostal missionaries, missions and churches existed in Russia. His letter ended with the words: “Please, pray for Russia,” a plea that became the watchword of the Assemblies of God mission to the U.S.S.R.⁵⁴

After establishing contact with the Foreign Missions Department of the Assemblies of God, the Russian Pentecostal Mission, led by Voronaev, formally affiliated the Assemblies of God and changed its name to First Russian Pentecostal Assembly.⁵⁵ A fund was established under the name “Evangelization of Russia” to sponsor the mission trip of Voronaev and his coworkers. The Assemblies of God approved the Russian missions effort and sent Voronaev a certificate of fellowship dated March 10, 1920. Surprisingly, the purpose of the certificate was for Voronaev’s position “as Pastor and Evangelist in Bulgaria,” a country mentioned nowhere in his correspondence prior to the assignment. The certificate was validated through

September 1, 1921.⁵⁶ Meanwhile, under Voronaev’s leadership, several new Russian Pentecostal congregations on the East Coast came together under a unified Pentecostal organization on February 15, 1920.⁵⁷

Voronaev, in a letter to J. Roswell Flower dated June 22, 1920, outlined his strategy to return to Russia.⁵⁸ He stated that he was leaving with his family and “some brothers”⁵⁹ from New York to Russia on July 13, 1920⁶⁰ on the steamboat “Madonna.” Noting that his own First Russian Assembly of New York was unable to meet the group’s financial needs, Voronaev trusted that the Lord and the Assemblies of God would provide the necessary resources.⁶¹

... on the Orient Express

According to Voronaev’s personal account, the group arrived in Constantinople⁶² on August 6, 1920.⁶³ There, the problem with his identity arose again. He had left Russia as an immigrant, but never received American citizenship. Meanwhile, the Bolshevik Revolution had taken place in Russia in 1917, and the new regime placed a blockade on the Black Sea coast.⁶⁴ Voronaev had to remain in Constantinople for approximately three months while awaiting the preparation of his new traveling documents.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, the Zaplishny family was able to cross the Black Sea and remained in the Bulgarian port city of Bourgas, the hometown of Dionissy Zaplishny’s wife, Olga Popova.⁶⁶

In Constantinople, Voronaev found

about 100,000 Russian royalists who had fled the communist regime. He began prayer meetings in Russian in the well-known Bible House of the American Bible Society.⁶⁷ Voronaev reported that he opened a Russian Pentecostal Mission on August 15, 1920 and fifteen days later baptized people in the river.⁶⁸ According to one source, the practice of foot washing, observed by some Slavic Pentecostals, originated in Constantinople: “Being in Turkey they get to know Sabbatharian Pentecostals [referring to Pentecostals possibly influenced by Seventh-day Adventist teachings] who during the breaking of bread washed their feet, while receiving the bread and the cup with wine. Voronaev and Koltovich liked this example of humility, and after receiving it for themselves, they brought it with them to the U.S.S.R.”⁶⁹

Big Black Sea

Voronaev’s stay in Constantinople did not last long. The Russians in Constantinople were largely those who had supported the overthrown Tsarist government. However, Voronaev was critical of the Tsarist government on several counts, including its cooperation with the Orthodox Church in persecuting evangelicals. Voronaev preached that the Bolshevik Revolution was the judgment of God upon the “Royal Orthodox Church,” creating conflict between the Pentecostal missionaries and the Royalists.⁷⁰

According to descendants of the Zaplishnys, Voronaev and Koltovich were invited to come to Bulgaria by Dionissy and Olga Zaplishny,⁷¹ who had already laid the groundwork for Pentecostalism within the Congregational Church⁷² in Olga’s native town of Bourgas.⁷³ In November 1920, Voronaev and Koltovich made the trek across the Black Sea and, with the Zaplishnys, began to evangelize

additional cities in Bulgaria.

Voronaev, in numerous letters published in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, reported success in cities across Bulgaria. He noted that many of the new Pentecostals came from the ranks of the local Baptist, Congregationalist, and Methodist churches.⁷⁴ Of the original party from New York, only the Voronaev and Koltovich families continued on to Russia. Klibok remained in Varna, where he married a Bulgarian, while the Zaplishny family remained with their work in Bourgas.⁷⁵

Voronaev's Itinerary in Bulgaria

March 5, 1921: Six Bulgarian cities visited. Seven were baptized with the Holy Spirit.

April 16, 1921: Meetings in Sliven, Bourgas, Plovdiv and Stara Zagora.

April 26, 1921: Baptism in the Black Sea for all who left the Bourgas Congregational Church after receiving the Holy Spirit.

May 14, 1921: Revival in the Congregational Church of Plovdiv. Four baptized in the Maritsa River and three baptized in Bourgas.

June 11, 1921: Over 30 baptized with the Holy Spirit in Bourgas, three baptized in Sliven on Easter and five baptized in Kazanlak.

July 1921: Voronaev reported ongoing revivals in 11 Bulgarian cities.

Not So "Little Odessa"

By the end of the summer of 1921, Voronaev and Koltovich had received their permits to return to Russia and, on August 12, 1921, they landed in Odessa.⁷⁶ It had taken Voronaev over a decade of traveling around the globe to return to his motherland as a Pentecostal preacher and fulfill the divine calling: "Voronaev, Voronaev, go to Russia!"

Voronaev's commitment and sacri-

fice yielded significant results. During his first three months in Odessa, he labored among the evangelical churches, sharing his testimony and preaching the full gospel. According to historian Steve Durasoff:

Drawing half of his congregation from the Baptists and Evangelical Christians who eagerly embraced the Pentecostal doctrines, Voronaev certainly could not hope to be popular with the local pastors. The movement grew rapidly and the work in Odessa alone was to reach a membership of almost 1000.⁷⁷

Voronaev traveled extensively, including to Leningrad and Moscow. In 1924, Voronaev organized the churches in the Odessa region into the Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith. Continued Pentecostal growth across the Ukraine made it necessary to form a broader organization. In 1926, delegates from across eastern Ukraine gathered and, under Voronaev's leadership, established the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith. By 1926, the Union claimed more than 350 Pentecostal assemblies with membership of 17,000.⁷⁸ These tallies increased to about 400 congregations with 20,000 members by 1928.⁷⁹

Crimes and Misdemeanors

In 1928 and 1929, the Soviet government began to intensify its efforts to stamp out religion. A series of new antireligious laws aimed to make religious practice almost impossible. The state forbade religious activities outside of performance of worship, it denied legal existence to all churches, it sent religious leaders and teachers to hard labor camps, and it crafted an onerous regulatory system that made it almost inevitable that practicing one's faith would result in breaking

the law.⁸⁰

As the state's hostility toward Pentecostals increased, Voronaev and other ministers began to preach baptism by suffering. In 1928, Voronaev launched a periodical, *Evangelist*, which reminded believers of the necessity of enduring suffering and hardship. After eight issues, the magazine was forced to cease publication. Many Pentecostals attached apocalyptic significance to the state's atheistic policies, believing they were a sign of the end times.⁸¹

Authorities accused Voronaev of being on the payroll of the US Assemblies of God and the Russian and Eastern European Mission (which worked closely with the Assemblies of God).⁸² Soviet writer F. I. Garkavenko alleged that Voronaev was an agent of "American imperialism," "planted" in Russia, and disguised as a Baptist:

With the aid of counter-revolutionary elements, he even founded the first Pentecostal sect in our country. The Pentecostals conducted anti-Soviet activities as they propagated their provocative "prophets." In those years many of the Baptist communities ... transferred to the Pentecostals.⁸³

Jailhouse Rock

The government disbanded the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith at the end of 1929.⁸⁴ On January 7, 1930 (which is Christmas Day according to the Julian calendar, as observed in the East), authorities arrested the officers of the Union, including Voronaev.⁸⁵ The 43-year-old Voronaev would be imprisoned for the rest of his life, except for a short period in 1936. His wife, Ekaterina, would spend the rest of her life valiantly trying to secure her husband's freedom, while also raising their six children (the oldest, Vera, had

died in 1928) and suffering imprisonment herself.⁸⁶

Several propaganda periodicals in 1930 published a recantation of faith purportedly signed by Voronaev. The recantation read:

I have decided to leave the religious ministry, and to refute the title of minister of the cult – evangelical preacher – and not continuing to be such, I have decided to dedicate the remaining years of my life to physical labor and become a part of those whose great work and efforts are building so great, so grandiose and unprecedented temple of socialism for the whole world, for the building of which I am ready to trample clay or sand or drag stones, in effort to fill up my previous gaps and trying to become more useful and exemplary citizen, distinguished with sober life and behavior.⁸⁷

Voronaev's wife, Ekaterina, denied that the recantation was genuine.⁸⁸ She would have been able to ask him about the recantation when she later was imprisoned in the same Soviet concentration camp as him. Given the Soviet practice of physical and psychological torture to induce confessions and recantations, even if Voronaev did sign the recantation, it is highly unlikely that it was given of his own free will.

