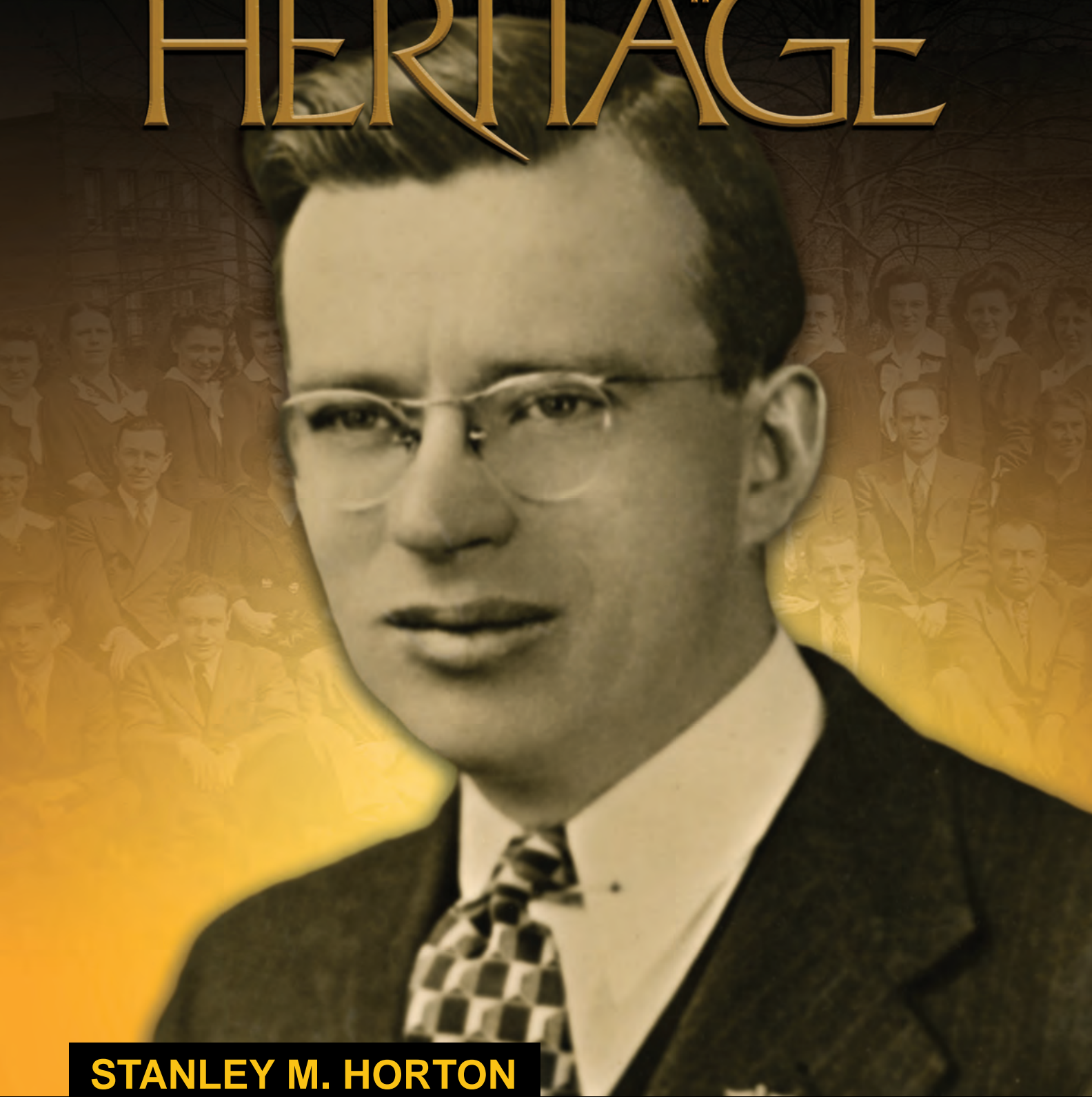


Assemblies of God

# HERITAGE



**STANLEY M. HORTON**

P.C. Nelson  
Joseph Smale  
Mae Eleanor Frey

Missions to Native Americans  
Miracles In WWII P.O.W. Camps  
Assemblies of God and the Charismatic Renewal

**2009**  
Volume 29

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Front cover: Stanley Horton as a student at Harvard, about 1948.



# From the Editor: Seize the Moment

By Darrin J. Rodgers

**How will the current economic troubles affect the Assemblies of God? According to common wisdom, economic downturns bring spiritual upturns. As the theory goes, when people discover they cannot be self-sufficient, they look for spiritual solutions to their problems.**

But is this really the case? History reveals that the Assemblies of God grew significantly during the Great Depression of the 1930s, but its growth was a deviation from the norm. Most churches suffered great setbacks. What really happened during the Great Depression? What lessons can this history provide for the Assemblies of God of the twenty-first century?

## Mainline Decline

The Great Depression of the 1930s devastated many segments of American Christianity. Historian Mark Noll noted that mainline Protestants not only faced economic uncertainties, but also theological uncertainties as liberal theology had begun to replace historic Christian beliefs. Many mainline congregations, schools, and ministries had to close or drastically cut back. Their institutions, funded by endowments that disappeared with the Wall Street crash, were running off the fumes of the past.

However, there was a noticeable exception to the decline of religious institutions in the 1930s: evangelical and Pentecostal churches made significant gains. According to Noll, these “sectarian” churches “knew better how to redeem the times.”<sup>1</sup>

## Pentecostal Growth

In September 1929, the AG reported 1,612 churches with 91,981 members in

the U.S.<sup>2</sup> By 1944, this tally increased to 5,055 churches with 227,349 members.<sup>3</sup> During that fifteen-year period, the number of AG churches tripled and membership almost tripled.

This growth didn’t happen by accident. Our forefathers and foremothers during the Great Depression laid a foundation for the expansion of the Assemblies of God, often at a tremendous cost. Of today’s seven largest AG colleges and universities, four were started during the Great Depression: North Central University (1930); Northwest University (1934); Southeastern University (1935); and Valley Forge Christian College (1939).



**Myer Pearlman was a prolific writer during the Great Depression.**

It was during these hard times that AG scholarship blossomed. Myer Pearlman (1898-1943), P. C. Nelson (1868-1942), and E. S. Williams (1885-1981) wrote many of their influ-

ential theological books in the midst of the Great Depression. Pearlman and Nelson literally worked themselves to death, their health breaking under the strain of constant writing, teaching, and preaching.

The AG’s foreign missions enterprise was centralized and strengthened during the Depression. This change encouraged coordination of efforts and accountability. The AG published its first *Missionary Manual* in 1931 and in 1933 the AG began providing funding for a missions staff at Headquarters.<sup>4</sup> While the Great Depression made finances tight, in 1933 the Foreign Missions Department trumpeted that it did not have to recall any missionaries because of shortage of funds.<sup>5</sup> When other denominations were retreating, the AG was making significant advances in missions.

While Pentecostals decried the Social Gospel movement, which they viewed as caring for physical needs while neglecting spiritual needs, many churches strove to evangelize in both word and deed. One of the best-known churches engaged in social outreach during the Depression was Pentecostal — Angelus Temple, the Los Angeles congregation founded by Aimee Semple McPherson. The congregation operated numerous soup kitchens and free clinics in the 1930s. Countless smaller storefront rescue missions dotted the Pentecostal landscape of that era.

Large-scale population migrations forced by the economic upheaval of the 1930s resulted in the unplanned evangelization of new regions. Pentecostals who left the Midwest during the Dustbowl established numerous Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Holiness, and Pentecostal Church of God congregations in the western states. African-American Pentecostals from the rural South migrated to northern cities and started Church of God in Christ congregations in almost every major city. Hundreds of thousands of migrant workers in the U.S. returned



to Mexico, including many new Pentecostal believers who, in effect, became indigenous missionaries to their homeland. In the providence of God, the painful social dislocation of the 1930s helped bring about the rapid spread of Pentecostalism. Like pollen scattered by a strong wind, Pentecostal refugees planted churches wherever they happened to land.

In raw economic terms, an economic downturn offers a great opportunity for churches to expand their bases. Finances will be tight in the meantime, but once the economy turns around, the churches will be much better off than they were previously, with a larger and more committed membership.

### Despair or Desperation?

Some Pentecostals actually seemed to celebrate the challenges of the Depression. The monthly magazine of The Stone Church (an Assemblies of God congregation in Chicago) published this editorial note: “Our chief difficulty is that we have been bitten by the luxury bug. Nations can stand almost any adversity better than that of the debilitating, enervating, calamity of prosperity. The Word of God declares that, ‘In prosperity the destroyer shall come’ (Jno. 15:21).”<sup>6</sup> One can almost hear the writer saying, “Bring it on, financial struggles will only make us stronger.”

C. M. Ward, the voice of the *Revivaltime* radio broadcast from 1953 to 1978, echoed this sentiment. He and his fiancée, Dorothy, set their wedding date for Christmas Day, 1929. Of course, one month before their wedding, the stock market crashed and the Great Depression began. Ward couldn’t afford to buy a wedding ring, much less presents for their first Christmas. He later learned that times of deprivation like this birthed one of two things: either despair or desperation. Despair caused people to simply give up, but desperation spurred people to work hard and to be creative.<sup>7</sup>



**C. M. Ward and his wife, Dorothy, were married just after the stock market crashed in 1929.**

### Need for Vision

Churches, however, are not guaranteed to grow during bad times. Indeed, AG evangelist Christine Kerr Peirce observed in 1935, “Instead of the depression driving people to God, there has developed an apathy and indifference which has not characterized previous periods of distress, when men have turned to God for help.”<sup>8</sup>

Peirce’s lament for the church in 1935 could easily describe the condition of the American church in 2009: “Our modern methods are fast wearing out. That which a few years ago attracted the great crowds, attracts them no more. We have worn out every spectacular appeal we could make and while a few are reached here and there, yet the truth stares us plainly in the face that nowhere are we doing more than just scratching the surface, in comparison with the great number of unchurched and unsaved that should be reached.”<sup>9</sup>

Why was the church in such a state of spiritual stupor? According to Peirce, “The backslidden, apathetic, lethargic condition of the pew today is due largely to the fact that this work [evangelism] has been left in the hands of the pulpit.” Instead, she averred, every Christian is called to be a witness.<sup>10</sup>

How can the church remedy this problem? Peirce dismissed the idea that the church needs methods that are even “more spectacular.” Instead, she propounded, “The need of the present

moment is Men and Women of Vision!” Christians first “must see God Himself,” and then must have a “vision of others.” She elaborated, “A true vision of the lost world will prostrate us on our face with a burden of intercession.”<sup>11</sup>

According to Peirce, then, the visionary church must be worshipful and missional. While Peirce’s critique was aimed at the American church in general, she recognized that Assemblies of God members could very easily lose their vision and replace their passion for God and for souls with a reliance on modern methods. However, visionary Assemblies of God leaders viewed the economic crisis as an opportunity, leading the Fellowship to engage in ardent prayer and great personal sacrifice to advance a cause that was much bigger than any one person.

### Seize the Moment

The history of the Assemblies of God illustrates the Fellowship’s compelling vision of world evangelization through voluntary cooperation to accomplish what individual Pentecostal believers or churches could not do alone. This issue of *Assemblies of God Heritage* showcases inspiring stories of people who overcame great obstacles to carry out this vision. Hopefully, these testimonies will encourage readers to likewise see the current economic turmoil as an opportunity to reassess priorities, to love those who are hurting, and to lay a broader foundation for the future of the Assemblies of God. Even as we look back at the heroes of the faith who grabbed hold of big ideas and sacrificed greatly to bring them to fruition, I pray that we, the inheritors of this legacy, will seize this moment and invest in the future of our faith. ✨

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

*See page 69 for notes*





Stanley M. Horton in 1977, while a professor at AGTS.

# Stanley M. Horton: A Pentecostal Journey

By Lois E. Olena

## Theologian of a Movement

Dr. Stanley M. Horton, renowned scholar, prolific writer, and worldwide lecturer, has been recognized as Pentecostalism's "premier theologian."<sup>1</sup> Referring to Horton as a "bridge linking the Azusa revival to the present day,"<sup>2</sup> George O. Wood wrote in honor of Horton's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2006:

As a child of the Azusa Street Revival and Mission, you have effectively lived out over these decades the splendor and the glory of this modern day outpouring of the Spirit. You have provided an intellectual and theological anchor to countless students and ministers, and have taught us all that Pentecost not only warms the heart, but energizes the mind also."<sup>3</sup>

In addition to authoring dozens of books and over 250 articles and reviews, Horton wrote the AG *Adult Teacher* Sunday school curriculum for over 25 years, at a time when the term "Sunday school elective" was unheard of. Without a doubt, Horton's life and work have profoundly shaped the theological values and beliefs of the Pentecostal Movement.

Upon graduation from Harvard, Horton first taught at Metropolitan Bible Institute from 1945 to 1948. The AG school used the North Bergen, New Jersey facilities of Beulah Heights Training School, which had fallen on hard times, then in Horton's second year moved to Patterson, New Jersey, and in 1948 to Suffern, New York. He then moved to Springfield, Missouri, where he served as chair of the Bible Department at Central Bible College from 1948 to 1978. From 1978 to 1991 he taught at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS), serving as chairman of the Bible and Theology Department, and since 1991 he has been Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Bible and Theology at AGTS.

## A Rich Pentecostal Heritage

Stanley Horton's godly heritage runs deep, providing the fertile ground for his own life of service — characterized by Pentecostal fervor, a commitment to biblical scholarship, and Christ-like character. His father Harry, whose ancestors had originally come to faith during the Wesley revivals in Ireland, was raised as a Methodist. As a young man Harry experienced the infilling of the Holy Spirit in Winnipeg, in the home of two women who had been to the Azusa Street revival. Stanley's mother, Myrle, was baptized in the

Holy Spirit at Azusa Street in 1906. She attended services there with her parents — Elmer Kirk Fisher and Clara Daisy Sanford Fisher — until the Fishers began the Upper Room Mission on South Spring Street, just blocks away from Azusa.<sup>4</sup> Stanley's earliest memories are of "songs of joy, shouts of 'Hallelujah!' and much prayer" in that Mission.<sup>5</sup>

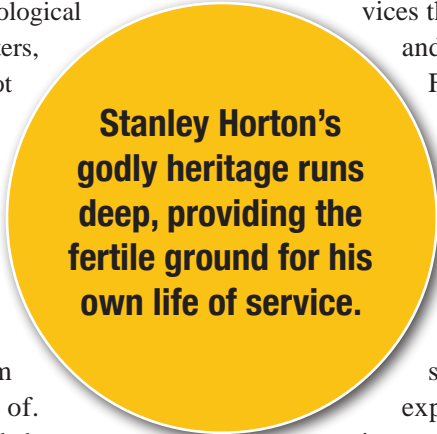
Clara, a camp meeting and Keswick conference speaker on the Chautauqua, New York circuit for Christian Endeavor societies, had had a "pre-Agnes Ozman"<sup>6</sup> experience in the mid-1880s. After preaching to a group of women in a Baptist church near

Erie, Pennsylvania one day, suddenly she felt the power of the Spirit and began to speak in a language she had never learned. Only later did she find out the true significance of her experience. When she first visited Azusa and observed the spiritual phenomena there, she exclaimed, "I already have this!"

"You couldn't have," they told her. "You are a Baptist!"<sup>7</sup>

## The Harry Horton Family

In 1914 Elmer Kirk Fisher turned over the pastorate of the Upper Room Mission to his young associate, Harry Horton, who had been serving with him since arriving in Los Angeles the previous year. On July 21, 1915, Harry married Fisher's daughter, Myrle, and the next year, on a spring evening in



**Stanley Horton's  
godly heritage runs  
deep, providing the  
fertile ground for his  
own life of service.**



Huntington Park, California, Stanley Monroe Horton was born. The eldest of eight children, he was followed by Donald Kirk, Harold Samuel, David Calvin (a “blue baby” who died about ten days after birth), Evelyn (Eva) May, Ruth Naomi, Clara Esther (who went by “Esther”), and Gertrude Lois (who died at age 3).



**Harry and Myrle (Fisher) Horton, parents of Stanley Horton, standing outside in Los Angeles in 1944.**

The Horton family lived in an apartment at the Upper Room Mission from 1916 until the congregation disbanded in 1924. A year before the Mission closed, Harry was crossing the street near their home one day when a bread truck whirled around the corner, hit him, and dragged him about ninety feet. Though God healed him from paralysis so he could walk again, he never regained full strength and eventually had to give up pastoring the Mission.