The Assemblies of God and the Russian and Eastern European Mission launched a campaign for Voronaev's release and for the family's safe passage to America.⁸⁹ The US government and the Red Cross intervened in 1932, resulting in the release of Voronaev's three American-born children (Alexander, Peter, and John), who were brought back to America in early 1933 under the care of the Assemblies of God Foreign Missions Department. Shortly after their departure, Soviet



The first conference of the General-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith, held at Odessa, Ukraine, September 21, 1926, with Ivan Voronaev (3rd row, center) as their leader.

authorities arrested Ekaterina in 1933.⁹⁰ She was transferred to the same prison camp, Chibiu, as her husband.⁹¹ In 1934, following further intervention by the Assemblies of God and the American embassy in Moscow, the remaining three children (Paul, Hope, and Timothy) were permitted to join their siblings in America.⁹²

The Voronaevs were released from prison – Ekaterina in the fall of 1935, and Ivan in 1936.⁹³ The Soviet government settled them in Kaluga, a city near Moscow, rather than allowing them to go to America to be with their children. Ivan Voronaev's freedom was fleeting — he was arrested again shortly after his release.⁹⁴ Ekaterina spent a period of time traveling from camp to camp, trying to locate her husband. She traveled under the radar of the authorities, staying with Pentecostals along the way and encouraging them in their faith. The communist authorities, upon discovering Ekaterina's identity when she had to apply for employment, placed her in prison for another six years.⁹⁵

Ekaterina was imprisoned a final time in 1949, accused of being a counter-revolutionary and a spy. The basis for this charge was that she tried to write to her children in America. The death of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin in 1953 brought a measure of religious freedom, and Ekaterina was freed and allowed to return to Odessa. In 1960, Soviet authorities finally granted permission for Ekaterina to join her chil-

dren in the United States.⁹⁶

A 1960 *Pentecostal Evangel* article, based on an interview with Ekaterina after she had returned to the U.S., described her final imprisonment:

Sister Voronaeff was put into solitary confinement. Her captors tried to hypnotize and brainwash her, but without success. She would close her eyes and silently pray. Her rat-infested cell had a cement floor upon which she was forced to sleep without any bedding and she was clad only in a few worn-out garments. She was watched by the soldiers constantly through a peep hole. They waited for any signs of emotional breakdown, but a quiet confidence had come over her. Through a broken window she could look up into the sky, and as she would raise her eyes heavenward she felt a peculiar sense of the presence of Him who said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." She was kept here for a year and constantly suffered from the brutal treatment she received. In spite of the torture, her spirit remained free and she kept a song in her heart.⁹⁷

Ekaterina passed away in 1965, not knowing whether her husband, Ivan Voronaev, was alive or dead.⁹⁸

From Here to Eternity

Mystery shrouds the final chapter

of Ivan Voronaev's life, following his second arrest in 1936. Historian Vinson Synan states that Voronaev "was shot to death in the prison yard and guard dogs tore his body apart," citing a personal 1991 interview of 500 Russian Pentecostal pastors in Moscow.⁹⁹ But half a century after its occurrence, this claim is at best circumstantial, reflecting a commonly accepted historical myth rather than documented facts. It is likely that Voronaev's life ended in the Siberian hard labor camps around 1943. The tireless visionary and organizer of Pentecostalism in Slavic lands became a martyr, killed along with countless others in the Soviet Union who gave up everything to be faithful to Christ.¹⁰⁰

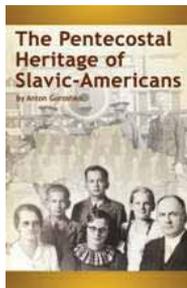
Tertullian wrote that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. So it is with the life of Ivan Efimovich Voronaev, a powerful preacher whose life ended under an assumed name, with no permanent address, no church building, no place of ministry, and no known grave. Throughout Voronaev's ministry in Baptist and Pentecostal churches on three continents, he strove to exemplify full consecration to Christ and His mission. He helped to establish or organize hundreds of churches, he preached thousands of sermons, and his ministry impacted countless lives. But behind the Spirit-empowered leader and orator was a life of struggle, persecution, and perseverance. Ivan Voronaev's story provides a poignant example of the power of Pentecost: God can transform the persecuted and the oppressed into preachers of the gospel and heroes of the faith.✝



Dony K. Donev, D.Min., a graduate of the Pentecostal Theological Seminary (Cleveland, TN), is researching early Pentecostal

missionaries to Eastern Europe. With his wife, Kathryn, he currently serves as a missionary and lecturer in his homeland of Bulgaria.

Interested in learning more about Slavic Pentecostal history? A new book provides a brief overview of the heritage of Slavic-American Pentecostals, beginning with origins in the former Soviet Union. English and Russian language versions are both in one volume.



Anton Goroshko. *The Pentecostal Heritage of Slavic-Americans (Пятидесятнические истоки Славян-Американцев)*. Renton, WA: National Slavic District Council, 2009. 70 pages, illustrated. \$5 plus shipping. Order from the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center online (www.iFPHC.org) or by phone: (877) 840-5200 (toll free).

NOTES

¹Voronaev and his family were also known in the United States under the Americanized forms of the name as Voronaeff and Varonaeff.

²Three main US archives hold materials relating to Voronaev: 1) The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, holding Voronaev's ministerial records and his reports to Pentecostal periodicals; 2) The Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives, holding some of Voronaev's publications; and 3) The Graduate Theological Union Archives of Berkeley, holding California Baptist Association records, including information about Voronaev's Baptist ministry in California, Oregon and Washington.

³Detailed information about Voronaev's origin and his name change is found in the Russian Communist periodical "Ateist" in an article

by N. Gurich, who quotes a letter sent from Russian Christians in New York to the Odessa Baptists on April 7, 1922, accompanied by a photograph of Voronaev. N. Gurich, "Traysuny I ikh organizator Voronaev," *Ateist* 55 (1930), 117. Quoted by A. T. Moskalenko, *Piatdisiatniki* (Moskva: Izdatelstvo politicheskoi literaturoi, 1966), 56.

⁴Anton Goroshko, *The Pentecostal Heritage of Slavic-Americans* (Renton, WA: National Slavic District Council, 2009), 7; Steve Durasoff, *The Russian Protestants: Evangelicals in the Soviet Union, 1944-1964* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969), 68. Perhaps following other sources, Synan places the birth date six years later in 1892 (Vinson Synan, *In the Latter Days: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century* [Fairfax, VA: Xulon Press, 2001], 66). Another account is given by O. Bornovolokov, who places Voronaev's birth date on April 16, 1885 (O. Bornovolokov, *Faktori, povliavshive na razvitie piatidesitneshkovogo dvijenja na yuge ukrainiy* [10/3/2008 1:55PM]). The 1886 date is taken from Voronaev's personal testimony recorded by his coworker V. Koltovich in "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," [Unpublished; Odessa], 1927, 1, as quoted in V. Gradja, *Kto takie petedesqtniki* (Alma-Ata: Alma-Ata, 1965), 15.

⁵Koltovich, 1. Quoted in O. Bornovolokov, *Faktori, povliavshive na razvitie piatidesitneshkovogo dvijenja na yuge ukrainiy*.

⁶*Ibid.*, 1.

⁷*Ibid.*, 1-2.

⁸I. E. Voronaev, "About the Birth of Christ," *Evangelist* 2 (1928), 2. Koltovich, 2.

⁹Goroshko, 9. It was common for Russian Baptists of that era to refuse to enter into military service.

¹⁰Koltovich, "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," 2.

¹¹Goroshko, 9. Some verbal accounts claim this to be the pastor of the Baptist church in question. Koltovich provides information of the actual escape, which happened in the military hospital, where Voronaev was taken when sick. At a certain moment there, he heard a voice commanding him, "Run." Koltovich, 3.

¹²Koltovich, 3. It has been difficult to trace the steps of the Voronaev family for the following reasons: 1) The names of virtually all Eastern European emigrants in the beginning of the 20th century were affected by Ellis Island's naming procedure, which Americanized the Slavic genitive possessive suffix "-ov," to the more familiar English "-off." 2) The change of the first name from Ivan to John immediately gives two variations of the name

under which Voronaev and his family came to the United States. 3) Because they did not arrive through the usual channel of Ellis Island, but through the San Francisco port, the search for immigration records becomes even more difficult. 4) Voronaev and his family traveled under an assumed identity which differs significantly from his given name, Nikita Petrovich Cherkasov (with a possible spelling of Nikitta Petrovitch Tcherkasov), which makes tracing his steps virtually impossible. For this research, it was not only difficult to find the documents and sources including these names and their variations, but it is even more difficult to discern if they refer to the same person.

¹³Koltovich, 3.

¹⁴Durasoff specifically mentions the cities of Irkutsk and Krasnoyarsk (Durasoff, 68), while Koltovich is more specific in describing Voronaev's 1908 travel and ministry under the new identity through Kizilavard, Krasnovodks, Baku and Astrahan (Koltovich, 3-4).

¹⁵Koltovich, 3.

¹⁶Ibid., 4.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Durasoff, 68.

¹⁹Goroshko, 5.

²⁰Koltovich, 4.

²¹Spelled "Kharbin" in Goroshko, 9.

²²Koltovich, 4.

²³Ibid., 5.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Synan, 66.

²⁶*Northern California Baptist Review* (September, 1911).

²⁷So named for their drinking of milk during the Russian Orthodox lent and documented with their first martyr during the reign of Ivan the Terrible (AD 1547-1584). They differentiated themselves from the Orthodox Church, living in separate communities and were reported to have spoken in tongues as early as the mid-nineteenth century.

²⁸During the early 1900s some 2,000 Molokans (mostly of the Jumpers and Leapers) left for the United States. They settled in the Los Angeles area, near Boyle Heights claiming to have influenced the Azusa Street Revival in its practice and doctrine. In his biography, Demos Shakarian of the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International associates these events with his memories of the child prophet of the Molokan Jumpers. Demos Shakarian with John L. Sherrill and Elizabeth Sherrill, *The Happiest People on Earth: The Long-Awaited Personal Story of Demos Shakarian* (Old Tappan, NJ:

Chosen Books, 1975).

²⁹Dry Baptists, also known as *Sukhie baptisty*, were Molokans who refused water baptism, preferring their traditional baptism by the Holy Spirit. Following a split from the Russian Baptist Union, their movement merged with the All-Russian Union of Evangelical Christians (ARUEC) under the leadership of Ivan Prokhanov.

³⁰The church is listed among others in the *62nd Annual Meeting of the San Francisco Baptist Association* (September 24-26, 1912).

³¹Ibid. No church pastor was listed.

³²*60th Annual Meeting of the Northern California Baptist Convention* (November 12-15, 1912), 88, 91.

³³"Awakening among Russians of Los Angeles," *The Pacific Baptist*, February 1913, 11-12.

³⁴John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919. Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

³⁵*63rd Annual Meeting of the San Francisco Baptist Association* (September 23-25, 1913).

³⁶*Northern California Baptist Annual* (1913), 96. "Russians of San Francisco," *The Pacific Baptist*, October 11, 1913, 29. However, in a 1920 handwritten ordination application to the Assemblies of God, Voronaev wrote that he was ordained as a Baptist minister on October 17, 1913. John E. Varonaeff, application for ordination, FPHC. This date is in an obvious discrepancy with Synan's claim that "in 1914, he was ordained to the Baptist Ministry" (Synan, 66). It also proposes a new birth date, as on the application Voronaev said he was 35 years of age. The application further stated that he had attended the Baptist Seminary at Berkeley, California, although school archives of the present-day American Baptist Seminary of the West located in Berkeley do not have his student records.

³⁷Koltovich, 5.

³⁸*Northern California Baptist Convention Annual* (1914), 104. Voronaev's sudden disappearance from the pastoral position evidently means that he was excluded from fellowship because of some problem with the church. One hostile source suggests that he falsely told the San Francisco Baptist Association the church requested his ordination. The account recorded by Koltovich has two brief paragraphs describing Voronaev's ministry in San Francisco, giving information on his 1) finishing seminary in 1915, 2) serving as a missionary to the Los Angeles area for around a year, and 3) ministering in Seattle, Washington until November 10, 1917, which was the time

when the Bolshevik Revolution took place in Russia (Koltovich, 5).

³⁹Goroshko, 5.

⁴⁰John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴¹Of the 42 Baptist missionaries and field representatives in the state, Voronaev was one of only two without a church. *Minutes of the 29th Annual Meeting of the Western Washington Baptist Convention* (October 9-12, 1916), 26. In 1917, he was the only state missionary without a church and had an annual salary of \$625. *Minutes of the 30th Annual Meeting of the Western Washington Baptist Convention* (October 9-11, 1917), 48, 109

⁴²Durasoff, 68. Durasoff states that Williams "introduced Voronaev to the Pentecostal doctrines." However, Voronaev wrote in 1919, "Of Pentecost I heard in Los Angeles, Cal. 5 years ago." John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴³Koltovich, 5. In October 1918, Voronaev was still listed on the ministerial rolls of the Western Washington Baptist Convention as a pastor and Russian missionary with a salary of \$55.

⁴⁴The New York Baptist Association reported in 1918 that Voronaev served as pastor of the New York Baptist Church, which was organized in 1916. The church had 10 members in 1917 and 18 by 1918. The 1920 annual report stated that the church was without a pastor beginning in the middle of 1919. This pastoral vacancy resulted from Voronaev's next step in his ministry. "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1918), 164-65; "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1919), 110-11; "Southern New York Association" *The New York Baptist Annual* (1920), 126-27.

⁴⁵Goroshko, 5.

⁴⁶Fred Smolchuck, *From Azusa Street to the U.S.S.R.* (Arcadia, CA: North American Slavic Pentecostal Fellowship, 1991), 3.

⁴⁷John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919.

⁴⁸July 8th in Koltovich, 5 and June 8th (perhaps by error) in Koltovich, 6.

⁴⁹John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919. Koltovich describes in detail the opposition from the Russian Baptist pastors against the establishment of the new Pentecostal congregation, as he mentioned several of them by name. (Koltovich, 6-7). In this account, Koltovich first introduces in Russian the term "Pentecostol" (spelled also

Notes continued on page 69



Gary McGee: A Sainly Scholar

By Various Authors

When Gary McGee went to be with the Lord on December 10, 2008, the Assemblies of God lost one of its best historians and missiologists. His passing also left a hole in the hearts of those who knew him. Judging from the 763 messages posted on the AGTS website during Gary's month-long hospitalization prior to his homegoing, his friends were countless and circled the globe.

As his daughter, Catherine, sorted through his possessions, she found numerous handwritten and typed notes of appreciation to Gary. One note, which Gary taped to the inside of his Bible, read, "Dear Dr. McGee, Your humility broke me, your knowledge amazed me and your love touched me. Thank you sir for all that you've given to me. May God enable you to touch many other lives." The sentiment is shared by thousands who counted Gary as a teacher, mentor, friend, scholar, colleague, and pastor.

Gary melded exemplary scholarship with spiritual sensitivity. He was active at Evangel Temple Christian Center (Springfield, Missouri), where he was known not only for his well-attended Sunday school class, but also for giving occasional prophetic messages during the worship services. Gary sometimes inscribed on church bulletins messages that God gave him. Two of those messages are below:

I am always near you. I will never leave you or forsake you. My grace makes up the difference where your strengths end. My grace is always sufficient for you.

I am proud of your work because you are working for my glory and the building of my kingdom and not your own.

Remember that despite your failures and feelings of unworthiness, I love you, am always near you, and will keep you.

(January 17, 1998)

The Lord said he has sent his children out from Maryknoll, Nyack, CBI, AGTS and many other schools. His kingdom is far greater than any human organization/denomination. He has servants in the RCC [Roman Catholic Church], the Orthodox churches, and Protestant churches.

The Lord said not to be afraid if He calls me to minister

to a broader section of His church. Don't be afraid but follow.

(February 16, 1997)

The first message shows Gary's humility — while he felt unworthy despite his achievements, he found his strength in Christ. The second message demonstrates Gary's personal belief that he was called to help Pentecostals find their place among the churches. Gary's expertise was not limited narrowly to the Pentecostal church; he was always seeking to understand his church's relationship to the broader Christian tradition.

Gary also wrote the phrase, "a saintly scholar," on the inside of his Bible. While the reason he made this inscription is unknown, it certainly describes its author. May Gary be an inspiration to future generations of saints and scholars.

Remembering Gary McGee

By Grant Wacker and Darrin Rodgers

Gary Blair McGee was born in Canton, Ohio, April 22, 1945, the second of five children. Born into a Pentecostal family, he came to adult faith in Canton's Bethel Temple Assembly of God. After graduating from Central Bible College in Springfield, Missouri, in 1967, McGee began teaching at Open Bible College in Des Moines, Iowa. In 1970, he returned to Springfield, where he lived until his death, December 10, 2008.

McGee was a lifelong member of the Assemblies of God. In 1969, the Iowa District Council of the Assemblies of God ordained him to full-time Christian ministry. The following year, he started teaching at his *alma mater*, Central Bible College. In 1971, he completed the Master of Arts in Religion at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. McGee finished another master's degree in Religious Studies at Missouri State University in Springfield, in 1976, and his Ph.D. in Church History at St. Louis University in 1984.

On completion of his doctorate, McGee began teaching full-time at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield. He received the title of Distinguished Professor of Church History and Pentecostal Studies in 2006. Two years later, the Society for Pentecostal Studies conferred on him the Lifetime Achievement Award.