Since there were no Pentecostal churches nearby, Stanley’s mother began taking her children to a nearby Baptist church and also occasionally attended Angelus Temple. On Saturday afternoons Aimee Semple McPherson would hold children’s meetings. On one occasion — since Stanley’s father was well known as the pastor of the Upper Room Mission — Stanley was brought up to the platform to lead in prayer. There, Sister Aimee, dressed in

her white apparel, beckoned to Stanley to sit on her lap until it was time for him to pray. “She was a first rate sermonizer and a gracious lady,” Stanley recalls of his visits there in later years. “I will never forget her warm, friendly personality, or the marvelous musical cantatas she wrote.”

Times were tough in those years for this large family, but Harry and Myrle lovingly cared for the family’s spiritual welfare. They made prayer times, Sunday school, and church enjoyable for the children and told them of miracles they and other family members had experienced, such as the time the Lord told Stanley’s father to leave San Francisco the day before the 1906 earthquake.

In 1933 when Stanley took the English entrance exam at Los Angeles Junior College, the school asked for an essay on how the Depression was affecting his family. He wrote that it hadn’t affected them at all. “The family was already poor and had learned to get along on very little,” he recalls. “So the current economic situation altered nothing.” Whether there was a Depression going on or not, God was always faithful to provide.

### “You Got All the Brains”

Esther, Stanley’s youngest sister, always kidded him that since he was first in the family, he “got all the brains,” and since she was the last — she “got none.” Though this was not true, of course, Stanley was a gifted student with a high IQ. Because of this, he skipped five semesters, allowing him to graduate high school in 1933 at the age of 16. Two years later he graduated from LAJC as a chemistry major and in 1937 received a B.S. in science from the University of California at Berkeley. Feeling called by the Lord in 1940 to teach, Horton continued to follow the Spirit’s leading, walking through one open door after the next as God made a way for him to earn

an M.Div. at Gordon Divinity School, an S.T.M. at Harvard, and ultimately his doctorate from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in 1959.

In an era when the Pentecostal world was suspicious of higher education, Horton was a rarity — one of few Pentecostals in that day to have multiple graduate degrees. The fact that he was a product of the early Pentecostal revival did not deter him from education. “I couldn’t let anything else get in the way,” he remembers. “I just had to follow the Lord. I felt as though higher education was a calling, and that if I did not fulfill that calling, I would have been disobedient to the Lord.”



**Stanley Horton standing on the steps of his dormitory at Harvard in 1944.**

### A Man Ahead of His Time

In many ways, Stanley Horton was a man ahead of his time. One example is in the clarity and biblical wisdom he was able to offer even at a young age. During one youth convention in his teen years, the leaders were working on a statement that members would sign relative to not going to theaters and so forth. Some of the young people wanted to add that members should not go to roller skating rinks. Stanley got up and said, “I think we





**Stanley Horton at less than 1 year old.**

**Young Stanley Horton on the top floor of the Upper Room Mission in Los Angeles, about 1918-1919. The mission was on the second floor, and the Horton family lived on the third floor.**

**Stanley Horton, at about age 13.**

need to put a more positive emphasis on what we believe and what God wants us to do rather than putting all the emphasis on the negative.” He told them straightforwardly that things like theaters and roller-skating were not his problem, that there were larger temptations for him — like spending all his time reading fiction instead of studying! He asked the group, “Shall we add ‘Not reading fiction’ to our list? No, we need to let the Holy Spirit guide us about what we should and shouldn’t do instead of making a list.”

And so the group voted to not keep adding these types of things to their list.

That spiritual sensitivity appeared in later years not only in Horton’s teaching and preaching but also in his writing. Just as early Pentecostals who preceded him, he was willing — in Grant Wacker’s terminology<sup>8</sup> — to use all pragmatic means available to communicate the primitive gospel to all — and that included publishing. Horton began writing articles even in his early years at Central Bible Institute

(now Central Bible College), publishing his first book, *Into All Truth*, in 1955. Today one might expect a 1950s article entitled, “What is Happening to Church Music?” to lambast a certain new-fangled music of his time. However, Horton’s words published in CBI’s campus publication *The Centralite*, serve as timeless counsel to those who have ever experienced “worship wars” in the church:

There is no doubt, however, that change is the rule in the music of



a living Christian Church. ...Real Christianity, although it may and should continue to profit from the best in the past, can never become lost in the encrustments of time. The power of the Holy Spirit keeps it a living vital thing, a religion of the heart. ...[that] touches every part. Christianity reaches into all of life. ...And because Christianity is so closely interwoven with experience, its expression changes and it's moulded to fit the needs of the time. ...we must use the best of today's music to reach and teach the people. We must conserve the best of the past and pray that we may take it all and mould it into something that will be conducive to heartfelt worship to God.<sup>9</sup>

A third example of how Horton was a man ahead of his time is in his commitment to higher education — not only for himself, but also for the entire Pentecostal movement. The

evolution of AG graduate and seminary education involved several steps, and Stanley Horton stood squarely in the midst of that process.<sup>10</sup> More than anyone else in the AG, Horton became for students during the 1940s and '50s a model of advanced education and an example of one who did not lose his faith in the process. He was able

**More than anyone else in the AG, Horton became for students during the 1940s and '50s a model of advanced education and an example of one who did not lose his faith in the process.**

to demonstrate a unique and powerful blending of education, spirituality, and leadership to a generation of younger students who achieved their doctoral studies and went on to contribute to the life of the church in education.

Horton was also ahead of his time in moving outside the AG “box” without having to leave it. More important to him than the AG’s entrance into the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE) in 1942 was the establishment

of the Evangelical Theological Society (ETS) in 1949.<sup>11</sup> He joined the Society in 1951, not long after it was established.

Dr. Bob Cooley, who in 1970 served as president of ETS, remembers how Pentecostals during that time were not fully welcome in the broader Evangelical world. In those days, Pentecostals were considered anti-intellectual. So ETS, as a professional academic society, was a context in which Pentecostals could defuse the potentially harmful effects of that image.

Since Horton had earned degrees from Gordon-Conwell and Harvard, he was well respected for his scholarship, and this respect opened the door for other Pentecostals to join. Because he and others launched out into the wider world, they were able to show that following Christ into all the world was far more important than being restrained to the boundaries of the Assemblies of God.<sup>12</sup>

Horton’s commitment to “friend-





**Stanley M. Horton seated (second row, 5 from right) with the faculty and students of Metropolitan Bible Institute during the 1946-47 school year. Evelyn, his wife, is sitting to the right of Stanley.**

ship evangelism” — decades before it was a buzz word, and in an era when many were still leery of anything that smacked of “social gospel” — stands as a fifth example of his being a man ahead of his time. Ray and Joyce Peters were members of Ferndale Assembly of God in Michigan in the late 1950s when Horton — by that time authoring the AG’s *Adult Teacher* curriculum — came through to conduct training sessions. Ray still remembers the impact of this training upon their local church ministry. He says that during their one-week training session, Horton told the teachers that getting the gospel out and reaching people means more than just telling them they have to be saved.<sup>13</sup> Believers should embrace families, get involved with them, come into their homes, see if the families have any needs, and if they do — meet them at that point of need as best as possible. This might mean cutting their grass, playing with their kids, helping out single moms whose husbands may have left them, providing guidance for parenting — whatever one had to do

to help.

Finally, Horton was a man before his time in his commitment to racial healing. Martin Mittelstadt and Matthew Paugh point this out in their article, “The Social Conscience of Stanley Horton,” in this issue of *Heritage*. Stanley Horton’s commitment in the 1960s to encourage and inspire Central Bible College’s first known African-American student, Spencer Jones, made all the difference in this young man’s life.

Another young African-American student at CBC, now Church of God in Christ (COGIC) Bishop Lemuel Thuston, also reaped the benefit of Horton’s guidance and godly mentoring. Not only was Horton a remarkable example to him of academic excellence, spiritual depth, and Christ-like graciousness, but he also showed a personal interest in him — encouraging him as a young man doing undergraduate work when the way was difficult, spurring him on to enroll at the new Assemblies of God Graduate School (now Assemblies of God Theological

Seminary), guiding him in specialized studies at nearby Southwest Missouri State University, connecting him with Spencer Jones to do an internship in Chicago’s inner city, and providing him with the “first and only” scholarship he had ever received — one designated for students who planned to work in the inner city. “Horton was the inspiration for much of what I was able to accomplish and pursue academically and in other areas,” the Bishop recalls. “... I probably would not have finished if it was not for him.”<sup>14</sup>

Horton also played a role in racial healing in the early days of the Society for Pentecostal Studies. His conversations at that time with Bishop Ithiel Clemmons became a link that helped bring COGIC brothers and sisters on board; this, too, made a tremendous impact on Thuston who was a youth considering CBC at the time: “COGIC probably would not have been open to the risk of that kind of united collaboration had it not been for Stanley Horton.”<sup>15</sup>





**Horton family portrait taken in Springfield, Missouri, ca. 1954. Evelyn is seated in back. In the front (l-r) are: Stanley Horton, Jr., Stanley Horton, and Ed Horton.**

### A Man of Mission

With such a strong Pentecostal heritage and powerful intimacy with Christ at a young age, Horton's commitment to the Kingdom of God comes as no surprise. He had seen the power of God work healing in his own body and in numerous other family members. He had witnessed God's amazing provision for his large, struggling family during his formative years. He had discovered the joy of wholehearted worship to God in the community of the saints. This love for God and commitment to His people spurred on the young Horton to reach out to others. Overcoming his own timidity in order to do outreach in his teen and undergraduate years, Horton ultimately felt the call of God on his life in the sum-

mer of 1940.

By that time, Horton had spent three years in Sacramento busily working for the Lord — even singing in the choir. (As he recalls, "The choir director said he didn't mind if a person was a little flat now and then!") He thought he was doing what the Lord wanted him to do. During this time, he began thinking of going to graduate school for science. However, God had other plans.

One Sunday, Stanley's pastor, Rev. W. T. Gaston, announced a special prayer meeting to take place that afternoon. Stanley attended, and by about four o'clock, realized that everyone else was gone. Praying alone in the church, he felt an unusual presence of the Lord and heard an audible voice

speaking to him: "I want you to go back to school and prepare to teach in Bible school." As he would recount years later, "That was the furthest thing from my mind, and no one else would have thought of it either!" In fact, when he did decide to go, some of the people in the church told him he was foolish to leave his career in science. Regardless, Stanley would not be swayed by their doubts. He was sure he had heard the very words of God that day.

Two years later, during the Northern California-Nevada district summer camp meeting, Horton received a license to preach, and by the fall of 1941 entered Gordon Divinity School. Both as a graduate student and then as college professor, Horton found ways to integrate the academic world into

the practical life of the church — in preaching engagements, interim pastoring, and full pastoral ministry. After his second year at Gordon, he pastored in Monson, Maine. While teaching at Metropolitan Bible Institute in 1945 shortly after he and Evelyn were married, the young couple pastored in Morristown, New Jersey and subsequently in White Plains, New York. Later, during his early years of teaching at Central Bible Institute, he pastored two churches — in Strafford and Sparta, Missouri.

Teaching was Horton’s calling. He knew clearly that God had spoken to him, so everything he did — whether writing, speaking, editing, or global missions — was to that end. Eternity alone will reveal how many have come into the Kingdom and grown as disciples through his influence.

Horton’s global teaching efforts began in 1962 when he served as guest professor at the Near East School of Bible and Archaeology, Jerusalem, on a leave from CBI for a Holy Lands tour. In later years, he was privileged to go overseas to teach and minister at numerous theological schools. Foreign missions had always impressed Horton. “When I was a boy, every time a missionary would come and speak to us, I would go the altar and ask the Lord to call me to the mission field. But He never did! He called me to teach. Not until my old age did God give me wonderful opportunities to be on mission fields to see what He was doing — allowing me to go to 25 countries and every continent except Australia.”

Horton’s writing ministry over the years was also a fulfillment of his call to teach. In addition to his dozens of books and manuals, and his over 250 articles and reviews, beginning in 1952, he authored all of the volumes of the AG’s *Adult Teacher* Sunday school curriculum, until 1971. He also contributed the biblical exposition

to issues of the *Adult Teacher* from 1971-1978 and, with the exception of 1982, he wrote (or contributed to) several volumes until 1992.

In *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Gary B. McGee and Ed J. Gitre note that Horton

... became an influential writer in the AG at a time when only a few pentecostals were professionally trained at the graduate level in theology and biblical languages. Theologically, he has had a profound influence on the course of AG theology in the last five decades.<sup>16</sup>

He modeled a biblical scholarship that was practically applied. So if you read the adult quarterly for twenty-five years, you can see that the lesson material grew out of an academic understanding of Scripture but was very practical. It was the same with his articles and other books — a technical understanding of the biblical text but a remarkable way of translating that into a body of applied theology. ...he had a wonderful way to do that. His scholarship was never esoteric; it was for everyone. To be able to go from an exegetical theology to an applied theology was a real gift.<sup>17</sup>



**Editorial staff at the Gospel Publishing House in 1956. (L-r): Donald Johns, Stanley M. Horton, Ellis Martin, Dorothy Morris, Ralph W. Harris (editor-in-chief), Nicholas Nikoloff, and Mary Virginia Bryant.**

Over the years, Horton would receive letters or comments from AG constituents and leaders throughout the Pentecostal movement regarding how much the *Adult Teacher* materials had meant to them and helped them understand Scripture.

Bob Cooley, Horton’s student at CBI in 1949 and later his colleague on the faculty there, said of Horton’s writing:

In 1949, Horton began writing for the *Pentecostal Evangel*, publishing in 41 out of the last 59 years, and he began the Q/A column in 1992. Regarding Horton’s contribution to the *Pentecostal Evangel*, editor Ken Horn states:

Dr. Stanley Horton has been the unofficial theologian of *Today’s Pentecostal Evangel* for decades. He has not only helped teach and guide

our readers through his numerous articles and regular columns, he has also acted as theological advisor on many occasions. Many years of the *Evangel* bear the imprint, seen or unseen, of Dr. Horton.<sup>18</sup>

Horton also wrote for the *Encyclopedia Americana*, the *Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia*, *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, the *Complete Biblical Library* series, and copious other venues. In addition to serving as editor or contributor for dozens of books,<sup>19</sup> Horton also chaired the editorial committee for the *Full-Life Study Bible* and its 2003 revision, *Life in the Spirit Study Bible* — commonly referred to as the *Fire Bible* in foreign translations.

In 1976 Horton wrote *What the Bible Says About the Holy Spirit*, which many see as “the definitive text on that topic in universities and seminaries around the world.”<sup>20</sup> In his later years, he would look back on this biblical theology of the Holy Spirit as his most meaningful contribution, since the book was translated into more languages than any of his other works, and continued to be in use not only for decades but also around the world. This work has continued to impact the global family of believers — playing a role in the spread of Pentecostalism in developing countries by helping to disciple those who have come into a Pentecostal experience.

Dr. Bill Menzies, in the foreword to *Reflections of an Early American Pentecostal*, a book that grew out of Horton’s 1994 lectureship series at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, said of Horton’s writing:

A special gift of Dr. Horton’s is the ability to write plainly, simply, and directly. His humility comes across even in his style of writing. There is no pretense, no “guilding of the

lily” to create special effects — just unvarnished proclamation of truth as he sees it. The transparency of his character is evidenced by the fact that his message has not wavered over the years. He profoundly encountered God as a young man and has lived consistently in the light of his personal Pentecostal experience. ...Few people have contributed as much to the world of Pentecostal scholarship as has Dr. Stanley Horton. ...one who has not only articulated Pentecostal theology clearly and persuasively, but who has lived a transparently clear life that is an authentic reflection of his message.<sup>21</sup>

### A Man of Sacrifice and Generosity

During his years at Central Bible Institute, balancing the responsibilities of a heavy teaching load, writing the *Adult Teacher*, and raising his three children — Stan, Ed, and Faith, Horton soon became known for long work hours and little sleep. His neighbors sometimes reminded him that they noticed his light on late. One colleague, who lived five doors down



**Stanley M. Horton sitting at his desk in the Gospel Publishing House, working on the *Adult Teacher*, about 1955.**

from the Hortons for many years, noted, “For twenty-five years of his writing the adult quarterly, I dare say that a good bit of what he wrote was written after midnight — long hours, and for very little pay.”<sup>22</sup>

For many years, this young CBI instructor, who became known around the world for his scholarship, received \$1 an hour for writing the *Adult Teacher*. Though this income was paltry, it did help augment his salary from CBI, which in the early years was particularly low. Horton’s “magnificent salary” as he later would put it — when he was hired to teach for the fall of 1948 — was \$2,400 a year, paid at \$60 a week for forty weeks. The twelve weeks of summer he had to look for other work.

Ironically, though the Hortons did not have much in the way of finances or worldly goods themselves, they were very generous over the years to others. When they saw or heard about a need, they often gave, whether it was to help pay a bill, buy food, help with medical care, or cover school expenses. And they usually gave anonymously if they could get away with it, because they didn’t want any glory from it.

Only years later did one of Horton’s closest associates discover just how much he and Evelyn had given away. Riding together to a district function in Nebraska where both men were participants, this colleague discovered

... just how generous he and his wife had been, giving to every appeal that came and ultimately giving away so much of their resources. Because they had given so much away, they had no resources to buy a house of their own. But there was no bitterness in his quiet report to me. They really had always just trusted the Lord to meet all their needs. Surely they invested in eternal values!<sup>23</sup>



## A Man of Encouragement

Key individuals influenced Stanley Horton's life at various times when he was young — providing encouragement and spiritual insight just at the right moment. His mother, Myrle Fisher Horton; his uncle, Wesley Steelberg; his pastor, W. T. Gaston; his fellow Gordon student, Gil Dodds; and his CBI Dean, W. I. Evans were among those who profoundly impacted his life. In the same way that Stanley experienced a good word and godly support when he was young, he showed that same kindness onto the lives of those who would come after him.

One promising young student, Bill Menzies, first became acquainted with Horton upon arrival for his freshman year at CBI in September of 1949. Bill took Dr. Horton for several classes in the course of his three years and had great respect for this young, shy faculty member. At one point during Bill's first year, he began to get that restless feeling; he just had to go out and change the world. After all, the Lord was coming soon! "I didn't think I could stay in Bible School long enough to finish," he remembers, "because the world needed me!" Since Bill respected Horton so much, he chose him for counsel. He went into Horton's office and explained his predicament:

I still remember that very quietly in his humble, gentle way, he said, "Bill did God call you to CBI?" And I said, "Yes." He said, "Well you know, if you were completing what God had called you to, and if the Lord came before you graduated, don't you think he'd be pleased with you?" And I paused, I remember, and it registered that I was doing what I should do. After all, as Horton pointed out, Jesus put *His* apostles through three and one-half years of training!<sup>24</sup>

So Bill decided to continue school.

Making it through that crisis moment at CBI as a young freshman thanks to Horton's encouragement, Menzies not only graduated and served as commencement speaker, but also went on to become "one of the most highly-regarded educators in the Assemblies of God."<sup>25</sup> This young man who just *had* to go out and change the world certainly did so in countless ways — yet he was better equipped for the task because of a level headed, Spirit-directed teacher with whom he would eventually serve as a colleague and co-laborer on numerous projects.



**Stanley M. Horton at a lecture series where he was the featured speaker. Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS), Baguio City, Philippines, Feb. 15-18, 1994.**

One of those projects was the formation of the Society for Pentecostal Studies.<sup>26</sup> Menzies served as the first president for SPS in 1970 and as editor of its publication, *Pneuma*. He recalls that

At the seminary there was not much interest in SPS. Few wanted much to do with it and weren't supportive at all. But Stan Horton quietly helped me and encouraged me when very few people did. He went out of his way to attend the meetings and participate. He also served as president on one occasion. He saw

the value of such a society, and in that, he was ahead of his time.<sup>27</sup>

Horton's sustaining words were directed not only toward his students and colleagues. His gracious spirit and tender support flowed over onto his family, whom he loved greatly. His daughter Faith recalls:

Any time I had a problem or would come home from school upset about something, I could go up the stairs to my Dad's little office and tell him what had happened. I remember he would smile or look concerned and say something like, "You know, I felt just like that when I was your age." That always made me feel so much better, because it wasn't just *me*. And he always had some word of wisdom of how to handle it.<sup>28</sup>

Truly Stanley Horton's life has been a life well lived. He stands as an example of an upright man who has simply followed the leading of the Holy Spirit, committing body, soul, and spirit to obeying the Lord of his life. With his words and his writings he beckons us to Spirit-empowered service, with his spiritual insights he spurs us on to know God better, and with his humble smile he draws us in to be more like Jesus.✠



**Dr. Lois E. Olena is D.Min. Project Coordinator and Visiting Professor of Practical Theology and Jewish Studies at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary. She has**

**authored Holocaust curriculum, poetry in *Blood to Remember: American Poets on the Holocaust* and other venues, and most recently a chapter on the AG and race relations in *We've Come This Far: Reflections on the Pentecostal Tradition and Racial Reconciliation* ([http://www.agts.edu/encounter/encounter\\_order.htm](http://www.agts.edu/encounter/encounter_order.htm)).**

## Horton Biography — April 2009!

Watch for the upcoming release of the full-length Horton biography by Dr. Lois Olena — *Stanley M. Horton: Shaper of Pentecostal Theology*. The book will also include an exhaustive bibliography (posted at: [www.ifphc.org/Horton](http://www.ifphc.org/Horton)) and a supplemental theological chapter on Horton's Israelology, pneumatology, and eschatology by Dr. Ray Gannon, AGUSM Representative for Jewish Ministries and Director of Messianic Jewish Studies at The King's College and Seminary. Pick up a copy at General Council in Orlando this August or order your copy directly from GPH ([gph.org/1-800-641-4310](http://gph.org/1-800-641-4310)) after the book's April 2009 release.

## The Dr. Stanley M. Horton Scholarly Resources Endowment

To honor Dr. Stanley M. Horton's remarkable service to AGTS, to the Assemblies of God, and to the greater Pentecostal community over the past seven decades, AGTS has initiated the Dr. Stanley M. Horton Scholarly Resources Endowment Fund, in conjunction with the Pillars of the Faith initiative (See [http://www.agts.edu/partners/pillars\\_of\\_faith.html](http://www.agts.edu/partners/pillars_of_faith.html)). AGTS invites you to help reach its goal of \$25,000 for this endowment. Please go to: <http://www.agts.edu/more/horton> for more information, to contribute to the endowment, and to reserve your copy of Dr. Stanley Horton's biography today! (The book releases in April and will be shipped in May to those who contribute \$125 or more to the Dr. Stanley M. Horton Scholarly Resources Endowment.) Those giving \$250 or more toward the fund will receive a copy autographed by Dr. Horton.

Contributions can also be made by contacting the AGTS Development Office at 1-800-467-2487, ext. 1012.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Program for The Dr. Stanley M. Horton Pentecostal Heritage Lectureship Series at Evangel University, April 3-4, 2008.

<sup>2</sup>George O. Wood, letter to Stanley M. Horton in honor of his 90th birthday, May 6, 2006.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>According to Cecil Robeck's *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 94, 203, the Upper Room Mission began at 107 1/2 North Main Street, just four blocks from the Azusa Street Mission. It later moved to 327 1/2 South Spring Street, also about four blocks from the mission. In 1914 Fisher moved the Mission to 203 Mercantile Place and then to Kohler Street and in 1915 to 406 1/2 Los Angeles Street.

<sup>5</sup>Stanley M. Horton, "The Pentecostal Explosion at the Azusa Street Mission," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 2:3 (Fall 1982): 2-3. [Reprinted as "The Azusa Street Revival According to Stanley Horton," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 25:4 (Winter 2005-06): 30-33.] See also Horton's *Reflections of an Early American Pentecostal* (Baguio City, Philippines: APTS Press, 2001), iii.

<sup>6</sup>Agnes Ozman was the first person to speak in tongues at the "Topeka Revival" on January 1, 1901. This revival took place at the Bethel Bible School led by Charles Parham. Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004), 55-56.

<sup>7</sup>Evangel University Chapel Audio (Interview with Stanley Horton by William Menzies), April 3, 2008, available at [http://www.evangel.edu/Students/SpiritualLife/ChapelAudio/files/2008\\_0403\\_DrHorton\\_DrMenzies\\_Interview.mp3](http://www.evangel.edu/Students/SpiritualLife/ChapelAudio/files/2008_0403_DrHorton_DrMenzies_Interview.mp3).

<sup>8</sup>Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), 10.

<sup>9</sup>"What is Happening to Church Music?" *The Centralite*, December 14, 1955, 4.

<sup>10</sup>I am indebted to Dr. Robert Cooley for his description of the evolution of AG higher education in the early years; much of the material in this section is paraphrased from our discussion (Robert Cooley, personal interview by Lois Olena, Springfield, MO, August 28, 2008).

<sup>11</sup>See "How Did the ETS Begin?" Evangelical Theological Society, <http://www.etsjets.org/?q=faq> (accessed September 6, 2008).

<sup>12</sup>Cooley, personal interview, August 28, 2008.

<sup>13</sup>Ray Peters, interview by Lois Olena, Maranatha Village, Springfield, MO, May 17, 2008.

<sup>14</sup>Bishop Lemuel Thuston, telephone interview by Lois Olena, Springfield, MO, September 12, 2008.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>G. B. McGee and E. J. Gitre, "Horton, Stanley Monroe," in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 772-773.

<sup>17</sup>Robert Cooley, telephone interview by Lois Olena, Springfield, MO, August 28, 2008.

<sup>18</sup>Ken Horn, e-mail to Lois Olena, July 19, 2008.

<sup>19</sup>Even after "retiring," Horton served as General Editor for the Pentecostal Textbook series, Logion Press, from 1991 to 2000. See the exhaustive bibliography in the Horton biography for more details.

<sup>20</sup>Program for The Dr. Stanley M. Horton Pentecostal Heritage Lectureship Series at Evangel University, April 3-4, 2008. See also Evangel University Chapel Audio Interview with Stanley Horton by William Menzies, April 3, 2008.

<sup>21</sup>Horton, *Reflections of an Early American Pentecostal*, i-ii.

<sup>22</sup>William Menzies, personal interview by Lois Olena, Springfield, MO, April 10, 2008.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>See "Doris Dresselhaus Menzies Autobiography," Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, <http://ifphcseeninprint.wordpress.com/2008/01/23/doris-dresselhaus-menzies-autobiography/> (accessed June 7, 2008).

<sup>26</sup>See "Mission & Goals," Society for Pentecostal Studies, <http://sps-usa.org/about/home.htm#HISTORY> (accessed April 11, 2008).

<sup>27</sup>Menzies, personal interview, April 10, 2008. William Menzies and Stanley Horton served on the faculty of Central Bible College, and later both served on the faculty of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary during the 1980s.

<sup>28</sup>Faith Horton Stilts, personal interview by Lois Olena, Springfield, MO, August 2, 2008.



# The Social Conscience of Stanley Horton

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By Martin William Mittelstadt and Matthew Paugh

**Stanley Horton ranks among the most prolific authors, theologians, and educators of twentieth century Pentecostalism. His classroom teaching shaped thousands of young ministerial candidates preparing for Pentecostal pulpits. His writings molded the thinking not only of countless thousands of preachers but also Sunday school and Bible study teachers across North America and around the world. In the broader world of academia, where classroom performance and publishing often overshadow character, this would not prove true of Stanley Horton.**

Concerning Horton, Paul Elbert asserts: “His unfailing attention to duty, his life-long obedience to God’s call, and his charismatic and sacrificial love of God’s people enable us to recognize his true stature as one who historically follows in the train of giants of inner spirituality like Donald Gee... Dr. Horton has lived out before us those qualities of grace worth emulating.”<sup>2</sup> Indeed, while inspiring Pentecostals to previously unattained heights in academia, Stanley Horton continues to model outstanding character not only for educators but all those associated with the way of Jesus Christ.

The following sketch celebrates Horton’s personal contributions to Pentecostal thinking about two enduring moral

concerns. Ethical responsibilities during war and racial tensions rank among the most significant challenges of the twentieth century. Horton’s response to these quandaries, not revealed by his prolific pen or by biographers to date, provides the foundation for this personal portrait.

Two stories of social conscience emerged as Horton shared an unscripted personal testimony during a recent session at the Society for Pentecostal Studies conference at Lee University in Cleveland, TN (2007). The first tells of the young Horton as a conscientious objector in World War II, and the second of the relationship between a seasoned and encouraging professor and probably the first African-



American student to attend Central Bible College in 1968-1972.<sup>3</sup> These angles, previously unrevealed, add further color to an already outstanding portrait of a celebrated figure in Pentecostal history.



**Stanley M. Horton sitting in his dorm room at the University of California at Berkeley in 1937.**

### Conscientious Objector

Born in 1916, the youthful Horton grew up during troubled times. Following World War I, individuals began the challenging task of rebuilding their lives — while continuing to live in an era marked by ongoing economic, social, and political unrest. By the late 1930s, escalating tensions resulted in the outbreak of a Second World War. Horton, by now a college graduate, found himself at the point of a major decision. He states: “At that time, pacifism was quite commonly taught in our Assemblies of God churches and literature.” After the AG officially adopted pacifism in 1917, the young Horton read extensively from the available literature.<sup>4</sup> He recalls the strong support for this position from his pastor, W. T. Gaston, who had previously served as general superintendent of the Assemblies of God.

When President Roosevelt called for the draft, the cumulative effect of the AG position, the literature, and the church led Horton to a decision; Horton took his place

as a conscientious objector.<sup>5</sup> Make no mistake; this decision was by no means easy or without consequences. Many conscientious objectors, including those from the AG, often faced vilifying abuse for their lack of patriotism.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, Horton’s stance left him in an even smaller minority, since the majority of Assemblies pacifists chose the route of non-combatant service.<sup>7</sup>

In the years following WWII, Horton began to notice a slight shift in his pacifist position. As a young college professor, he noted adjustments based upon encounters with students returning from active duty. He recalled numerous testimonies of conversion while overseas and one student who received the baptism in the Holy Spirit while in a submarine. Horton tells of the migration of former soldiers to American Bible colleges:

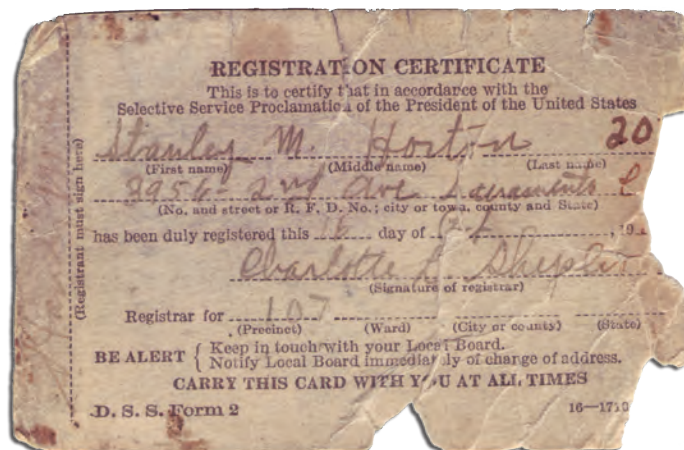
In my first teaching job at the Metropolitan Bible Institute in New Jersey, I think half of the students there were on the GI Bill... Some of them were saved while they were in the army or one of the services, and there wasn’t too much I could say about that, because I had to accept that the Lord had called them. They showed that

they really loved the Lord, and they have gone out to do great things. A number of those students I had went out, and some of them became district superintendents, evangelists, pastors.

Today, Horton continues to deliberate on the Christian response to war. In the current climate of war and a predominant culture of violence, he retains his earliest sympathies and returns to the Scriptures. Horton encourages Christian responsibility concerning the place of earthly kingdoms: “Of course, you can’t forget what Jesus said to Pilate, ‘If My kingdom were of this world, my soldiers would fight. But my kingdom is not of this world.’ So our primary concern needs to be for the kingdom of God and not primarily for the kingdoms of this earth.”<sup>8</sup>

While Horton recognizes the value of citizenship and its ensuing responsibilities, he maintains Christians must not lose sight of their higher citizenship, namely, the kingdom of God. With the same passionate conviction found in his teaching and writing, Horton calls for young people to engage the mission field: “We should encourage young people... to spread the gospel, and establish the church, and not be so quick to think that they can solve the world’s problems with war and conflict, which I still don’t believe that we can.”