A prolific writer, McGee authored seven books, edited and contributed to three additional volumes, and published more than 185 articles. He was a frequent contributor to AG publications, including the *Pentecostal Evangel*, *Assemblies of God Heritage*, *Advance*, *Enrichment*, and *Paraclete*. He won distinction for his two-volume history of Assemblies of God world missions, *This Gospel Shall Be Preached*; for his biographical approach to Assemblies of God history, *People of the Spirit*; and for co-editing the first edition of the award-winning *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*.

He completed his final book, *Miracles, Missions, and American Pentecostalism*, weeks before his death. McGee traveled extensively internationally and taught at several schools in the U.S. and abroad. He established a reputation as the leading authority on the history of the Pentecostal practice of speaking in tongues, as well as the history of the doctrine of Holy Spirit baptism.

McGee ranked as one of the most respected and loved educators in the Assemblies of God. One of a small number of top-tier Pentecostal historians, McGee's clear prose, wit, and careful, detailed research won admiration from fellow scholars and church leaders alike. He generously shared rare

other peoples' needs and labored to complete the tasks he believed the Lord had given him. He took his work seriously, but not himself.

One of McGee's close friends aptly said, "Gary was always ready for a joke as well as a prayer." His family and associates knew him as a man of sterling character, good humor, unflinching humility, spiritual sensitivity, and personal warmth. Gary McGee left a giant footprint in the church, in the seminary, and in the hearts of the multitude that loved him.

Grant Wacker is Professor of Christian History at Duke Divinity School (Durham, North Carolina). Darrin Rodgers is Director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center (Springfield, Missouri).

Gary McGee as a Teacher

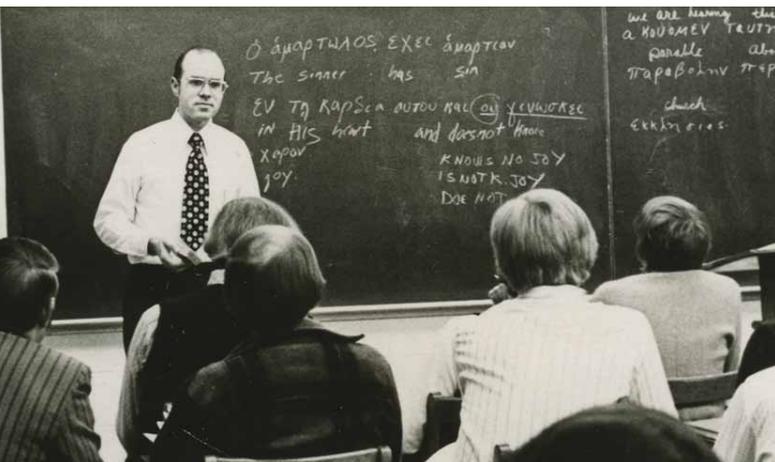
By Byron Klaus

Gary McGee's reputation as a teacher developed over the years. He began his career teaching at the Open Bible College in Des Moines, Iowa in 1967. He continued at his *alma mater*, Central Bible College, in Springfield, Missouri from 1970 to 1984 when he joined the faculty of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS). At the time of his death, he was the Distinguished Professor of Church History and Pentecostal Studies and was approved as Professor Emeritus (posthumously) in October 2009 by the AGTS board of directors.

You could not be around McGee without realizing he was a teacher who loved the local church. He had the spiritual gift of teaching, and you did not need to be in his presence long to know he was born to that calling. He told those students aspiring to be teachers that the best place to sharpen their teaching skills, on a regular basis, was to lead a Sunday school class.

A small volume he wrote entitled, *How Sweet the Sound*, testified to a passion for hymns and gospel songs sung in local churches that he felt never grew old. He taught his courses by starting each session with prayer and the singing of a song. For countless students, their introduction to the hymns and gospel songs that shaped the Pentecostal tradition and beyond were heard for the first time as Gary sang them. Church history courses included lessons in the chapel where students sang hymns while Gary accompanied at the piano, giving voice to the heart of the Church that had been sung for centuries by countless Christians.

As a church historian McGee saw it as his duty to introduce his students, many of whom had little experience



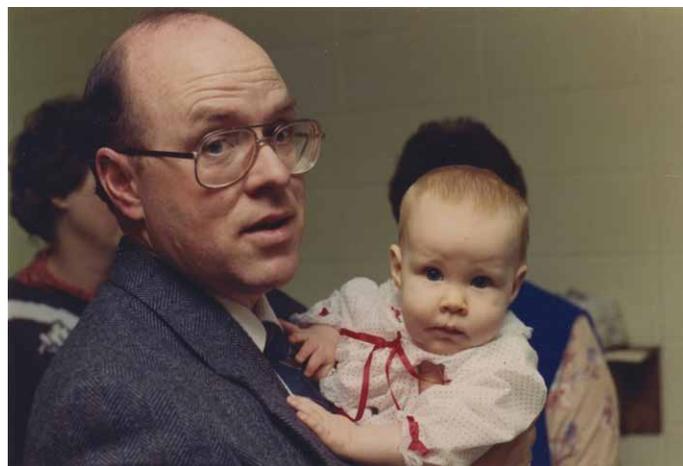
Gary McGee, teaching a Greek class at Central Bible College.

primary source materials, which he had worked long and hard to obtain in dusty archives, with other researchers.

During the last ten years of his life, he suffered from cancer and arthritis, but students and colleagues remembered that he never complained. Instead, he focused on

outside their Pentecostal tradition, to the broader world of Christian traditions. He had a love for icons and statues. One of his prize possessions was his bust of Martin Luther. He loved that bust, and whether it was used as a fixture in his office or a prop for his lectures, the bust of Luther was a reminder that he saw the larger than life characters of church history as real people, not mere objects of abstract conjecturing. He loved cathedrals and churches, as well as the tinkling bells and smoking scepters of high church liturgy, and he joyfully introduced his “Spirit-led” students to experience the beauty of those unique contributions made by the larger Christian family.

His students saw him as a stern taskmaster, with their research papers turned back looking like a Christmas tree with “to be” verbs circled and connected through their papers. Students even begged Gary’s young daughters to talk to their father about his stern measures in grading papers. While he admitted to being technologically challenged, his



Gary McGee, holding daughter Catherine McGee, at Evangel Temple Christian Center (Springfield, Missouri), 1986.

content needed little help to be clear and profound. Though the student grapevine would forever describe McGee as a hard grader whose expectations were exceedingly high, the fear of his red pen gave way to the recognition that Dr. McGee was connected to his Lord in a profound way.

His personal piety was not on display for admiration, but as a humble expression of a life lived with Christ at its center. He strategically and intentionally desired that encounters with students would be filled with the extending of human dignity. Those who served with him as teaching assistants were encouraged to call him Gary, but admitted that calling him Gary was akin to calling the Pope, “bro.” The respect he deserved was returned to students in abundant proportion, with a desire to pour honor and dignity into lives that too often had received scant human recognition in

their young lives.

*Adapted from the preface to Gary McGee’s last book, *Miracles, Missions, and American Pentecostalism (Orbis, 2010)*.*

Byron Klaus is President of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (Springfield, Missouri).

Gary McGee: Friend, Colleague, and Family Man

By Wayne Warner

Family, friends, and colleagues remember Gary McGee as a Christian believer who quietly and humbly demonstrated both fruit and gifts of the Spirit. He not only taught about Pentecostal truths, he also lived the life. And patience and longsuffering were evident as he courageously battled illnesses and even rejection.

With all of his career successes, Gary took rejections as well as anyone. A good example concerns his outstanding volume, *People of the Spirit*. A committee in the early 1990s reviewed the manuscript and rejected it. There it sat on the shelf for several years. But then the book was reconsidered, approved, and released in 2004, which thrilled so many because it is their favorite of Gary’s excellent published works.

Gary grew up in the Pentecostal tradition at Bethel Temple Assembly of God, Canton, Ohio — as a result of his maternal grandmother’s conversion in an Aimee Semple McPherson meeting in Canton in 1921. A great spiritual heritage. But as David du Plessis said, “God has no grandchildren,” so it was with Gary. He accepted Christ as his Savior and Lord; subsequently he experienced his own Pentecost and was an ordained Assemblies of God minister for 39 years.

A loving family willingly forfeits comforts and closeness when a parent or spouse chooses the long road for advanced academic degrees. Sacrifices and separation are too often necessary parts of the plan. Gary was blessed with his wife Alice and his two daughters Angela and Catherine who accepted the hardships to see that their husband and father completed the goals he had set at Concordia Theological Seminary, Missouri State University, and Saint Louis University. Grandchildren Bailey and Marshall gave Gary great joy during his last few years.