Finally, Horton reiterates (as anyone with non-violent sympathies) Jesus’ paradigmatic role: “I think that Jesus was certainly the model... that Jesus was here to give His life in order to save others, rather than to take life. And that there was a complete change here in the way that God was deal-



**Stanley Horton’s Selective Service registration card.**

ing with people, now that Jesus had come.” In this manner, Horton reminds Pentecostals of the radical nature of the kingdom. Jesus provides a model for a holistic approach to the value of human life as the embodiment of the “good news of peace” (Acts 10:36).

When questioned about the current attention given to pacifism in the Assemblies of God, Horton provides a poignant response: “I stopped by the table there at SPS because they had information materials about pacifism. And I was surprised because that is the first time I have seen anything like that for all these years. And so I was surprised to see that there were still some who were encouraged about that. And I think there should be room for people who, by their own conscience, feel that they should be conscientious objectors.”<sup>9</sup>

In reflecting upon the current global crises, Horton recalls the difficulty of his own decision at the outbreak of WWII and calls for ongoing rigorous engagement of the Scriptures and our rich heritage on the question of the Christian’s responsibility during a time of war. We turn now to another sterling example of Horton’s commitment to the value of all human life that took place more than twenty years later during the pivotal 1960s.

### Racial Healing: The Story of Spencer Jones

As any student of race relations in the United States knows, the spring of 1968 marked an especially turbulent time. In the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King’s assassination, riots erupted in major cities and colleges throughout the nation. The rise of Black Power signaled a new era of militant activism. As these developments unfolded, Spencer Jones

walked onto the campus of Central Bible College (CBC) in Springfield, Missouri, to pursue “the call of God” on his life.<sup>10</sup> Fresh from receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit while serving in Vietnam, Jones was “shocked” to find himself as the only black student on campus. Indeed, based upon the available sources, he reportedly has the distinction of being the first African-American student to enroll at CBC.<sup>11</sup>

As the only African-American on campus in an overwhelmingly white

**“And I think there should be room for people who, by their own conscience, feel that they should be conscientious objectors.” – Stanley Horton**

city, Jones found the pressures almost too great to bear. He remembers, “There is no question about it. I was contemplating packing up and leaving.” One morning after chapel service, Jones was particularly discouraged and by himself.

Dr. Horton came to him in that moment with encouraging words. Horton affirmed Jones by stressing his belief in him and God’s call on his life. He invited Jones to his office. Whenever he needed to sit down and talk, he would find Horton’s door open. As Jones reflects on the encounter, he observes, “If my spirit was at a thirty, it lifted it to a ninety-nine.” Characteristically, Horton downplays his role: “He started talking to me and gave me an opportunity to talk to him and encourage him, and I guess with the help of the Lord I did encourage him, and he stayed and graduated.”

Notably, this pivotal interaction took place before Jones even had a class with Horton, but it would begin a mentoring relationship that would sustain Jones during his studies at

CBC. Jones notes that Horton would “go out of his way” to stop and talk to him. He would drop into the professor’s office where he would find a listening ear, needed exhortation, and a willing prayer partner. “He was that bridge that took me across troubled waters,” exclaims Jones. During his freshman year, the young student felt isolated and completely unaccepted: “The first year nobody knows you. Nobody cares about you. Nobody’s reaching out to you. Nobody wants to take you out to dinner or wants to be with you.”

However, due to Horton’s influence, the once discouraged Jones would find himself as student government vice president during his senior year in 1972 as well as

one of fourteen CBC students nominated to *Who’s Who Among Students*, an annual directory of outstanding students selected from American universities and colleges.<sup>12</sup>

Of course, Jones’s impact goes beyond his years at CBC. As Horton puts it, Jones “went to Chicago where he established a tremendous work for the Lord.” That “work” refers to the ministry of Southside Tabernacle in Chicago where Jones has ministered for more than thirty-six years. Through active involvement in and partnership with the community, including its schools and police force, the church has grown from twenty adults to more than 550 worshippers.

Under Jones’ guidance, the congregation has planted more than thirty churches across the nation and trained more than one hundred ministry workers.<sup>13</sup> Extending beyond Chicago, Spencer Jones has impacted the national Assemblies of God through his involvement in U.S. Missions, National Inner City Workers Conference, National Black

Fellowship, Evangel University, and the AG Executive Presbytery.

Throughout his years of ministry, Rev. Jones has not forgotten the role that Horton played during his college years: “I’ve always alluded to the fact that I am doing what I’m doing now because of his impact on my life. If he had not done that, I wouldn’t be doing what I’m doing for God in the cities of America.” As Horton mentored him, Jones now reflects that same “mentoring spirit” in his interactions with young ministers. He gives back by discerning “when people are going through some tough times whether it’s in a racial way, whether it’s in a financial way, whether it’s whatever.”



**Spencer Jones with the Blazers basketball team during his first year at Central Bible College in 1969. Standing (l-r): Sam Solivan, Ivan Stubbs, Scott Garner. Seated (l-r): Spencer Jones, John Cagle, David Mendez, and Jim Wallace.**

Just as Horton was a resource for him, Jones has made himself available for encouragement, prayer, and attentive listening.

But what was it that inspired a busy professor to take time to mentor this young African-American student? Not surprisingly, Horton points to God’s Word. Reflecting on Acts 10:24-48, he proclaims: “At the house

of Cornelius, when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles, that outpouring of the Spirit removed the barriers not only between the Jews and the Gentiles, but it was really intended to remove the barriers between Gentiles as well. So that recognizes that we have all become, as the apostle Paul says, brothers and sisters, with Christ as our elder brother, and God as our Father, that these racial and national and cultural differences are not the things that should concern us anymore.”

Along with the Scriptures, Horton draws inspiration from the formative years of the Pentecostal movement. He recalls that despite the many

criticisms leveled against its interracial makeup, the Azusa Street mission demonstrated the dictum that “the bloodline wiped out the color line.”<sup>14</sup> On a personal level, Horton relates an incident that his mother Myrle shared with him. He narrates: “She was 11 years old, when she received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. And I don’t know how the news got out so quickly, but the next day she went back to school and

all the children went to the other side of the playground except for the black girl that was there, and she came and played with my mother.”<sup>15</sup>

With this heritage in mind, Horton considers the contemporary church. He decries the unfortunate separation of Pentecostals into respective black and white camps. But he sees hope for reconciliation, if today’s Christians

return to the impetus of God’s Word. He observes, “What we see in the New Testament should show us that our local church should include people from all walks of society and in the community around, from all kinds, so that people looking at the church can say, ‘See all these people, they are different, but they love each other.’” Dr. Horton concludes, “Our churches need to become more concerned about reaching out to people of other races.”

## Conclusion

While Stanley Horton has undoubtedly had a profound impact on Pentecostal theology, these vignettes from his life serve as reminders that he did not divorce theory from practice. Indeed, as both incidents make evident, Horton’s reflections on Scripture acted as the driving force behind the choices he made in dealing with the difficult social problems of his time. In doing so, he offers a model for twenty-first century believers as they encounter an ever changing and complex society. As Pentecostals face complicated challenges, the preeminent scholar of the AG reminds them to remain faithful to the movement’s emphasis on Jesus’ paradigmatic role as well as the Spirit’s impact on their life together.

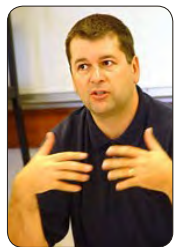
While providing a pattern for approaching new societal concerns, Horton points out that the issues of his day have not reached final resolution. As questions on involvement in war continue to linger, Horton acknowledges that Christians must not lose sight of their citizenship in the kingdom of God. In light of that higher citizenship, believers must continue to debate their role in the nations of this world. While some will choose to fight, there must remain room for those who object based on their understanding of God’s Word and their Pentecostal heritage.

Like concerns over engagement in war, racial tensions persist in society.



Unfortunately, Dr. Horton observes that these strains also continue in many churches. Nevertheless, he provides a vision of the church that consists of people from all races and ethnicities. As Pentecostals accept Horton's legacy, that ideal will motivate us to work for reconciliation in our day.

Though these stories present both example and inspiration, what may be most surprising is that they were largely unknown. When Horton disclosed the details at the 2007 SPS Conference, many attendees admitted shock at what they heard. While partly attributable to Dr. Horton's humility, how many other testimonies remain unrevealed? These narratives are part of our own story. As today's Pentecostals, we must uncover these testimonies and tell them, both to fill in our history and to glean models for living out our faith in turbulent times.✠



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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>See the following biographical sketches: William Menzies and Paul Elbert, "Biographical Sketch" in *Faces of Renewal: Studies in*

*Honor of Stanley M. Horton*. Paul Elbert, ed. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988), xvii-xx; Gary McGee and E. J. Gitre, "Horton, Stanley Monroe" in *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas, eds. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 772-3; and Gary B. McGee, *People of the Spirit: The Assemblies of God* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2004), 532, 535-7. See also Stanley Horton, *Reflections of an Early American Pentecostal* (Baguio City, Philippines: APTS Press, 2001).

<sup>2</sup>Menzies and Elbert, "Biographical Sketch," xix.

<sup>3</sup>We interviewed Stanley Horton in his home on April 26, 2007. All subsequent quotes by Horton are taken from this interview. The audio version of this interview is available through the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center ([www.ifphc.org](http://www.ifphc.org)). We wish to thank William Molenaar for his technical assistance.

<sup>4</sup>In 1917, the Executive Presbytery adopted a resolution declaring the AG to be pacifist. Pacifism remained the official position of the AG until 1967. Jay Beaman's *Pentecostal Pacifism: The Origin, Development, and Rejection of Pacific Belief Among the Pentecostals* (Hillsboro, KS: Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, 1989) provides a helpful historical trajectory of Pentecostal responses to non-violence.

<sup>5</sup>While Horton refers only to the influential teaching of Gaston, other early and important pacifist publications included Arthur Sydney Booth-Clibborn, *Blood Against Blood* (New York: Charles C. Cook, n.d.); Frank Bartleman, *War and the Christian* (n.p.: n.d.); Donald Gee, "War, the Bible, and the Christian," *Pentecostal Evangel* (November 8, 1930; November 15, 1930), and Donald Gee, "Conscientious Objection," *Pentecostal Evangel* (May 4, 1940).

<sup>6</sup>J. Roswell Flower, "The Plight of the Conscientious Objector in the Present World Conflict," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 3, 1943, 2-3. See further implications for pacifists via the recent PBS documentary entitled: "The Good War and Those Who Refused to Fight It" <http://www.pbs.org/itvs/thegoodwar/ww2pacifists.html>.

<sup>7</sup>Flower reports that no more than twenty young men took their place as conscientious objectors in contrast to the vast majority of young men who sought and gained status as non-combatants ("The Plight of the Christian in the Present World War," *Pentecostal Evangel*,

June 12, 1943, 2-3). Note also the article by then AG superintendent E. S. Williams, "... In the Case of War..." (*Pentecostal Evangel*, March 19, 1938, 1). Williams maintains the AG position but also suggests young men might enlist in non-combatant service: "Since none can escape some relationship to the war... could not such a one serve as a cook, a helper in a hospital, a stretcher carrier, a driver of an ambulance, or of a truck? There are many services which one could fulfill without 'armed resistance which involves the actual destruction of human life.'"

<sup>8</sup>Horton is paraphrasing John 18:36.

<sup>9</sup>Horton refers to the growing influence of the Pentecostal Charismatic Peace Fellowship. See [www.pcpf.org](http://www.pcpf.org) for further information.

<sup>10</sup>Mittelstadt interviewed Rev. Spencer Jones on November 9, 2007 in Springfield, MO. The audio version of this interview is available through the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center. All subsequent quotations by Jones come from this interview.

<sup>11</sup>Howard N. Kenyon, "Black Ministers in the Assemblies of God," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 7:1 (Spring 1987), 13. Kenyon constructs a valuable historical trajectory of AG policy on the credentialing of African-Americans.

<sup>12</sup>Jones is highlighted in the CBC student publication, *The Centralite* 23 (May 26, 1971), 1. He is also featured in this student publication with fellow CBC and Evangel College members of student government alongside the executive officers of the AG (*The Centralite* 22 [March 20, 1970], 3). Thanks to Lois Olena for this information.

<sup>13</sup>Kirk Noonan, "A/G Church, Police, Schools Partner for Strong Community," *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 11, 2001, 7; Hal Donaldson, "25 Things That Make the Fellowship Great," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 27, 2003, 11; John W. Kennedy, "Pastor Stays Active in Schools and Community," AG.org News and Information, June 14, 2005, available at [http://rss.ag.org/articles/detail.cfm?RSS\\_RSSContentID=3652](http://rss.ag.org/articles/detail.cfm?RSS_RSSContentID=3652)

<sup>14</sup>Here Horton alludes to Frank Bartleman's exclamation: "The 'color line' was washed away in the blood." See Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (South Plainfield, NJ: Bridge Publishing, 1980 [reprint of *How Pentecost Came to Los Angeles*, 1925]), 54.

<sup>15</sup>Horton gives further detail to this account in his *Reflections*, 14-15.



P. C. Nelson, founder of SAGU, in 1934.



# Daddy Nelson

By Bob Burke and Viola Holder

During the Great Depression and war years of the 1930s and 1940s, when the Assemblies of God was rapidly gaining members and developing its educational institutions, few theologians or educators left a greater impact on the Fellowship than did Peter Christopher (“P. C.”) Nelson. Nearly seven decades after his death in 1942, his scholarship in books such as *Bible Doctrines*, his simple explanation of the Statement of Fundamental Truths, and the school he started, now Southwestern Assemblies of God University (Waxahachie, Texas), are monuments to his continuing influence.

Nelson’s early life was anything but easy. He was born in a tiny village in Denmark in 1868. His father, one of the first Baptist believers in the country, was imprisoned for expressing his convictions. In 1872, the Nelsons sought religious freedom in America and settled in Iowa. Nelson lost his father in a farm accident when he was eleven years old, the first of many tragedies that struck the family. Nelson wrote, “Early in my life the cup of sorrow was pressed to my lips, and that had the effect of sobering me down, and making me more sympathetic with those whose life is filled with grief and disappointment.”<sup>1</sup>

Nelson was twenty years old when God called him to preach — and preach he did. He began his ministry in small Baptist churches in the Midwest. Once a group of elders interviewing him for a pastorate asked Nelson, “Would you stay with the Baptists or stand on the Bible?” Nelson answered, “I will stick with the Bible, no matter what becomes of the Baptists!”<sup>2</sup> That battle cry guided Nelson’s beliefs and teachings for the remainder of his life.

In his earliest pastorates, Nelson set a tone for preaching against wickedness and demanding his parishioners believe in the supremacy and inspiration of the Bible. After a particularly successful revival, he wrote, “Blatant wickedness was for the most part silenced, and I think everybody recognized the hand of God was in the revival.”<sup>3</sup> About the Bible, Nelson said, “The Bible is in itself a library. In it blends one golden stream of history, science, philosophy, poetry, prophecy, and theology — a stream, glorious as the running

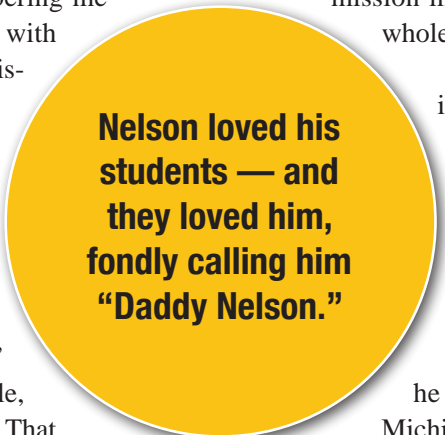
river which flows clear as crystal from the throne of God and the Lamb.”<sup>4</sup>

Nelson was passionate for missions. He became editor of the missionary department of the widely-read *Baptist Record*. His burning desire to promote the message of Christ to all the people of the world grew from reading the touching story of Ko Thah-Byu, a persecuted, but effective missionary. That desire led to what may be his perceived mission in life — to take “the whole gospel to the whole world.”<sup>5</sup>

From 1904 to 1917, Nelson was a leading Baptist evangelist in the Midwest. He held large and long revival campaigns in tabernacles, municipal auditoriums, opera houses, and circus tents in a dozen states. Local newspapers reported thousands saved and several new churches established.