Gary’s many research projects at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center — where I served as director — blended work and pleasure with his friends. When he walked into

the archives with that contagious smile and greeting, it was always a work-stopping visit — especially when he had just returned from an overseas teaching assignment or researching at such legendary institutions as Yale or Harvard. The



Gary McGee (right) with Peter Kuzmic in Osijek, Croatia.

warm greeting wasn't just for the archives staff but also for everyone he met. I took it as an honor whenever he contributed a well-researched and interesting article to *Heritage* when I served as editor.

Evangelist T. L. Osborn wrote about Gary, "He has played a great influence in spreading the Gospel to students who will spread it to others all of their lives."

One of Gary's Spanish-speaking students at Central Bible College, Saturnino Gonzalez, was ready to return home in the 1970s because of his difficulty with English until the professor took the time to help. "He worked with me, not only so that I could understand the class, but also helped me improve my English skills. I owe a lot to Dr. McGee."

Colleague Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., remembers his friend Gary as a renowned Pentecostal scholar, a meticulous researcher with insightful assessments, and a voice of reason as an ecumenist. "He was able to speak truth into many discussions in a loving and gentle way. His sense of humor was engaging, and he could find it even in the most difficult of places."

When we wonder about why the righteous and committed are taken and tyrants continue to plunder and murder, we think of a good brother, Gary Blair McGee, who left this life at the pinnacle of his successful ministry. We don't have the answers now and probably will be unconcerned about them when we meet our friend Gary the next time.

Wayne Warner served as Director (1980-2005) of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center (Springfield, Missouri).

Accolades and Tributes

Here are selected comments of appreciation and condolence received around the time of Gary McGee's homegoing.

In our 35 years together, with joy I can confirm that Gary's personal life meshed seamlessly with his public persona. He was equally at home washing dishes, playing with the children, and typing my term papers as he was speaking to distinguished audiences or serving as "pastor" at the annual church campout.

*Alice Murray McGee
Springfield, MO*

You, like few other professors, understood my not-so-traditional frame of mind and helped me to feel like I did indeed have a place here and in the broader AG mind. You accepted, encouraged and challenged me. Watching the grace and beauty you have displayed in the midst of your suffering over the years has taught me more than any book on the subject. For all of these things and for your friendship, I thank you and God who placed you here. I sincerely grieve for every student who may not get to experience the same. Your imprint is and always will be on all of us.

*Sincerely,
Jennifer Hall
Springfield, MO*

Over the years at SPS gatherings and elsewhere, I have been instructed by your insights regarding Pentecostal faith and Christianity in general, and I have been enriched and nurtured by the spirit of your presence, cheerful but realistic, supportive but willing to criticize when needed, and always communicating genuine care and respect for others — a commodity that is all too rare in both Christian and academic settings. You have been a teacher to us all and your life has been a blessing. You will be missed — I will miss you — greatly.

*Douglas Jacobsen
Messiah College, Grantham, PA*

Gary was one of my first students after I came to MSU in 1967. I remember him as among the very brightest and best. I have followed his career with keen interest and have often mentioned him to other students as a model of what one can achieve. And of course he was much more than

Continued on page 70

Heritage in 6 Volumes (1981-2006)

Heritage Volumes 1-6

6 Vol. Set (1981-2006) **750492** \$160.00

Individual Volumes

Volume 6 (2004-2006)	750491	\$ 35.00
Volume 5 (2002-2003)	750478	\$ 35.00
Volume 4 (1998-2001)	750444	\$ 35.00
Volume 3 (1995-1997)	750156	\$ 35.00
Volume 2 (1990-1994)	750427	\$ 35.00
Volume 1 (1981-1989)	750426	\$ 35.00



Volumes 5-6 (not pictured above) are spiral bound.

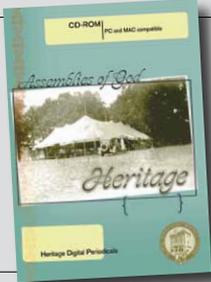
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HERITAGE MAGAZINE

In Assemblies of God Heritage you can read about the pioneers, churches and innovative ministries that helped form who we are today. Its colorful pages, which capture the lively stories of our Pentecostal past, will inspire and evoke memories. We have been publishing *Heritage* since 1981. It's never too late to catch up on the past! Back issues are available individually, in bound volumes, on CD-ROM, and by downloading them from the FPHC website.

Assemblies of God Heritage (1981-2006) CD-ROM

This CD collection of *Heritage* allows users to perform full-text searches while retaining the original layout. This product requires Adobe Acrobat Reader.

AGH (1981-2006) CD-ROM **750480** \$ 20.00



Heritage Annual Edition

Order extra copies of the 2010 edition for family and friends. Features inspiring stories about Royal Rangers, John McConnell, Jr., Robert Spence, Ivan Voronaev, and others. On orders of five or more, \$5 each.

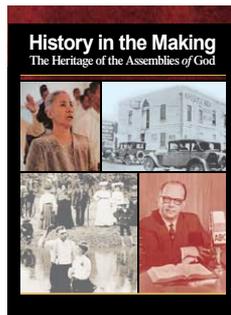
Heritage Annual 2010	750300	\$ 8.00
Heritage Annual 2009	750290	\$ 3.00
Heritage Annual 2008	750280	\$ 3.00
Heritage Annual 2007	750270	\$ 3.00



HISTORY IN THE MAKING VIDEO

History in the Making highlights the modern-day Pentecostal revival and the formation of the Assemblies of God in 1914. The video was originally created as an orientation piece for tours of the Assemblies of God headquarters. It has been edited for local church use and features new music, narration, and graphics. *History in the Making* is an excellent tool for understanding and sharing the history of the Assemblies of God and is great for membership classes and other church education needs.

(Updated: 2008 / Length: 8 minutes 50 seconds)



History in the Making is available for free download at: http://ag.org/top/About/history_video.cfm

A higher quality DVD format may be purchased for \$20.

History Video DVD **750494** \$20.00

Clearance Sale — While Supplies Last

Buy the original *History in the Making* video, which offers a more in-depth analysis of AG history than the updated 2008 version. While supplies last. (1999 / Length: 28 minutes)

History Video VHS **750195** \$19.95 \$5.00

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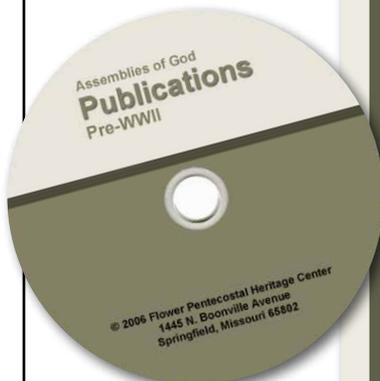
ifphc.org DIGITAL PRODUCTS

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Assemblies of God Publications Pre-WWII

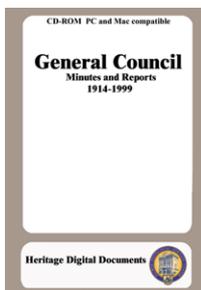
- Pre-AG Periodicals**
Apostolic Faith (1906-1908)
Word and Witness (1912-1915)
The Pentecost (1908-1910)
- National Periodical**
Pentecostal Evangel (1913-1939)
- Official Documents**
General Council Minutes (1914-1939)
- Local Church and District Periodicals**
Latter Rain Evangel (1908-1939)
Glad Tidings Herald (1927-1939)
Midnight Cry (1911-1925)
- Christian Education**
Adult Teachers' Quarterly (1927-1939)
Christ's Ambassadors Herald (1926-1939)
Gospel Gleaners (1928-1939)
- Additional Publications**
 Books
 Tracts
- Oral History**
 10 Interviews



Pentecostal Evangel

The *Pentecostal Evangel* has always played an important role in the Assemblies of God. Through its many articles it offers teaching on doctrinal issues, inspiring testimonies, and aids in documenting church growth and missionary efforts. Whatever the research topic, the *Pentecostal Evangel* is one of the best places to look for theological issues and ministry trends in the Assemblies of God.

PE (1913-1969) 1 DVD+R	750486	\$ 99.95
PE (1913-1949) 10 CD-ROMs	750418	\$ 139.00 \$99.95



General Council Minutes and Reports

The *General Council Minutes and Reports* are a valuable resource for those interested in learning how the Assemblies of God handled debates on core doctrinal issues, challenges in world missions, the establishment of national ministries, and scores of other ministry and congregational concerns. All of this and more is documented in the minutes and reports from the General Council.

GCMR (1914-1999) CD-ROM	750439	\$ 20.00
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Additional Publications on CD-ROM

<i>Latter Rain Evangel</i> (1908-1939)	2 CD-ROMs	750417	\$ 30.00
<i>Word and Witness</i> (1912-1915) and <i>The Pentecost</i> (1908-1910)	CD-ROM	750419	\$ 15.00
<i>La Luz Apostólica</i> (1965-1973) y <i>El Evangelio Pentecostal</i> (1972-1992)	CD-ROM	750446	\$ 15.00

Recommended

Our most comprehensive AG collection with over 40,000 pages

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Move beyond the traditional starting places for research. With this DVD+R you gain access to over 40,000 pages of books, tracts, national and local periodicals, and adult and youth Christian education materials. Featured core resources include the *Pentecostal Evangel* (1913-1939) and *General Council Minutes and Reports* (1914-1939), as well as *The Apostolic Faith* (Azusa Street newspaper) and other periodicals that predate the Assemblies of God. As a bonus this product includes 10 MP3 audio interviews of those who were either active in ministry or eyewitnesses to major events and personalities in the early years. If you are looking for a broad-based collection of primary source materials for understanding the formational years of the Assemblies of God, look no further.

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Healing Evangelists

1881-1957

John Alexander Dowie
Aimee Semple McPherson
Carrie Judd Montgomery
Charles S. Price
Maria Woodworth-Etter

Leaves of Healing (1894-1906)
Bridal Call (1918-1929)
Triumphs of Faith (1881-1949)
Golden Grain (1925-1957)
Various Books



50,000+ page collection of periodicals and books on one DVD+R

Recommended

Healing Evangelists

This DVD contains the periodicals and books of five well-known healing evangelists that made a significant impact on the early Pentecostal movement. They include John Alexander Dowie (1847-1907), Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944), Carrie Judd Montgomery (1858-1946), Charles S. Price (1887-1947), and Maria Woodworth-Etter (1844-1924). With a total count of over 50,000 pages, this DVD offers a wealth of resource material for those interested in healing ministries and the early Pentecostal movement.

Healing (1881-1957) DVD+R **750488** \$ 49.95



Also Available Separately on CD-ROM

Leaves of Healing

LH (1894-1906) 6 CD-ROMs **750441** \$100.00

Golden Grain

GG (1926-1957) 2 CD-ROMs **750436** \$ 30.00

Triumphs of Faith

TF (1881-1946) 2 CD-ROMs **750433** \$ 30.00

Notice: These three periodicals are available for a much lower cost as part of the Healing Evangelists DVD featured above.

Early Periodicals

Confidence

Confidence was an early British Pentecostal periodical edited by A. A. Boddy, an Anglican rector who was baptized in the Spirit in 1907. Sermons and reports given at the conferences and revivals held at Boddy's parish were recorded in the pages of *Confidence*.

C (1908-1926) CD-ROM **750420** \$ 20.00

Word and Work

Samuel G. Otis published *Word and Work* to promote Pentecostal meetings and churches in the New England area, including meetings with Maria Woodworth-Etter, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Smith Wigglesworth. The issues are filled with sermons, articles, and news items pertaining to the early Pentecostal movement.

WW (1899-1940) CD-ROM **750434** \$ 20.00

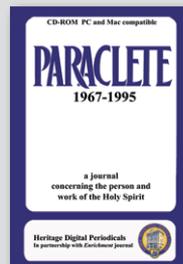
Academic Resource

Society for Pentecostal Studies Papers

These papers were presented at the annual meetings of the Society for Pentecostal Studies from 1982-2004. They consist of cutting edge scholarship on Pentecostalism in areas such as Biblical Studies, History, Missions & Intercultural Studies, Philosophy, Practical Theology/Christian Formation, Religion & Culture, and Theology.

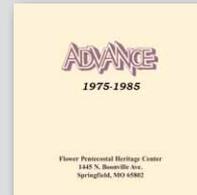
SPS (1982-2004) CD-ROM **750490** \$ 99.95

Theology and Local Church Ministry HISTORICAL PUBLICATIONS



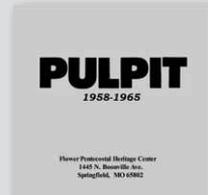
PARACLETE

1



ADVANCE

2



PULPIT

3

1 *Paraclete* (1967-1995) is a journal concerning the person and work of the Holy Spirit that was published by the Assemblies of God. Its pages contain dialogue and discussion of some of the hottest theological issues of the times.

CD-ROM **750435** \$ 20.00

2 *Advance* magazine (1965-95) played an important role in the ongoing education of church leaders. It featured articles on the work of the Holy Spirit, sermon ideas, and how-to articles related to local church ministry.

2 CD-ROMs **750465** \$ 40.00

3 *Pulpit* (1958-65), the predecessor of *Advance*, was the first Assemblies of God periodical created specifically to address practical theology and leadership issues faced by pastors.

CD-ROM **750464** \$ 15.00

Advance and Pulpit Set

3 CD-ROMs **750466** \$ 45.00

These text-searchable digitized publications are a researcher's dream. Requires Adobe Acrobat Reader 6.0 or higher. Each product on this page consists of a single CD unless otherwise noted.

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Adult Teacher		
1927-1934	750003	\$20.00
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1939-1950	750009	\$20.00
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1971-1980	750012	\$20.00
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WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Slant		
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Missionary Challenge		
1944-1955	750030	\$20.00
World Challenge		
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1970-1974	750033	\$20.00
1975-1979	750034	\$20.00
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1975-1996 (3 CDs)	750035	\$45.00

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Glad Tidings Herald (Glad Tidings Tabernacle, NYC)		
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1951-1958	750038	\$20.00
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Licht und Leben (German Branch magazine)		
1942-1984	750040	\$20.00
Revivaltime News		
1950-1954	750041	\$20.00

NON-AG PUBLICATIONS

Church of God (Cleveland, TN) Minutes		
1906-2002	750047	\$19.95
Church of God (Cleveland, TN) Publications DVD		
Features all major Church of God publications from its foundational years. Includes books, General Assembly minutes, all known copies of the <i>Church of God Evangel</i> , the first published songbook, and many lesser known publications.		
1901-1923	750048	\$49.95
E. W. Kenyon Periodicals		
1898-1948	750042	\$20.00
Gospel Call (Russian and Eastern European Mission) and related publications		
1922-1965	750043	\$20.00
Grace and Truth (Memphis, TN, edited by L. P. Adams)		
1914-1918	750044	\$20.00
Open Bible Churches Periodicals		
Includes periodicals of the Bible Standard Churches and the Open Bible Evangelistic Association prior to their 1935 amalgamation to form what became the Open Bible Churches.		
1920-1935	750049	\$20.00
Pentecostal Missionary Union (Great Britain) Letters and Minutes		
1909-1928	750045	\$20.00
Trust (Rochester Bible Training School)		
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The Pentecostal Missionary Union, Church of God (Cleveland, TN), and Open Bible Churches digital products are available courtesy of the Donald Gee Centre (Mattersey Hall, UK), the Dixon Pentecostal Research Center (Cleveland, TN), and the Open Bible Standard Churches (Des Moines, IA), respectively. The original materials are available at these repositories.

iFPHC.org
REVIVALTIME

Who can forget C. M. Ward, Dan Betzer, and the Revivaltime choir?

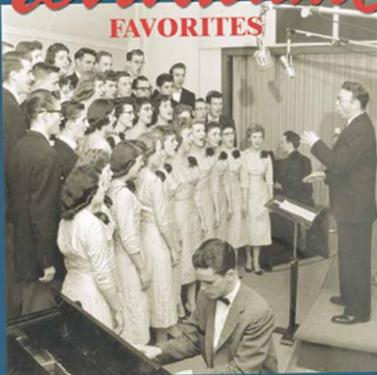
For forty years, their voices were heard around the world on *Revivaltime* – the Assemblies of God radio program. Through our *Revivaltime* products, you can listen to C. M. Ward's warmth and wit once again

as he tackled the difficult questions of life, and hear the *Revivaltime* choir performing your favorite songs.



C. M. Ward

Revivaltime
FAVORITES



1950-1990

Revivaltime Favorites

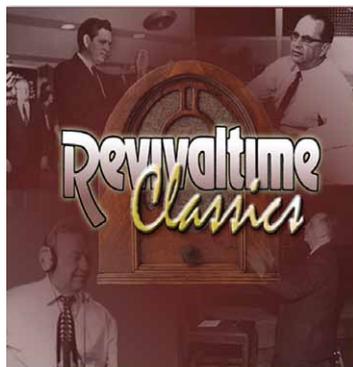
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Songs on this CD:

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Blessed Assurance | Let Us Praise the | Arise, My Soul, Arise |
| Written in Red | Almighty | I've Just Seen Jesus |
| Symphony of Praise | In the Name of the Lord | Moving Up to Gloryland |
| You are My Hiding Place | Name Above All Names | The Holy City |
| Look for Me Around the | In One Accord | The Lord's Prayer |
| Throne | Yes, He Did | Yes, It is Mine |
| My Life is in You, Lord | Rise and Be Healed | I Will Bless the Lord |
| He Came to Me | He is Jehovah | |

Clearance Sale — While Supplies Last



Revivaltime Classics

Collection of 14 classic sermons by C.M. Ward with introductions and interviews by Dan Betzer, his successor.