Nelson was nearly 50 years old when he became Camp Pastor at an Army base in Michigan during World War I. There the soldiers began calling him “Dad.” A young man wrote in the camp newspaper, “We call him Dad because he watches over us and tries to lead us to the best and highest good in life.”<sup>6</sup>

A chance dinner with friends in 1920 changed Nelson’s life when he was introduced to the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Even after 31 years in the ministry, it was the first time Nelson had heard an utterance in an unknown tongue. He was impressed and immediately began seeking the experience. Four months later, Nelson was struck by an automobile while crossing a street in Detroit, Michigan. He was gloriously healed from severe injuries and promised God



**Nelson loved his students — and they loved him, fondly calling him “Daddy Nelson.”**





**Daddy Nelson leading a parade of Southwestern Bible School students in 1929. Parades were frequently used in Enid to publicize the school and its work.**

he would tell the world about his healing.<sup>7</sup>

A few weeks later, he received the baptism in the Holy Spirit, resigned as pastor of a large Baptist church in Detroit, and became a Pentecostal evangelist. He held his first campaign in Wichita, Kansas, in March and April 1921. Hundreds were saved and healed. His burning message was that soul-winning evangelistic work must be accompanied by a healing ministry.

A Baptist since birth, Nelson began looking in 1924 for affiliation with a Pentecostal fellowship. Several of his minister friends were connected to the Assemblies of God, a ten-year-old fellowship headquartered in Springfield, Missouri. Nelson wrote Assemblies of God General Chairman J.W. Welch about his interest in joining the fellowship. Welch was pleased that Nelson was “looking our way for fellowship.”<sup>8</sup>

In May 1925, Nelson and his wife, Myrtle, were granted ministerial credentials by the Assemblies of God. Almost immediately, Nelson received calls for revivals across the country and began writing regularly for the *Pentecostal Evangel*.

Nelson had long realized the

importance of biblical training when he founded Southwestern Bible School (SBS), now Southwestern Assemblies of God University (SAGU), in Enid, Oklahoma, in 1927. The first students who enrolled for classes in a two-story red brick former public school endured great hardship. Some did not own a fountain pen or a Bible. Money was so scarce that when a new student arrived and paid tuition, Nelson sent someone to the dime store to buy another plate, knife, fork, and spoon.<sup>9</sup>

Nelson loved his students — and they loved him, fondly calling him “Daddy Nelson.” The first word student Thelma Kelley ever heard Nelson utter was “Glory!” in his deep, bass voice. Whatever the circumstance in Nelson’s life, his first greeting each morning was “Glory!”<sup>10</sup>

Nelson was at peace with his God. Once when he was returning from a trip to collect food from churches in the area, the trailer hitch broke and the precious load of food for the students was strewn in a deep ditch. As Nelson surveyed the scene, he put his hands on his hips and bellowed into the darkness, “Glory to God! Glory to God! Glory to God!”<sup>11</sup>

Daddy Nelson worked long hours and slept little as he labored during the

Great Depression to keep the doors of SBS open. More than once he went to sleep during chapel and during services at the Enid Gospel Tabernacle where he was pastor. One evening Nelson was asked to lead the opening prayer before an evangelist assumed the pulpit. Beleaguered in body from another of his long trips to raise money for the school, Nelson stood and dismissed the congregation in prayer.<sup>12</sup>

The spirit of Nelson and his faculty, including Bible teacher Finis Jennings Dake, was captured by Blake Farmer, later president of SAGU:

At times the financial barriers seemed insurmountable ... It was difficult to secure funds for new construction or improvement purposes. A large amount of pledges had to be written off as worthless ... Although the school never gave up its overall educational objectives, there was a time when God’s blessing on Bible teaching ministry was the main reason for continuing its efforts. Few people in those days ever expected the school to progress beyond its present status.<sup>13</sup>

The importance of the working of the Holy Spirit was emphasized by

Nelson and his faculty members at SBS. A worthy servant of the students was Dean of Women Annie “Mother” Bamford, a woman of English descent who lived and breathed helping young Christian women.

During a chapel service in 1935, student Delia Howard described a “mighty wave of God” that came over the student body and many received the baptism. Howard remembered, “Like a blanket it came, heavy and convincingly real. Many went down under the weight of it ... Heaven came in waves of a mighty sea, rolling, breaking, never ceasing, surging through hungry souls.”<sup>14</sup>

There were many instances of Nelson leading his students at SBS in searching for a deeper relationship with God. During one service, student Helen Armentrout began singing in an unknown tongue, unknown to everyone except teacher Mollie Baird who had spent five years as a missionary in a remote area of India. At first Baird was too overcome to speak. When she regained some control of her emotions, she told the students Armentrout had sung in perfect Urdu, a language of northern India.<sup>15</sup>

In 1932, Hugh and Theola Tucker Jeter were the first missionaries sent out from SBS, a fact that made Nelson proud. The following year, Jeter’s sister, Louise, was called to Peru. Although she was only 19, too young for official missionary appointment, she was determined to go. In March 1933, someone gave her a dollar. Soon she had accumulated \$10 — enough to purchase a passport. Three months after Mother Bamford prayed over her lone dollar bill, Louise Jeter boarded a steamship in California and waved goodbye to a small group of saints on the dock singing, “There’s Power in the Blood.” Other than a few dollars, the only worldly possessions Louise had was a barrel of clothing and quilts provided by the Women’s Missionary

Council in Enid.

Louise later married missionary Alva Walker and became one of the most prolific published authors in the Assemblies of God missions program. Her *Great Questions of Life*, written for the International Correspondence Institute (ICI), is perhaps the most widely distributed religious writing, except for the Bible, in the history of printing.<sup>16</sup>

SBS, under the leadership of Nelson, began sending dozens of Assemblies of God missionaries to the field. The most famous was J.W. Tucker who graduated in 1938 and left for service in the Belgian Congo. He was murdered by the rebel Simbas in 1964 and his body thrown to the crocodiles. The seeds planted by Tucker in

plished scholar. In his formal education at leading Baptist seminaries, he mastered Hebrew and Greek before undertaking a study of Aramaic in which parts of Nehemiah and Daniel were written. He wanted to be able to read the entire Bible in the original languages. Throughout his years of study he learned a variety of languages and was proficient in 25 dialects.<sup>18</sup>

Sitting at a worn typewriter for hours at a time, Nelson wrote letters, position papers, tracts, and books about his passion for winning the lost and emphasizing Spirit-filled living for Christians. He was a regular contributor to Baptist publications until he switched his allegiance to the Assemblies of God. His probing articles and sermons became front-page



Perhaps the last photograph taken of Daddy Nelson and his faculty in 1941, including two future presidents of the college. Front row (l-r): unidentified, E. W. Moore, O. W. Keyes, Myrtle Nelson, Daddy Nelson, Mother Bamford, C. P. Robison, Cecil Lowry, and M. E. Collins, future president of SBI. Back row, third from left, Klaude Kendrick, future president of SBI and founding president of Evangel College, and his wife Gracie.

the country known as the Democratic Republic of the Congo have sprouted and grown into a thriving church. The tragedy of Tucker’s death was told in *He is in Heaven*, a best-selling book by his widow.<sup>17</sup>

Daddy Nelson was an accom-

material for several Pentecostal publications, including the *Pentecostal Evangel*. No other Pentecostal could write like Nelson in his generation. His words were sharp and challenging, but never harsh and unrealistic.

Nelson’s lasting legacy for the



# TABERNACLE MEETINGS

AT  
**CHESTER, SO. DAKOTA**  
*July 1st to 22nd, 1917*

Conducted by  
**NELSON**  
**Evangelistic Party**



REV. P. C. NELSON  
Evangelist



MRS. P. C. NELSON  
Soloist



REV. A. O. BROYLES  
Associate Evangelist

Plain Preaching      Big Chorus  
Junior Chorus      Sweet Solos, Duets, Etc.  
**Everybody Welcome!**

SERVICES:—Week nights at 8:30  
Sundays, at 10:30 a. m. and 3:00 and 8:00 p. m.

In 1917, Nelson and his evangelistic party held a tabernacle meeting in Chester, South Dakota.

Assemblies of God is *Bible Doctrines*, a commentary on its Statement of Fundamental Truths. It has been a textbook in the licensing procedure for tens of thousands of Assemblies of God ministers. Perhaps the book's greatest attribute is its simplicity. It was originally written as a series of articles for the magazine of the Assemblies of God youth program. Simple and easy to read, the text was combined into a full book to give doctrinal guidance to Pentecostals around the world.

In his earliest writings, Nelson's passion for lost souls was evident. "Winning souls is the Christian's trade," he wrote, in 1903 in the *Baptist Record*. "Whatever other occupation may engage his attention, the real business and purpose of a child of God is to bring souls to Christ."<sup>19</sup>

After Nelson was healed, God's power and desire to heal his children dominated his writings. In a tract for the Gospel Publishing House, Nelson wrote, "The Jesus who stopped and

touched the leper and made him clean and sent him home to his heart-broken family, will reach down and touch your heart and make you a new man or woman."<sup>20</sup>

Through a series of events, Nelson moved SBS to Texas in 1941 and the school eventually merged with the Shield of Faith Bible Institute and the Southern Bible Institute to become present Southwestern Assemblies of God University at Waxahachie, Texas.

In Nelson's last article printed in the *Pentecostal Evangel* before his death in 1942, he renewed his call for all Christians to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. "If you are a Jew," he wrote, "the baptism is for you. If a Gentile, the baptism is for you. It is for all flesh — all humanity. Glory to God!"<sup>21</sup>

The decades of 20-hour days and seven-day weeks of labor took their toll on Nelson. In the summer of 1942, he began stammering and became disoriented during a sermon. Helped from the platform, he was taken to his home where his health quickly deteriorated. He died on October 26, 1942. Reverend F. D. Davis, who succeeded Nelson as president of the Bible school, sent a telegram to Assemblies of God Headquarters, "Brother Nelson fell asleep today."<sup>22</sup>

Throughout his life, Nelson's superb gift of expression won him great acclaim. About preaching he said, "The gospel is good news. Sometimes it is necessary to preach something that does not sound like good news. Hell is not very good news, unless you tell them how to stay out."<sup>23</sup>

Nelson believed in equipping Christian young people for all walks of life, not just the ministry. He wrote, "Our school is a place where Pentecostal people may send their children for training, not only for Christian service, but for other callings in life. For a good Bible training is a foundation which all need no mat-

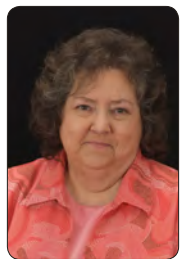
ter what their occupation.”<sup>24</sup>

In evaluating his lifelong service for the Kingdom, Daddy Nelson said:

If I have been able to reclaim erring ones and help them turn from their wandering and follow the footsteps of Jesus, and to inspire God’s children who are sorely tried and discouraged with the hopes of reaching the glorious goal, I have not labored in vain.<sup>25</sup> ❖



**Bob Burke, a fourth generation Pentecostal and a lifelong member of the Assemblies of God, practices law in Oklahoma City. He has authored or coauthored 90 nonfiction books. He is a member of the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame.**



**Viola Holder lives in Waxahachie, Texas, where she serves as the University Archivist for Southwestern Assemblies of God University.**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Paul Nelson. In 1966, Paul Nelson, the son of P. C. Nelson, began writing a biography of his father that was never published. He sent the narrative to the P. C. Nelson Library at Southwestern Assemblies of God University, Waxahachie, Texas, hereafter referred to as P. C. Nelson Library.

<sup>2</sup>Peter Christopher Nelson, unpublished autobiographical notes written from 1889-1928, P. C. Nelson Library, hereafter referred to as P. C. Nelson notes.

<sup>3</sup>*Baptist Record*, Pella, Iowa, November 1904.

<sup>4</sup>P. C. Nelson notes.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>J. W. Welch, letter to P. C. Nelson, September 3, 1924, P. C. Nelson library.

<sup>9</sup>Catharine, McCafferty, The P. C. Nelson I Knew Project, 1954, hereafter referred to as The P. C. Nelson I Knew Project, P. C. Nelson Library.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Hugh Jeter, interview, January 15, 1993, Archives of the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

<sup>13</sup>Blake Lynn Farmer, *Southwestern Assemblies of God College: Founding, Growth, and Development, 1927-1965*. Ed.D. dissertation—Baylor University, 1965.

<sup>14</sup>The P. C. Nelson I Knew project.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Louise Jeter Walker, interview, December 11, 1993, Archives of the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

<sup>17</sup>Hugh Jeter, interview, January 15, 1993, Archives of the Oklahoma Heritage Association.

<sup>18</sup>Nelson’s linguistic achievements were quite remarkable. According to a 1915 biographical sketch, written when he was still a Baptist minister: “As a student he especially distinguished himself in the languages, acquiring a good knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Japanese, Hebrew, Aramaic, the Scandinavian languages, and others. He has a reading knowledge of twenty-five languages and can conduct religious services in several of them. While at Rochester [Theological Seminary] he was translator for the Vick Seed Company, which all pioneers of Shelby county will remember and which at that time did a large business necessitating the use of fifteen foreign languages. He was tutor in Latin and Greek at Denison University and conducted a school of modern languages in one of the New York universities. For a number of years he took regularly more than a dozen foreign periodicals, receiving these in exchange for a paper in which he conducted the department of missions.” “Rev. P. C. Nelson,” in Edward S. White, *Past and Present of Shelby County, Iowa* [vol. 1] (Indianapolis, IN: B. F. Bowen & Co., Inc., 1915), 549-550. This claim about Nelson’s linguistic expertise is repeated in a self-published promotional tract from the same era, stating that he was a “natural linguist,

being able to speak several languages, and to read twenty-five.” “Fifteenth Season,” tract, Southwestern Assemblies of God University archives. Nelson’s academic prowess was legendary. Hugh Jeter recalled, “According to one report, the *Literary Digest* classified him as one of the very top men worldwide in the field of theology.” Hugh P. Jeter, “The P. C. Nelson I Knew,” *Assemblies of God Heritage* 13:4 (Winter 1993-94): 14. While the article from the *Literary Digest* has not been located, the story has been widely repeated and is firmly etched in Nelson lore.

<sup>19</sup>*Baptist Record*, July 1903.

<sup>20</sup>P. C. Nelson, “The Double Cure” (Evangel Tract No. 471, Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Missouri, [1931?]).

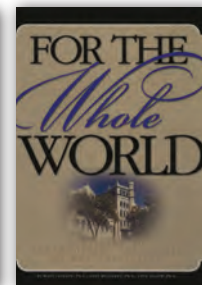
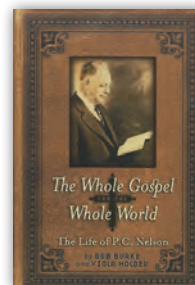
<sup>21</sup>P. C. Nelson, “Answers to Questions Concerning the Baptism in the Spirit,” *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 19, 1942, 7.

<sup>22</sup>F. D. Davis, telegram to Assemblies of God Headquarters, October 26, 1942.

<sup>23</sup>P. C. Nelson notes.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.



**This article was adapted from: *The Whole Gospel for the Whole World: The Life of P. C. Nelson* (2008) by Bob Burke and Viola Holder. For another look at Nelson and the school he founded, see: *For the Whole World: A History of Southwestern Assemblies of God University* (2003), by Mary Jackson, Gary McElhany, and Loyd Uglow. Both books are available from SAGU for \$24.95 and \$19.95, respectively, plus postage.**

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**Joseph Smale standing on the platform inside First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, in 1898. This is where the 15-week revival of 1905 took place. Used by permission. Courtesy Archives of First Baptist Church, Los Angeles.**



# Preparing the Way for the Azusa Street Revival: Joseph Smale, God’s “Moses” for Pentecostalism

By Tim Welch

According to early Pentecostal journalist Frank Bartleman, William Seymour was God’s “Joshua” at Azusa Street, where he led the people into the “promised land” of Pentecostalism; whereas Joseph Smale was God’s “Moses” — leading the people as far as the “Jordan,” though he himself never got across.<sup>1</sup>

Who was Joseph Smale, how did he prepare the way for the Azusa Street revival, and why has his story been largely forgotten?

For over a century Pentecostal historiography has recognized Smale, a British Baptist pastor, as one of many significant figures involved in the chain of events leading up to the 1906 Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles, which was one of the focal points of the emerging Pentecostal movement. Attention has naturally concentrated upon other more prominent characters in the emergence of Pentecostalism, overshadowing Smale’s unique and catalytic contribution.

## Formative Years

Joseph Smale was born into a working class family in Cornwall, England in 1867, the youngest of five children. His father worked as a copper and tin miner; his mother as a charwoman. The necessity for employment forced a family move to the neighboring County of Somerset during Joseph’s early childhood.

It is worth explaining the significance of these geographical locations, because they provide important contextual background for Smale’s formative years, given that both Cornwall and Somerset had experienced “a rhythm of revival,” especially amongst Wesleyan Methodists, throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> For example, in 1869 a revival had broken out in a town close to Smale’s home, which lasted three months with 150 people converted. This work of God was attributed to “the earnest prayers of the Methodists

in the town and to the unity with which both Wesleyans and Bible Christians followed the lead of the Holy Spirit.”<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, evidence of such a spiritual climate is substantiated by Smale’s own conversion in 1881, when at age 14 he became a Christian “in a Wesleyan chapel, by a Baptist preacher.”<sup>4</sup> Soon after that Smale sensed a call to ministry and began to conduct services, the Lord “sealing with His approval the word preached, by the salvation of many souls.”<sup>5</sup> However, by his own admission Smale lacked training in those early years of Christian service, which led him to apply to The Pastor’s College in London, founded by English Baptist preacher and author Charles H. Spurgeon.

## Spurgeon’s College, London

It was for poorer students such as Smale that The Pastor’s College (now called Spurgeon’s College) had been established in 1856. The lack of money was not regarded as a legitimate reason to preclude anyone from receiving training to fulfill the call of God upon his or her life, especially if the person had an irresistible urge to preach the gospel.<sup>6</sup> After having been personally interviewed by C. H. Spurgeon, the twenty-year-old Smale was invited to begin a three-year theological training course in 1887.

Spurgeon’s influential teaching on pneumatological themes indicates some formative strands for Joseph Smale’s



**C. H. Spurgeon,** founder of The Pastor’s College in London that Joseph Smale attended.



own convictions about the need for, and the possibility of, Holy Spirit power. In Spurgeon's estimation any true revival would unquestionably herald "a season of glorious disorder."<sup>7</sup> Consequently this particular student of Spurgeon imbibed a robust Calvinism interlaced with a heightened expectation for God's power to be displayed with an increase of signs and wonders.<sup>8</sup>

The life and ministry of Joseph Smale establishes a link between C. H. Spurgeon and the development of Pentecostalism. The Calvinist Spurgeon, then, could be described as an important root of Pentecostalism, in addition to the more frequently mentioned Wesleyan and Keswick roots. To Smale, Spurgeon's teaching was simply a balance of "Word and Spirit."<sup>9</sup>



**Joseph Smale's student portrait, at The Pastor's College, London, 1887.** Used by permission. Courtesy of Spurgeon's College Archives.

### On to Prescott, Arizona

Smale was ordained in 1890. His first pastorate, at Park Road Baptist

Church, Ryde (on the Isle of Wight), lasted only twenty-eight months. In 1892 Joseph Smale joined the growing army of those from Spurgeon's college who were going to pastorates overseas.<sup>10</sup> In October 1892, twenty-five-year-old Pastor Smale left England for North America to begin his second pastorate in the frontier town of Prescott, Arizona.

The embryonic congregation, called Lone Star Baptist Church, was spiritually and culturally engaging with the transient population in the busy mining town of Prescott, which was attempting to build an infrastructure with businesses in their infancy. All of "this made the pastors feel insecure. The salary was low, housing poor and the church members few."<sup>11</sup>

### Marriage and Bereavement

Despite these tough pioneering days in the church at Prescott, Smale gained a measure of relief in the form of marriage to an English bride, Helena Dunham. Helena endeared herself immediately to the people of Prescott, teaching a Sunday school class of young children, leading and speaking at church Bible studies,<sup>12</sup> and supporting Joseph as a "beloved wife, wise counselor, and efficient helper."<sup>13</sup>

However, after just thirteen months in Prescott, Helena Dunham Smale died at the age of 27, following the birth and death of their first baby.<sup>14</sup> These were dark and painful days for Joseph Smale, having buried his baby and then laying his wife to rest at Prescott Cemetery.

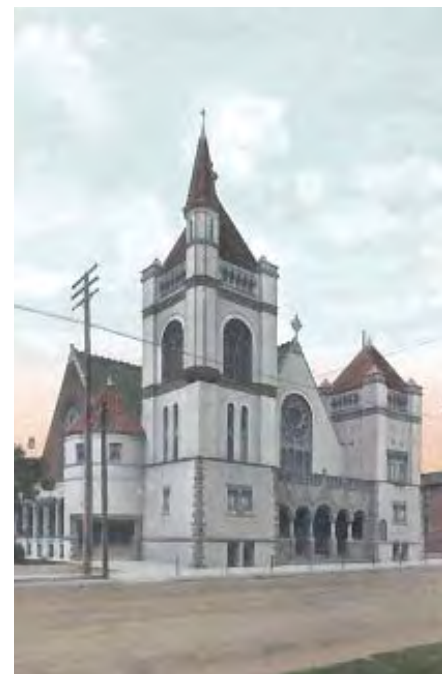
Amidst his joys and sorrows, all indications point to Smale having established a maturing church using his cluster of giftings as a missionary pastor-evangelist-teacher. During his four years in Prescott, Lone Star Baptist Church had grown from 43 to 125 members, and with his increasing popularity and noted speaking ability,

his wider connections brought Pastor Joseph Smale to the attention of a prestigious church in Los Angeles.

### First Baptist Church, Los Angeles

As Smale commenced his third pastorate at First Baptist Church of Los Angeles in 1897, he informed his new church that they were "looking for a revival, and several signs of it are already with us."<sup>15</sup> But despite his early resolve, Smale's early years at First Baptist Church were mixed with extreme contradictions.

Seven hundred new members joined the church in the first five years,<sup>16</sup> yet attempts to steer the prominent church in the direction of an anticipated revival were hampered by a continual stream of church conflicts and personal disappointments. Furthermore, all of these battles were aired publicly in the Los Angeles press, with sensationalized headlines such as "Warfare Breaks Out in First Baptist Church!"<sup>17</sup> These problems contributed to the deterioration of Smale's health and, by 1904, he was at the point of burnout.



**First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, taken from a postcard.**

## Marriage, Separation and Divisions

Behind the scenes, Smale's second marriage to Alverda Keyser in June 1898 broke down from the outset. They remained separated until their divorce in 1910. Divisions in the church became increasingly apparent, as many factions emerged within the large congregation over various issues, particularly regarding Smale's dominant leadership style. By 1903, the number of disaffected members had grown, antagonistic business meetings were frequently adjourned after midnight, over 100 members had left to join Temple Baptist Church, and conflict with the area Baptist Convention ensued.

It was during this time of brokenness and conflict that revival broke out. Smale journeyed to the Welsh Revival in 1905 and became instrumental in the revival fire spreading from Wales to California.

Pentecostal histories generally identify Smale's journey to Wales as some form of "scouting" mission. But, in reality, his decision to visit Wales came about because of one simple fact — Joseph Smale was a devastated man. Within a decade his first wife had died; his second marriage had split apart; his church was divided; and his health had deteriorated. Smale, a broken man, was looking for spiritual solutions to his problems. Smale's brokenness helped to set the stage for the Azusa Street revival.

By 1904, Smale's absence from the pulpit due to ill health was becoming more frequent. In July 1904 the church members agreed to send Smale abroad on an extended vacation for "six months or such time as he shall be fully recovered... providing for him a trip to England and the Holy Land."<sup>18</sup> Some members later admitted their

hope that he might not return to Los Angeles!<sup>19</sup>

## Fifteen Weeks of Revival at First Baptist (1905)

After nine months away, Smale was given a grand welcome home reception by five hundred church members, presenting him with \$150 in gold. Then, on Sunday, May 28, 1905, he preached his first sermon since his return. His sermon title was "The Great Welsh Revival."

"At the close of the sermon, the Pastor invited all those who were not right or felt they wanted to get nearer to God, to come forward and kneel. At least two hundred people came. Prayer was offered and there followed a general confession of sin and an asking of forgiveness from each other. The

**Smale journeyed to the Welsh Revival in 1905 and became instrumental in the revival fire spreading from Wales to California.**

Spirit was strongly manifest."<sup>20</sup>

Prayer and praise services were then held every afternoon and evening during the week. Significantly, these services attracted people from churches across Los Angeles. The Holy Spirit's power was evident at every meeting, and phenomena common in other revivals started occurring. The services were marked by frequent testimony, prayer, and praise, and the pastor often had no chance to preach.

The weekly advertisement in the *Los Angeles Times* was altered in 1905 to incorporate the "Word and Spirit" dimension, reading: "The First Baptist Church of L.A. is a fellowship for evangelical preaching, evangelical teaching, pentecostal life and pentecostal service."<sup>21</sup>

By the tenth week, with momen-

tum gathering, the church clarified the purpose of the daily prayer and praise meetings: "The subjects of prayer have been, first for a Pentecost; second, for the infilling with the Holy Ghost of all Christian believers; third a reversion of the Church of Jesus Christ to Holy Ghost administration; and fourth, the conversion of sinners."<sup>22</sup>

Church members disagreed over how the church would be administered by the Holy Ghost. Smale decided that the church should discontinue the services of the choir leader, claiming that the Holy Spirit was instead leading the meetings.<sup>23</sup> This resulted in the choir threatening strike action and the first formal objection to the daily meetings for prayer. But it was lodged by only one of the deacons, along with the revealing comment by his wife, who asked Smale if "these people [Christians from other churches] could not be made to remain away from the Wednesday night meetings so that we can have our own little family and the Pastor to ourselves."<sup>24</sup>

Many histories give the impression that the entire board of deacons reacted against Smale, resulting in his forced resignation. In reality only one leader, Deacon Dozier, requested a special meeting of church members "to consider the Pastoral Relations." But this was voted down by the board of deacons, with their unsuccessful request to Deacon Dozier to "stop his opposition and fall in line with the church."<sup>25</sup>

That same afternoon, Sunday, September 10, 1905, Smale decided not to continue as pastor and tendered his resignation. Aware of the other six deacons' support, Smale wished to avert further bad publicity for the church. He also admitted to being "in need of a rest," after the strain of two





The Azusa Street Mission as it would have looked in 1906 when Joseph Smale visited.

meetings every day for the previous fifteen weeks.<sup>26</sup>

### First New Testament Church, LA

Smale immediately set out to start a new congregation organized along revival lines. Within eight days of Smale's resignation, the inaugural meeting of his First New Testament Church was convened at the Burbank Hall theatre.<sup>27</sup> This was a pattern not dissimilar to other Pentecostal congregations that, as historian Grant Wacker observes, "particularly liked to take over the devil's warehouses – vacant saloons and dance halls ranked high on the list – to turn them into houses of worship."<sup>28</sup>

Joined by about 225 other Los Angeles-area Christians, mostly from First Baptist, Smale had the opportunity to implement church life and practice in "new wine skins," with the motto: "Under the Headship of Christ." According to Smale, the revival of the previous fifteen weeks transferred effortlessly from First Baptist to Burbank Hall, under the power of the

Spirit.<sup>29</sup>

### The Pentecostal Blessing

In the autumn of 1905 Smale embarked on a preaching series entitled, "The Pentecostal Blessing,"<sup>30</sup> clearly stating to the newly-formed First New Testament Church that his theology had been blessed and shaped through "the hard school of life's experience."<sup>31</sup> Smale placed a special emphasis on personal, practical Christian discipleship and on ecclesiology. The intersection point between these two emphases, according to Smale, was found in a deepening Pentecostal experience of "The Holy Ghost" referred to as "The Gift," which was "an experience distinct from regeneration" and illustrated in Acts 2:38.<sup>32</sup>

Smale observed that "The Gift" of the Spirit was already evident in tangible ways at the New Testament Church through members' unity, the creation of a "color blind" congregation, salvation, personal holiness, and obedience to world evangelization.<sup>33</sup> But as for glossolalia being "the" or

"an" initial sign of Spirit baptism, Smale was open, though not emphatic. Joseph Smale played a catalytic role in an increasingly intense, expectant spiritual climate in Los Angeles.

### The Gift of Tongues and Azusa Street

This intensity was heightened following the 1906 Easter Sunday service at Smale's church during which Jennie Moore, who later married Azusa Street revival leader William Seymour, spoke in tongues. Pentecostalism in Los Angeles was in its infancy. The outbreak of tongues speech at Smale's church occurred less than two months after William Seymour had arrived in Los Angeles, but before his small congregation relocated to the mission on Azusa Street. The arrival of the gift of tongues and "holy laughter" over subsequent months at Burbank Hall came to be widely reported by local newspapers.<sup>34</sup> Historian Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., described how "the place was electrified," causing diverse reactions. Some shouted praises, and others who had been to William Seymour's meet-

ings at the Asberry house joined in by speaking in tongues, while others “were so frightened they jumped for the doors.”<sup>35</sup> Bartleman’s eyewitness account added, “the people gathered in little companies on the sidewalk after the service inquiring what this might mean. It seemed like Pentecostal ‘signs.’”<sup>36</sup>

## Smale and “The Holy Rollers”

By July 1906, such experiential manifestations of “heaven on earth” at First New Testament Church were increasing in number, intensity and extraordinariness. This was paralleled, if not trumped, by reports of the Azusa Street revival. Press accounts polarized established churches and leaders, dividing those who felt these were authentic revivals from those who were vehemently opposed to what they considered to be deception and works of the devil.

One should not underestimate the importance of Smale’s and First New Testament Church’s identification with the emerging Pentecostal revival at Azusa Street and at other burgeoning Pentecostal mission works in those early months. Countering criticism emanating from both the daily newspapers as well as the churches, Joseph Smale provided vital ambassadorial support, lending his credibility to the vulnerable early Pentecostal movement.<sup>37</sup>

Critical depictions of Pentecostal phenomena published in newspapers also stirred significant interest in the revival. One *Los Angeles Times* article, titled “Rolling on Floor in Smale’s Church,” described the following scenes:

- “Muttering an unintelligible jargon, men and women rolled on the floor ...”
- “... screeching at the top of their

voices at times, and again giving utterance to cries which resembled those of animals in pain.”

- “There was a Babel of sound.”
- “Men and women embraced each other in the fanatical orgy.”
- “One young woman jumped from her seat, screaming ‘Praise Him! Praise Him! Praise Him!’ and then fell in a writhing fit of hysterical weeping prone on the floor. None of the worshippers went to her rescue. She became unconscious and was left for hours where she had fallen.”
- “... a pretty young woman scarcely more than 18, who seemed greatly affected by the condition of the girl who had fainted. She was fashionably dressed. Suddenly she arose and began to cackle like a hen. Forth and back she walked in front of the company, wringing her hands and clucking something which no one could interpret.”<sup>38</sup>

In response to such publicity, opposition mounted among many of the established pastors and churches who belonged to the Los Angeles Church Federation. Robeck explained how the Federation “raised serious questions” about what they and many regarded as “out-of-control fanaticism.”<sup>39</sup>

However, Joseph Smale decided to publish an open letter to the Los Angeles Church Federation in the *Los Angeles Express*.<sup>40</sup> In this letter, Smale issued a clarion call that “the churches must cease their unholy rivalries, their living for carnal worldly display, [and] their glorying in denominationalism.”<sup>41</sup> In Robeck’s estimation, Smale was “the ideal mediator between the Azusa Street Mission and the Los Angeles Church Federation.”<sup>42</sup>

It seemed as though members of the

Los Angeles Church Federation could agree on little except their opposition to the revival at Azusa Street and First New Testament Church. The *Apostolic Faith*, published by the Azusa Street Mission, noted: “In California, where there had been no unity among churches, they are becoming one against this Pentecostal movement.”<sup>43</sup> Smale was a bold advocate for the Pentecostal revival during the summer months of 1906. However, Smale grew weary of what he perceived to be the movement’s excesses and withdrew his support.

Why did Smale, who was one of the catalysts of the Azusa Street revival, grow disillusioned with the movement? Interestingly, the question appears to have an answer bound up in personal hurt and theological differences. It happened when Henry Keyes, one of Smale’s most loyal friends and supporters at First Baptist Church and the New Testament Church, vehemently opposed Smale when Smale rejected a prophetic word brought by Keyes’ daughter as false and prompted by an evil spirit.