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------|---------|
| Revivaltime Classics | | |
| 7 CD Set | 750463 | \$59.95 |
| Revivaltime Classics | | |
| 7 Tape Set | 750455 | \$39.95 |
| Revivaltime Classics | | |
| 1 MP3-CD | 750470 | \$29.95 |



Revivaltime Reenactment 2005

Songs and a sermon from the 2005 Denver, Colorado General Council.

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|
| Revivaltime Reenactment | | | |
| Tape | 750485 | \$9.95 | \$4.95 |
| Revivaltime Reenactment | | | |
| DVD | 750482 | \$24.95 | \$11.95 |
| Revivaltime Reenactment | | | |
| VHS | 750483 | \$19.95 | \$9.95 |



Revivaltime Reenactment 2003

Held in conjunction with the 2003 Washington, D.C. General Council

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------|
| Revivaltime Reenactment | | | |
| Tape | 750469 | \$9.95 | \$4.95 |

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The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center's oral history program

is designed to capture the stories of the people whose lives were intertwined with the Assemblies of God. The program was started over 25 years ago, and FPHC now has a collection of over 600 interviews ranging from 30 minutes to 8 hours. Interviews are available on cassette tape, RealAudio file, audio CD, videotape, or as part of an MP3-CD collection.

Visit our oral history website

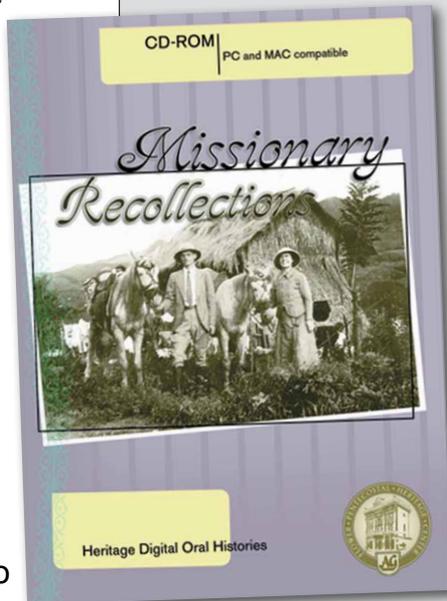
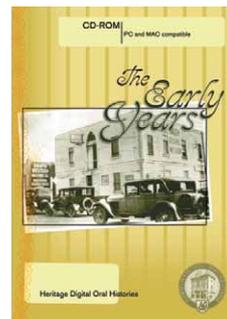
www.iFPHC.org/oralhistory

- Listen to free podcasts of interviews
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- Order interview collections on MP3-CDs

Early Years

The interviews in this collection focus on the early years of the Assemblies of God and the Pentecostal movement. Various pastors, evangelists, and leaders reflect on memories of the Azusa Street revival, the founding convention of the Assemblies of God in 1914, and evangelizing in the early years of our history. Alice Reynolds Flower, Joseph Wannemacher, C. M. Ward, and Ernest Williams are among the many personalities that can be found on this MP3-CD.

EY MP3-CD **750430** \$ 20.00



Missionary Recollections

This collection of missionary oral history interviews is a sample of 16 hours of interviews drawn from the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center's rich collection. You can learn more about the background history and be able to understand firsthand some of the hardships, dangers, joys and sorrows of several of our key missionaries on foreign fields from places like Africa, India, China and Latin America.

Missionary interviews on this MP3-CD:

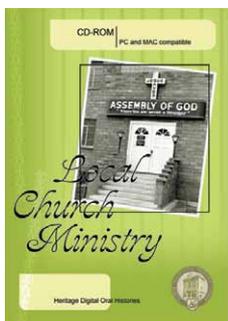
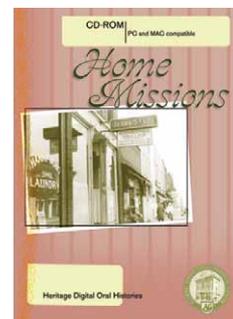
Hugh and Betty Baker, H. C. Ball, Ada Bolton Bard, Eva Bloom, Murray N. Brown, Sr., John H. Burgess, Alfred and Elizabeth Cawston, Charles Greenaway, Melvin L. Hodges, J. Philip Hogan, Maynard L. Ketcham, Howard C. Osgood, Everett L. Phillips, Harriet Williams Schoonmaker, Anna Stafsholt, Esther Harvey, Loren O. Triplett, Jr., Arthur Berg, Louise Jeter Walker, Anna Tomaseck, Valborg Frandsen, Adele Flower Dalton, Grace Walther and Marjorie Brown.

MR MP3-CD **750431** \$ 20.00

Home Missions

Here is a 28-hour oral history collection focusing on Assemblies of God home missions in interviews with 14 men and women whose ministry turf included prisons, the Kentucky Mountains, Alaska, Native American reservations, Teen Challenge centers, and other needy areas. You'll hear the actual voices of Ann Ahlf, David Hogan, Andrew Maracle, Paul Markstrom, Lula Morton, Frank Reynolds, Curtis Ringness, and seven others.

HM MP3-CD **750437** \$ 20.00



Local Church Ministry

Today it is impossible to sit down and chat with Bond Bowman, James Hamill, Mary Ramsey Woodbury, and other early 20th century Pentecostal pastors. But it is possible to go with the interviewers and listen in on more than 10 hours of rare conversations with 12 leaders — representing ministries from coast to coast and border to border. You'll hear for the first time on MP3-CD how they were able to help build the Kingdom through their important roles within the Assemblies of God.

LCM MP3-CD **750474** \$ 20.00

John McConnell, Jr.

(Continued from page 25)

telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

⁴⁶Weir, 125-133.

⁴⁷John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009.

⁴⁸Weir, 125-151.

⁴⁹Ibid., 149.

⁵⁰Ibid., 151.

⁵¹For a detailed account of the sequence of events concerning McConnell's founding of the original Earth Day and Nelson's later adoption of the name for his Environmental Teach-In, see: Weir, 125-151. See also: John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009; John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, interview, June 15, 2009.

⁵²McConnell, "A Testimony of Faith," 1.

⁵³Quoted in Weir, 25.

⁵⁴John McConnell, Jr. and Anna McConnell, telephone interview, April 3, 2009.

⁵⁵John McConnell, Jr., "To Die Is Gain," typewritten manuscript, 1. FPHC

⁵⁶McConnell, "A Testimony of Faith," 1.

⁵⁷John McConnell, Jr., unpublished introduction to *The New Covenant*, 1987. FPHC.

⁵⁸Weir, 9.

Ivan Voronaeff

(Continued from page 57)

as "Pantecostel" on p. 8) to describe the new Pentecostal community, perhaps for lack of the term Petdeseten ("Pentecostal") not yet introduced to the Slavic languages.

⁵⁰J. E. Varonaeff, "Pray for Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, December 13, 1919, 10.

⁵¹Koltovich, 7. O. Bornovolokov, *Deyatelnost Shvian v Amerike* (Traven-Lipen: Svitlo Voskrisinya).

⁵²Smolchuck, 4; Goroshko, 10.

⁵³Koltovich, 7.

⁵⁴John E. Varonaeff, letter to E. N. Bell, December 9, 1919. Also see: Varonaeff, "Pray for Russia," 10.

⁵⁵John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell

Flower, January 1, 1920. FPHC.

⁵⁶John E. Varonaeff, Certificate of Fellowship with the General Council of the Assemblies of God, March 10, 1920. FPHC.

⁵⁷Koltovich, 7.

⁵⁸John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 22, 1920. FPHC.

⁵⁹These are the families of co-missionaries Dionissy Zaplishny and V. R. Koltovich. With them sailed a group of believers from Caucasus, including V. Klibik and N. Kardanov from Ossetia. Koltovich is spelled as "Kotlovich" and Kardanov as "Kordakov" by communist propaganda writer Fedor Garkavenko in his *Sektantiy, ih vera i dela* (Moskva: Gosudarsstvenoe izdatelstvo polit. literatura, 1960), 73.

⁶⁰Reports vary on the date of departure. The party left on July 15, 1920, according to Koltovich, 8. A descendant of Dionissy Zaplishny dates the departure on July 17, 1920. Martha C. Zaplishny Jackson, "Detailed Historical Postscript," typewritten, n.d. FPHC.

⁶¹John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 22, 1920.

⁶²Constantinople is now Istanbul, Turkey.

⁶³John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920. FPHC. Another source claims the group arrived on August 10, 1920. Koltovich, 7.

⁶⁴Koltovich, 7.

⁶⁵John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920.

⁶⁶Jackson, 2.

⁶⁷Koltovich, 7.

⁶⁸John E. Varonaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, September 2, 1920. Also mentioned in Koltovich, 7.

⁶⁹O. Bornovolokov. *Faktori, povliavshive na razvitie piatidesitnicheskovo dvijenja na yuge ukrainiy*, 19. The author relies on Koltovich, "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting" or the preface of a later source by the name of G. G. Ponurko. The practice of foot washing was brought to Bulgaria and the U.S.S.R. and became prominent in certain segments of Eastern European Pentecostalism. The Pentecostal Union (Bulgarian Assemblies of God) does not observe foot washing, while the various Church of God groups (Church of God [Cleveland, TN], Church of God of Prophecy, United Churches of God, etc.) do observe the practice.