Consequently, by September 1906, the Keyes family and about 50 dissenters had split with Smale, starting the “Comeouters” group, described in the press as “outrivaling the orgies conducted on Azusa Street” with claims of power to raise the dead.<sup>44</sup> Smale was moving in a very different direction.

Alongside these events was an underlying question: “Could Spirit baptism be validated?” Smale was consistent in his teaching, even throughout the momentous days of July 1906, that the gift of tongues was not for every Christian. He based this view upon 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, positing that the gifts are given “to one” and then “to another”, but most definitely they are never distributed in terms of “to all is given.”<sup>45</sup>

Smale’s view on the gift of tongues



immediately set him apart from the congregation at Azusa Street. Still, Smale was quick to tell his own church that he:

maintains a cordial attitude toward them [the Azusa Street meetings], and will continue to do so as long as God's Spirit works in them. He has a love for every child of God, but is obliged to differ from some of the doctrinal positions taken by the leaders of the Apostolic Faith Movement.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, there is no evidence that Smale ever did receive the gift of tongues. Whether the gift of tongues bypassed Smale, or he bypassed the gift, is unknown. Despite many of his church members leaving and heading for the Azusa Street Mission and the Upper Room Mission led by Henry Keyes and Elmer K. Fisher, Joseph Smale continued his ministry of preaching and mission work with a heightened sense of Pentecostal expectation.

## Holy Spirit Mission Strategy

For Smale, baptism in the Spirit should lead Christians to regain "soul-winning" power, and so, in keeping with his Spurgeonian roots, Smale encouraged the New Testament Church in local and global mission endeavors. Mrs. Davis, "an old woman" in Smale's congregation, came forward to go as a missionary to Jerusalem in 1905.<sup>47</sup> Then the most significant mission strategy emanated from the revival fires of First New Testament Church, when in March 1907 Smale traveled to China with the sole purpose of establishing a "Gospel Mission." Smale detailed his trip in a tract, "An Apostolic Journey in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century."<sup>48</sup> The "China New Testament Church" which was formed on Smale's "apostolic" visit to Pakhoi in 1907 was still in existence when he

returned to China in 1921.

## Smale's Final Years (1911-1926)

Smale continued to pastor First New Testament Church for several more years after the Azusa Street Revival. Then in 1911 he married again, and with his new bride, Esther Hargrave, they left Los Angeles with the intention of becoming missionaries to Spain. But having spent the winter in Spain, their plans altered and Smale was invited to become the pastor of an independent church in South London, very close to Spurgeon's College. During his short ministry here, Smale established the formation of the Spanish Gospel Mission in 1913, which continues to operate to the present day.



**Joseph Smale, ca. 1900.**

The Smales then moved again, with Joseph becoming pastor of Unity Chapel Bristol in late 1913. This church, with its earlier connections with George Müller, operated along Brethren lines. It was a faith work, meaning the pastor "received no stated salary," and its church leaders settled business only "by the consent of an undivided church."<sup>49</sup> Smale's pastorate here, as elsewhere, was marked by its brevity.

By 1916 Smale had returned to Los Angeles, where he pastored Grace Baptist Church until his death in 1926 at age 59. Near the end of his life, Smale issued a severe indictment of

the movement that he had helped to start. He wrote, "Pentecostal denominations have committed a blunder in interpreting the acts of the Apostles as descriptive of the Church of this parenthesis age... So untrue an interpretation is responsible for the orgy of disorder as seen in the Pentecostal movement of our times; and the confusion, division and the schismatic life and spirit so characteristic of present day organised Christianity."<sup>50</sup>

However, Joseph Smale remained convinced throughout his ministry that the Church and every Christian believer needed a personal Pentecost. Such a baptism of the Spirit, in his view, would "baptize with heavenly spiritual life"<sup>51</sup> so that believers could be "filled for the work of evangelism."<sup>52</sup> He downplayed the gift of tongues, not wanting to restrict the work of the Spirit "to a lingual exercise of the throat."<sup>53</sup>

Smale's contribution to Pentecostal and Baptist history touches on numerous issues that are very relevant for 21<sup>st</sup> century Pentecostals. Bartleman's identification of Smale as Pentecostalism's "Moses" figure is an enduring reminder both of Smale's significance in the movement's infancy, and of the loss of his potential leadership after his departure from the movement in 1907. A study of his life enables further reflections regarding the seeming dilemma between "freedom in the Spirit" and the organization of Spirit-led activity.✠



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Front and back covers of an issue of Smale's *Truth* journal. Courtesy of the Smale Family Archives.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Bartleman, a participant at the Azusa Street revival (Los Angeles, 1906-1909), went on to become the most prominent early historian of the revival. Frank Bartleman, *Azusa Street* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1980), 62.

<sup>2</sup>David W. Bebbington, "Culture and Piety in the Far West: Revival in Penzance, Newlyn, and Mousehole in 1849," in *Revival and Resurgence in Christian History*, ed. Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: Boydell Press, 2008), 225-250.

<sup>3</sup>Lewis H. Court, *The Romance of a Country Circuit: Sketches of Village Methodism* (London: Henry Hooks, 1921), 32.

<sup>4</sup>"Baptist Ordination at Ryde," *Isle of Wight County Press Newspaper*, May 17, 1890, 6.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup>J. C. Carlile, *C. H. Spurgeon: An Interpretative Biography* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1933), 171.

<sup>7</sup>C. H. Spurgeon, Sermon: "The Pentecostal Wind and Fire," *Metropolitan Pulpit*, September 18, 1881.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>9</sup>Joseph Smale, *Our Church Quarterly* (First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, December 1897), 1.

<sup>10</sup>Ian M. Randall, *A School of the Prophets* (London: Spurgeon's College, 2005), 94.

<sup>11</sup>First Baptist Church, Prescott, Arizona, *The Ninetieth Anniversary 1880-1970*, 20.

<sup>12</sup>*Arizona Weekly Journal Miner*, January 3, 1894, 6.

<sup>13</sup>"In Memoriam: Obituary of Helena Dunham Smale," *Arizona Baptist Association Minutes*, 1894-1895, 13.

<sup>14</sup>*Arizona Weekly Journal Miner*, January 30, 1895, 5.

<sup>15</sup>Joseph Smale, *Our Church Quarterly* (First Baptist Church, Los Angeles, December 1897), 1.

<sup>16</sup>"Five Years of Success," *Los Angeles Herald*, February 6, 1902, 10.

<sup>17</sup>"Call for Trial of Pastor Smale," *Los Angeles Times*, September 15, 1902, 14.

<sup>18</sup>First Baptist Church, Los Angeles (FBC LA), *Records*, Volume IX (1905), July 31.

<sup>19</sup>"Bombs for Baptists," *Los Angeles Times*, September 11, 1905, 11.

<sup>20</sup>FBC LA, *Records*, Volume IX (1905), May 28.

<sup>21</sup>"Church Service," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1905, I.11.

<sup>22</sup>FBC LA, *Records*, Volume IX (1905), August 6.

<sup>23</sup>FBC LA, *Records*, Volume IX (1905), August 23.

<sup>24</sup>FBC LA, *Records*, Volume IX (1905), September 6.

<sup>25</sup>FBC LA, *Records*, Volume IX (1905), September 11.

<sup>26</sup>"Baptist Boil Still 'Biling,'" *Los Angeles Times*, September 12, 1905, II.10.

<sup>27</sup>First New Testament Church, Los Angeles (FNTC LA), *Our First Anniversary* (September 1906), 3.

<sup>28</sup>Grant Wacker, *Heaven Below: Early*

*Pentecostals and American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 112.

<sup>29</sup>FNTC LA, *Our First Anniversary*, 3.

<sup>30</sup>Joseph Smale, *The Pentecostal Blessing* (FNTC LA, 1905); Seven sermons are incorporated in this book.

<sup>31</sup>*Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>32</sup>*Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>33</sup>FNTC LA, *Our First Anniversary*, 8.

<sup>34</sup>"Rolling on Floor in Smale's Church," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, July 14, 1906, II.1; "'Holy Roller' Mad," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, July 17, 1906, II.14; "Queer 'Gift' Given Many," *Los Angeles Daily Times*, July 23, 1906, I.5.

<sup>35</sup>Cecil M. Robeck Jr., *The Azusa Street Mission and Revival: The Birth of the Global Pentecostal Movement* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 75.

<sup>36</sup>Bartleman, 43.

<sup>37</sup>Robeck, 83-86.

<sup>38</sup>"Rolling on Floor in Smale's Church," II.1.

<sup>39</sup>Robeck, 83.

<sup>40</sup>"New Testament Leader Writes Open Letter," *Los Angeles Express*, July 23, 1906, 6.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>Robeck, 84.

<sup>43</sup>"Spreads the Fire," *The Apostolic Faith* 1:2 (October 1906): 4.

<sup>44</sup>"Claim Power to Raise Dead," *Los Angeles Times*, September 24, 1906, I.17.

<sup>45</sup>Joseph Smale, *First New Testament Church First Anniversary Brochure* (September 1906).

<sup>46</sup>FNTC, *Bulletin for July 8 - July 15, 1906*, 3.

<sup>47</sup>"Indian is a Hustler," *Los Angeles Times*, December 9, 1905, I.7.

<sup>48</sup>Joseph Smale, *An Apostolic Journey in the Twentieth Century Relating the Facts That Led the First New Testament Church of Los Angeles to Establish a Gospel Mission in Southwest China* [Los Angeles: First New Testament Church, 1908].

<sup>49</sup>G. L. Higgins, "Unity Chapel, St. Philip's, Bristol (1850-1946)," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 35:4 (Oct.-Dec. 1963): 229.

<sup>50</sup>Joseph Smale, *Truth: Earthly and Heavenly* [N.p.: Smale, 1925?], 36.

<sup>51</sup>Joseph Smale, "A Message to Spirit-Filled Believers." In: *Truth: Earthly and Heavenly* [N.p.: Smale, 1925?], 91.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*, 90.



**KANSAS CITY STAR**  
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 Sports, 421-3821—News, Business Office, 421-1200  
 Want Ads, 221-6000—Circulation, 221-6290 15c

**Charismatics in Joyful Praise of Renewal**



**Deers Really 'Nice'**

Just before they leave to go to Arrowhead, William Stark, an investigator of the police view again, said he figures about 10 per cent fewer possibilities are on Arrowhead streets. The vice squad has been averaging about eight or ten a night, he said, for vice-related activities.  
 One downtown business, which usually closes its at 10:30 p.m., has extended its hours until 11:30 p.m. and ally closes its at 11:30 p.m. and ally. The business is a jewelry store and usually closes at 11:30 p.m. and ally. The business is a jewelry store and usually closes at 11:30 p.m. and ally.

**The Kansas**  
 VOL. 109, NO. 274 MAIN EDITION  
 KANSAS CITY, SATURDAY MORNING, JULY 23, 1977

**City Enjoying Biggest, Cleanest**

These things can be said about the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches, being held all over downtown Kansas City this week:  
 • It is the biggest convention in the history of the city with more than 45,000 persons attending (the Sheraton drew about 35,000 last summer).  
 • It will bring in about \$2.3 million, figuring a 3-day stay for the average delegate who will spend about \$77 a day. Industry conventions bring in considerably more with the average delegate spending \$30.29 a day.

Story on last night's conference  
 • The bar business is down slightly in big restaurant sales are up, especially breakfast and brunch, as a result of prospective customers.  
 • Sales of ice cream and sodas, the average delegate spending \$30.29 a day, up, so are sales of post cards and out-of-

**KANSAS CITY STAR**  
 SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 23, 1977 — 27 PAGES  
 Sports, 421-3821—News, Business Office, 421-1200  
 Want Ads, 221-6000—Circulation, 221-6290 15c

**Orthodox Jews at Conference Confront Two Worlds**

By Susan Prosser  
 Reporter for the Star  
 Faced with the reality of being Jewish and Charismatic, Orthodox Jews confronted two worlds at the Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches in Kansas City last week.  
 The Jewish community in Kansas City is estimated to be about 10,000 people, according to the Jewish Community Center. The conference, which was held at the Arrowhead Stadium, drew about 45,000 people.

**Stadium Re...**

By Helen T. Gray  
 Reporter for the Star  
 In the case of the Arrowhead Stadium, the week of the Charismatic Conference in Arrowhead Stadium joined the public opinion last night as prevalent their decision to...  
 The Sheraton Hotel, which has been the site of many conventions, is expected to be a big success story. The Sheraton Hotel, which has been the site of many conventions, is expected to be a big success story.



The Conference on Charismatic Renewal in the Christian Churches (Kansas City, July 1977) marked the high point of the charismatic renewal. Participants met in the Arrowhead Stadium (bottom). The Kansas City conference attracted significant news coverage (top).



# Cautious Embrace: The Assemblies of God and the Charismatic Renewal

By Benjamin Wagner

In 1977, from July 20th through July 24th, approximately 45,000 Christians from over ten different denominations gathered at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City to celebrate their unity in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Classical Pentecostals were prominent at this conference: they helped in the planning, preached, and led worship at the plenary evening worship service, and met together in their own sub-conferences.<sup>2</sup>

For Assemblies of God adherents, one of the most significant occurrences at the conference was the presence of General Superintendent Thomas Zimmerman and the image of him seated next to Roman Catholic Cardinal Léon-Joseph Suenens on the platform.<sup>3</sup> The charismatic renewal had accomplished something that would have been difficult for many earlier Pentecostals to imagine: a Pentecostal leader and a member of the Catholic hierarchy participating in a Pentecostal-style worship service comprised of Catholics, traditional Protestants, and Pentecostals.

This article briefly sketches how some ministers, laity, and denominational leaders in the Assemblies of God responded to the charismatic renewal from the early 1960s to the 1970s. Scholars have rightly characterized the classical Pentecostal responses to the charismatic renewal as mixed and ambiguous. On the one hand, many Pentecostals participated in and promoted the spiritual ecumenism that was celebrated from the early 1960s until it reached its zenith at the 1977 Kansas City conference.

On the other hand, Pentecostals also were at pains to make sense of a movement that sought to integrate Pentecostal-type spirituality with theologies, practices, and ecclesial traditions that seemed antithetical to the Pentecostal tradition. In tracing how Assemblies of God adherents responded to the charismatic renewal movement, this article focuses on

how the renewal raised anew the question of Pentecostal identity and prompted Pentecostals to rethink the relationship of Pentecostalism to the larger Christian tradition.<sup>4</sup>

## Early Pentecostalism and the Mainline Churches

In order to fully understand why Pentecostal responses to the charismatic renewal movement were ambivalent, it is helpful to recall the tensions within the early

Pentecostal movement as it located itself in relation to the mainline churches. Many early Pentecostals tended to emphasize how Pentecostalism was separate from or at least in tension with traditional Christianity. As Robert Anderson has shown, early Pentecostal leaders were restless, sectarian seekers. They believed that the fullest Christian experience lies outside the mainstream churches. Anderson, in fact, characterized early Pentecostalism as

“a kind of anti-establishment Protestantism that was anti-clerical, anti-liturgical, anti-sacramental, anti-ecclesiastical, and indeed, in a sense, anti-religious.”<sup>5</sup>

Once these sectarian seekers experienced Spirit baptism they believed it provided the missing link to authentic, apostolic Christianity. And they were certain that their movement represented the apex of redemptive history which heralded the coming of the last days. These convictions lent a remarkable degree of positive spiritual zeal to the movement, fueling missions and a passionate commitment to Christ. But they could also lead Pentecostals to deprecate other Christian traditions and reinforce a sectarian mindset. This mindset was intensified when they were rejected by other Christians.

Yet this sectarian posture toward the mainline churches is not the whole story. There was also an underlying ecumenical ideal within the early Pentecostal movement.<sup>6</sup>



**The renewal prompted many in the Assemblies of God to rediscover a common link with Christians from other traditions.**





**AG pastor Paul Dear and wife, Norma, address the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, Youngstown, Ohio, in the early 1970s.**

Some Pentecostals believed that their movement had the potential to establish unity between different types of Christians and to revive the mainline churches. This ecumenical unity would be based primarily on the experience of the Holy Spirit's power and presence, rather than on detailed doctrinal agreement or polity.