⁷⁰Koltovich, 7.

⁷¹Jackson, 2.

⁷²Koltovich calls them "child baptizers" in "Minutes of the Jubilee Meeting," 8.

⁷³Ibid., 7.

⁷⁴For examples of Voronaeff's revival reports from Bulgaria, see: *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 5, 1921, 12; *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 16, 1921, 13; *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 14, 1921, 12; *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 11, 1921, 13; *Latter Rain Evangel*, July 1921, 15.

⁷⁵Koltovich, 8.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Durasoff, 70.

⁷⁸Koltovich, 10 and *Evangelist* 1 (1928), 1. Quoted in Durasoff, 73 and Smolchuck, 4.

⁷⁹"Report of Assemblies in Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 8, 1928, 10.

⁸⁰Durasoff, 77-87; Philip Walters, "A Survey of Soviet Religious Policy," in *Religious Policy in the Soviet Union*, ed. Sabrina Petra Ramet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 13.

⁸¹Roman Lunkin, "Traditional Pentecostals in Russia," *East-West Church & Ministry Report* 12:3 (Summer 2004), 4-7.

⁸²Voronaeff received some financial support from American Pentecostals, although the amount of support is uncertain. For instance, Voronaeff stated in a 1922 letter that he received money from the Russian Pentecostal Assembly in New York. Ivan Voronaeff, letter to J. Roswell Flower, June 7, 1922. FPHC. Durasoff stated that Voronaeff's financial support came on a monthly basis from Glad Tidings Tabernacle (New York) and from the Russian and Eastern European Mission (Chicago) during the period of 1921-1930 (*The Russian Protestants*, 70).

⁸³Quoted in Durasoff, 71.

⁸⁴Goroshko, 11.

⁸⁵Alexander Voronaeff, letter to Noel Perkin, January 10, 1930. FPHC.

⁸⁶Goroshko, 12.

⁸⁷Garkavenko, 73.

⁸⁸Durasoff, 94-95.

⁸⁹According to one document, this campaign was launched immediately after Voronaeff's imprisonment. "J. E. Voronaeff and Family," unpublished manuscript, 1939, J. E. Varonaeff missionary file, FPHC.

⁹⁰"Voronaeff Family in Russia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 26, 1933, 9.

⁹¹"News from Russia of Brother Voronaeff," *Pentecostal Evangel*, December 29, 1934, 10.

⁹²Goroshko, 11-12.

⁹³"Notice Regarding Voronaeff Family," *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 13, 1936, 9; Voronaeff

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Ivan Voronaev

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was released in 1936. "Voronaeff Release," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 26, 1936, 7.

⁹⁴Goroshko states Voronaev was free for five months. Goroshko, 12. Ekaterina, in an interview, stated that he was only free for one month. Ruth Demetrus, "Back from Siberia," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 27, 1960, 4.

⁹⁵Demetrus, 4.

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Durasoff, 95; "Mrs. Voronaeff with the Lord," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 24, 1965, 29.

⁹⁹Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 139.

¹⁰⁰Gary B. McGee, "Russian Pentecostalism," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 31, 1998, 17; Goroshko, 12.

Gary McGee

(Continued from page 62)

a fine scholar, he was a warm, caring Christian in all of his life.

Wayne Bartee

*Missouri State University,
Springfield, MO*

Gary was a great scholar, a great churchman and a great friend. As an ecumenist, he was a supporting, weight-bearing pillar of the International Classical Pentecostal/Roman Catholic Dialogue. He will be missed.

Fr. Kilian McDonnell, O.S.B.

*St. John's Abbey, Collegeville,
MN*

Few teachers understood so well and embodied so finely the academic enterprise as Gary. He was a true scholar, with published results valued far beyond the AG. But more, he was a true Christian

gentleman, an exemplary teacher untouched by arrogance and deeply committed to students. He was, indeed, an academic prince.

Russ Spittler

*Fuller Theological Seminary,
Pasadena, CA*

Gary McGee was my best friend, and no one could have asked for a better colleague and mentor. We traveled together on historical research trips and attended academic conferences. I drove Gary to many of his appointments with doctors and had the privilege of holding my friend's hand in times when he experienced extreme pain. Through it all, I observed his integrity, humor,

faithfulness to God, and the love he had for his family. He was a prime example of the scripture: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7).

Warren Newberry

AGTS, Springfield, MO

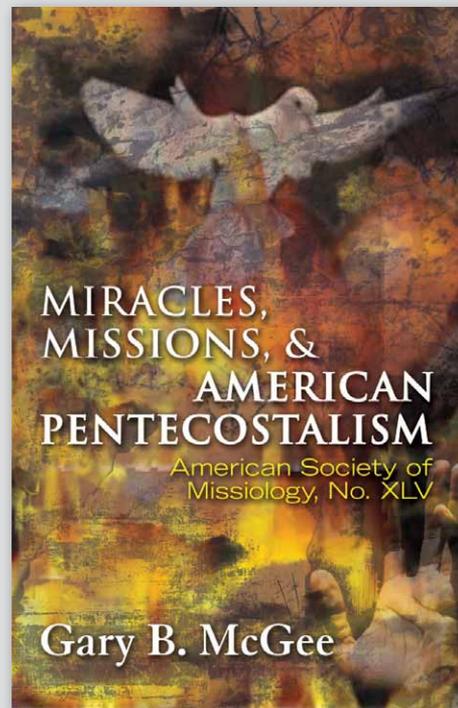
The McGee family has made Gary's lifework accessible to future scholars: his books have been placed at the AGTS library in the new Dr. Gary B. McGee Research Collection Room; and his research materials (18 linear feet) are now housed at the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center. ♣

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Darrin Rodgers

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In October 2006, the leadership of the Assemblies of God established the Wayne Warner Research Fellowship, an endowed program designed to encourage faculty, independent researchers, and students to use and publish from the Center's rich holdings. The program will award research and travel grants to a limited number of researchers each year whose research concerning Assemblies of God history is likely to be published and to benefit our Fellowship.

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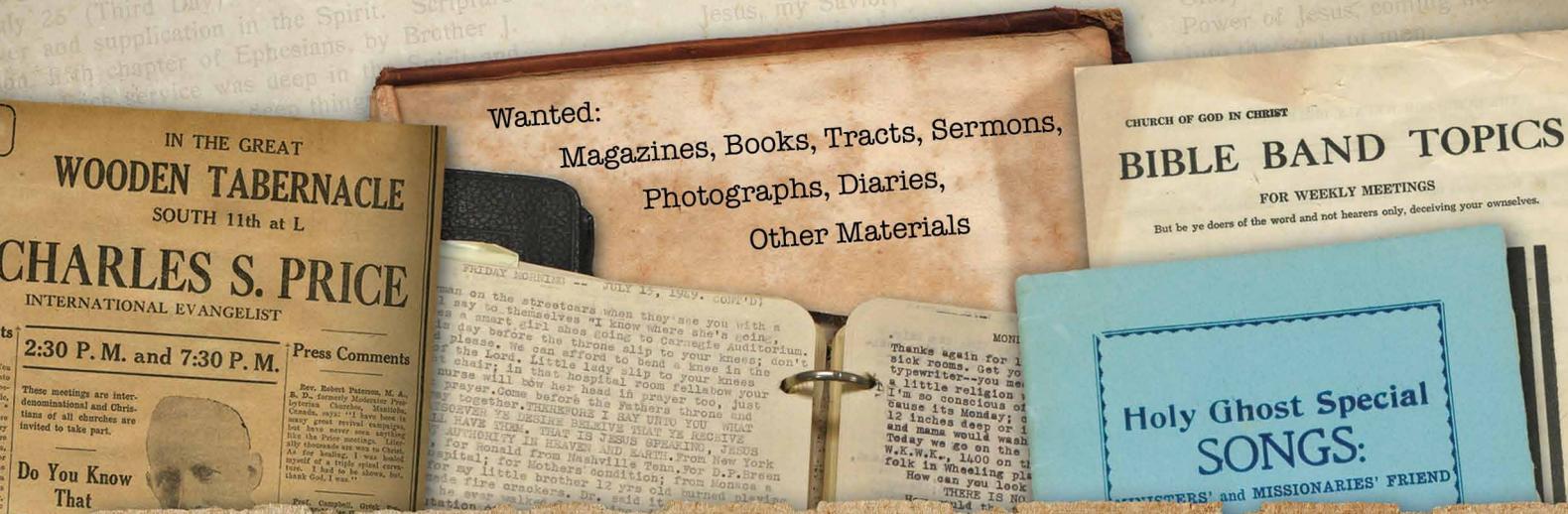
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