For example, in A.W. Orwig's account of the Azusa Street revival, he noted that some folks who had been "seized by the holy fire" did not "identify themselves with the [Pentecostal] movement," although they frequently attended the revival services. Instead they remained "in their own church as better lights and more efficacious salt than they had hitherto been."<sup>7</sup> From Orwig's perspective, the Pentecostal experience could be a leavening effect on other churches. This early ideal of spiritual ecumenism and transdenominational revival was retrieved by some Pentecostals as they responded to the charismatic renewal.

Thus, the charismatic renewal movement posed a challenge to second and third-generation Pentecostals

in the post-World War II era. It challenged them to grapple with their own mixed heritage with regard to how they understood Pentecostal identity and spirituality in relation to the broader Christian tradition.

### The "Mountain of Prejudice Melted": The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International

Throughout the 1950s and 60s, the Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International (FGBMFI) provided the major platform for promoting the spiritual-ecumenical ideal of the early Pentecostal movement. Founded in 1951 by second-generation Pentecostal Demos Shakarian, the FGBMFI was also a vehicle for Pentecostal healing evangelists of the late 1950s and early 1960s who were already ministering beyond the boundaries of Pentecostal denominational churches.<sup>8</sup> According to Paul Dear, who ministered to Roman Catholic charismatics when serving as an Assemblies of God minister in Ohio,

the FGBMFI was "about the only platform" during the 1950s and 60s "for [classical Pentecostals] to relate to ministers and others who were being filled with the Spirit."<sup>9</sup>

Reading through the pages of FGBMFI's *Voice* magazine, however, one can find examples of interpretations of the charismatic movement that some charismatics would have been uncomfortable with. In some articles, Pentecostals struggling to interpret the meaning and direction of the charismatic movement expressed anti-organizational and anti-institutional sentiments, as well as a lingering suspicion of historical development, creeds, ritual, and liturgy.<sup>10</sup> Yet the overarching theme was Christian unity based on the common spiritual experience of Spirit baptism and the common purpose of evangelism.

Assemblies of God historian Carl Brumback assessed the impact the FGBMFI had on Pentecostals in the pages of *Voice*. According to Brumback, the FGBMFI was a major catalyst for a changed climate between Pentecostals and other Christians. He noted that many second and third generation Pentecostals had become "confirmed isolationists" towards other Christians, believing that non-Pentecostals were joined to "idols of denominationalism and creedalism." Yet "the mountain of prejudice has melted" because classical Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals have worshiped together in FGBMFI meetings.<sup>11</sup>

In general, FGBMFI focused on the spiritual condition of individuals and did not have an explicit vision of the renewal of historic churches.<sup>12</sup> Yet the ecumenical interchange which occurred through FGBMFI laid the foundation for Pentecostals to accept such a vision.

One pastor, who had once viewed Spirit baptism as "exclusively belonging to the belief and practice of our Pentecostal movement," felt certain

that God was doing a “new thing” in the charismatic movement and the FGBMFI. He reported that he had helped lead non-Pentecostals into the experience of Spirit baptism and always counseled them to stay in their churches. He thought that Spirit baptism made Christians in the historic churches more effective by giving them “divine power and ability for their present assignment.”<sup>13</sup>

This pastor’s involvement with charismatics enlarged his vision of the Pentecostal movement. Experiences like his created the groundwork for some classical Pentecostals to remain open to the charismatic renewal movement, even as they sought to integrate Pentecostal-type experience with doctrines and practices that were outside of the Pentecostal tradition.

#### “They Couldn’t Understand Us, But ... They Were Terribly Kind”: Responses to the Early Episcopalian Charismatics

1960 is well-known as a watershed year in the history of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement. That was the year that Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal rector, created a good deal of controversy by announcing to his congregation at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, California that he had spoken in tongues and had no intentions of leaving the Episcopal Church.

Bennett had found a form of prayer that he was not willing to give up, but which he also thought was compatible with Episcopalian spirituality. He recalled that his first experiences of speaking in tongues brought him a great sense of God’s presence: “Never had I experienced God’s presence in such reality as now ... the reality of God was something that I felt all the way through — even with my body.”<sup>14</sup> After a night of particularly intense glossolalic prayer, he drove home singing the traditional Episcopal



**Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal rector and leader in the charismatic renewal.**

Introit for Pentecost — “the Spirit of the Lord hath filled the whole world, Alleluia” — along with gospel songs from his childhood.<sup>15</sup>

Although Bennett’s announcement in church about speaking in tongues made national news, what is less well-known is that the evening before he had attended a service for Pentecostal ministers. After Bennett shared his experience of Spirit baptism, a Pentecostal minister came to the platform and admonished him publicly to stay in the Episcopal Church. According to Bennett, the minister said:

Father Bennett, we would love to have you join us, and there will always be a welcome for you in our churches, but we know that this is not the thing for you to do. You should stay in your own denomination so they can receive word of the baptism in the Holy Spirit; for they will listen to you where they would not listen to us.<sup>16</sup>

This advice to Bennett by a Pentecostal is significant. It demon-

strates a concern for the expansion of Spirit baptism *within* the Episcopal Church.

Indeed, classical Pentecostals were interested in and supportive of Bennett’s ministry when he was reassigned to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Seattle, Washington. Just a couple of weeks after Bennett’s arrival, the pastor of the local Assemblies of God church invited him to speak at his church.<sup>17</sup> Positive interaction between Episcopalian charismatics and classical Pentecostals continued at St. Luke’s and in the Seattle area throughout the 1960s and 70s. According to Richard O’Driscoll, Bennett’s assistant pastor at St. Luke’s, this interaction not only had a positive impact on the Episcopalians, it also helped Pentecostals appreciate other expressions of the Christian faith:

[Pentecostal] pastors in the Pacific Northwest were often very open to charismatic ministers to preach in their churches. A warm fellowship thus developed that surprised us all, I think. God was obviously pleased at the love that blossomed between these churches. The linchpin, of course, was the newfound experience and preaching of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. With a common understanding of the salvation experience and the baptism in the Holy Spirit came a richness of fellowship based on new respect for the Protestant expressions of the faith that for fifty years of the Pentecostal movement ... had no doubt been questionable at best.<sup>18</sup>

While Bennett’s and O’Driscoll’s account of the grassroots interaction between Pentecostals and charismatics is markedly positive, another Episcopalian who was prominent in the renewal gave a more complicated picture. Jean Stone was a member of Bennett’s St. Mark’s parish and





**The Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International issued these booklets to show how the Holy Spirit was working in various denominational churches.**

founder of the Blessed Trinity Society, an organization dedication to spreading Pentecostal spirituality within the Episcopal Church and other mainline Protestant denominations. The evidence from Stone's experience reveals the diversity of Pentecostal responses at this early stage of the charismatic renewal.

Positive cooperation between classical Pentecostals and charismatics is evident in Stone's account of the early days of the Episcopal renewal. She recalled that when Episcopalians at St. Mark's first began to practice charismatic spirituality in prayer groups, local Pentecostal pastors gave advice and answered questions via the telephone. Stone reported that these Pentecostal pastors were "delighted we had received the gift of the Spirit and were anxious to accept us and to overlook our idiosyncrasies. They

couldn't understand us, but were in the main, terribly kind."<sup>19</sup>

Even as Stone recounted the open stance taken by Pentecostals toward the new Episcopal charismatics, she also noted the tension that developed when she did not leave the Episcopal Church. After a stint in a local Pentecostal church, she returned to the Episcopal Church after finding a church where the rector was Spirit baptized. Her Pentecostal pastors viewed this decision with incredulity. "My impression," she writes, "was that they thought that anyone who would go from a Pentecostal church to an Episcopal church would ultimately end in hell. Although they were very kind, nothing I said convinced them."

She also noted an episode when she and other Episcopalian women were ministering at a local Assemblies of God congregation. According to

Stone, at this meeting approximately fifty people received Spirit baptism. She reports that some of her companions overheard a conversation between two Pentecostal pastors during which "one of them shook his head and said ... I don't say they don't have *something*, but they'll never have all they're supposed to have until they join the Assemblies of God."<sup>20</sup>

Some Pentecostals, then, still struggled to accept the notion that Pentecostal spirituality could be fully experienced and maintained by those who stayed in the Episcopal Church. A few Pentecostals had a difficult time remaining open to Episcopalian tradition and liturgy, even though several leading charismatic Episcopalian Pentecostals were "high-church" Episcopalian. Pentecostals would continue to have questions about how Pentecostal spirituality could be integrated into unfa-

miliar liturgical and theological contexts as the renewal developed.

### “A Deep Sense of Christian Understanding and Mutual Trust”: Denominational Meetings With Episcopalians

Pentecostals may have been unsure how Pentecostal-type spirituality could survive among mainstream, liturgical Episcopalians. But the fact that many Episcopalians were speaking in tongues led some Pentecostals to take a closer look at the Episcopal tradition. In the most dramatic and clear instance of this, Assemblies of God executives and Episcopalian officials participated in a dialogue between 1962 and 1965.

Significantly, this was the first dialogue between Assemblies of God leaders and mainline denominational representatives. The meetings were decidedly informal, with no intention of achieving doctrinal consensus or institutional unity. After two meet-

ings a joint statement was issued and printed in the Episcopal weekly, *The Living Church*, and the Assemblies of God’s *Pentecostal Evangel*. It said that during the dialogues, “there emerged a deep sense of Christian understanding and mutual trust. We found ourselves a fellowship, open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to a degree which we had hardly dared to expect.”<sup>21</sup>

Episcopalian records reveal that the meetings did indeed lead Pentecostal leaders toward a greater openness and appreciation of the Episcopal tradition. For example, during the 1962 meetings, the Assemblies of God delegation attended an Episcopal ordination service and afterwards remarked that they had discovered “that you could really mean the Prayers that you read out of a book.”<sup>22</sup>

The records also indicate a growing respect between Episcopalian leaders and Assemblies of God officials. This does not mean, of course, that problems were overlooked. For instance,

Assemblies of God officials expressed concern that the new charismatics were treating the gift of tongues too lightly and “presenting experience for experience sake.”<sup>23</sup> Since these talks were informal, however, no serious attempt was made to address issues that both sides were concerned about.

Nevertheless, these meetings are evidence that the renewal prompted Assemblies of God leaders to engage with a tradition greatly different from their own. More important for purposes of this article is the fact that this dialogue was a factor in prompting the Assemblies of God to issue a resolution at its 1963 General Council regarding the charismatic movement. The resolution approved Assemblies of God ministers helping ministers of other denominations who are seeking to know more about Spirit baptism. The resolution pointed out that “one denomination has already held conferences with the Executive Presbytery on the Pentecostal experience.” Based



Logos Journal, Trinity, New Covenant, Voice, and Aglow were popular magazines during the charismatic renewal.



on these factors, the General Council resolved that:

The ministers of this General Council expresses its desire to meet with, pray and in any other way assist any denominational minister in reaching and understanding of the Pentecostal experience, and be it

### Controversy: David du Plessis and Roman Catholic Charismatics

This open approach to the charismatic renewal, however, was put to the test as the renewal evolved. Two developments in particular illustrate the ways that the charismatic renewal challenged the boundaries of an open,

tions. Du Plessis came to believe that he was called to promote Pentecostal spirituality within the World Council of Churches (WCC). At first he hesitated and prayed: "Lord, I have preached so much against them. What do I say to them now? They will not listen to me. Their churches have put our people out of their fellowship. That is why we have now a separate Pentecostal Movement." According to du Plessis, however, "the Lord kept telling me to go and witness to them."<sup>25</sup> As he followed this prompting, du Plessis found that leaders in the ecumenical movement were actually eager to hear why and how Pentecostals had been so successful in missions and church growth.

Other Pentecostals, however, believed that Pentecostals should have nothing to do with the modern ecumenical movement. Pentecostals decried the liberal theology of member churches and feared that groups like the WCC were leading to the formation of an end-times "super-church."

While du Plessis was garnering publicity by reaching out to members of the WCC, Thomas Zimmerman was serving as the president of the National Association of Evangelicals, an organization that was opposed to the WCC and the modern ecumenical movement. This put Zimmerman and Assemblies of God leaders in an awkward position. When Assemblies of God executives asked du Plessis to cease his involvement with the modern ecumenical movement, du Plessis refused, claiming this was the ministry God had given him. He was asked to surrender his credentials in 1962. In 1980, however, the Assemblies of God reinstated him.

The issues surrounding the treatment of du Plessis by Assemblies of God leadership are complex, and a sufficient discussion is beyond the scope of this article. Denominational politics and evangelical affiliation



**Actor, writer, and charismatic renewal advocate Pat Boone, speaking at a FGBMFI meeting in Springfield, Missouri, 1971.**

further Resolved, that the Executive Presbytery be authorized to encourage work in this area through personal contact and through the preparation of such literature and other materials as may be needed.<sup>24</sup>

This resolution was important because it gave Assemblies of God ministers the freedom to relate to the charismatic movement and it assured ministers in the traditional denominations that the Assemblies of God would not remain aloof, but would be open and willing to give appropriate guidance.

ecumenical stance towards charismatics and the broader Christian church.

First, there was the clash between David du Plessis and Assemblies of God leadership. David du Plessis (1905-87), a South African-born Pentecostal who moved to the United States in 1948 and affiliated with the Assemblies of God in 1955, came to be known as "Mr. Pentecost" during this time period. More than any other Pentecostal, du Plessis promoted the idea of Pentecostalism as an ecumenical spirituality that can be integrated with disparate forms of Christianity and enliven diverse Christian tradi-

were certainly major factors, as scholars have pointed out.<sup>26</sup> It is also important, however, to recognize that du Plessis's vision of Pentecostalism was more expansive and ecumenical than some Pentecostals were comfortable with. His ministry was especially disconcerting to those who worried that Pentecostal spirituality might become so diffuse that it would soon be difficult to define Pentecostalism.

Du Plessis believed that Pentecostal spirituality could be integrated with disparate forms of Christianity and would provide the catalyst for spiritual renewal in all churches. He advised charismatics to stay within their own churches. Many Assemblies of God pastors throughout the country followed du Plessis' lead. They allowed their churches to become havens for charismatics to practice Pentecostal spirituality in prayer meetings, but they did not attempt to persuade the charismatic to join their churches.<sup>27</sup> In sum, du Plessis's approach challenged any residual sectarian impulses within the Pentecostal movement, but some saw it as a threat to Pentecostal distinctiveness.

The second major challenge to an open, expansive approach to the charismatic renewal came with the Roman Catholic charismatic movement, which emerged in 1967. Classical Pentecostals were involved in ministering to Roman Catholics at the beginning of the movement. When Notre Dame students became interested in Spirit baptism, they met at the house of Ray Bullard, the president of the local FGBMFI chapter and member of Calvary Temple, an Assemblies of God church in South Bend, Indiana.<sup>28</sup> Bullard invited local Pentecostal pastors to come and pray with the Notre Dame students for Spirit baptism. After some of the students spoke in tongues, however, they were told by one Pentecostal minister that if they did not leave the Catholic Church, they

would "lose the gift of the Spirit."<sup>29</sup> It was difficult enough for Pentecostals to make sense of Episcopalian and mainline Protestant charismatics, but the Roman Catholic charismatic renewal radically stretched the boundaries of Pentecostal openness.



**David du Plessis, known as "Mr. Pentecost," speaking at a Roman Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue in Rome in the 1970s.**

A foremost problem was Catholic doctrine and practice. New York District Superintendent Joseph Flower noted that the most troubling aspect of the charismatic movement for Pentecostals was the testimony of some Catholics. In particular, some charismatic Catholics claimed to "become more devoted to their church, Mary, and the sacraments, including the mass, after their charismatic experience."

Also disconcerting was the way Catholic charismatics framed Spirit baptism in terms of sacramental theology. Flower's advice, however, was for Assemblies of God adherents

to remain patient and trust that God would lead the Roman Catholics into fuller truth. And he reminded his readers that there were plenty of theological errors and strange practices which took place in the early days of the Pentecostal revival.<sup>30</sup>

At the grassroots level, numerous Assemblies of God members continued to minister to and interact with Roman Catholic charismatics, in spite of misgivings about aspects of Roman Catholic theology and practice. For example, Paul Dear, an Assemblies of God pastor in Youngstown, Ohio, was invited to speak to a group of Roman Catholics on the topic of Spirit baptism in 1971.

That evening many Roman Catholics experienced Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues. This launched Dear into a ministry with Catholics and other non-Pentecostals who were seeking the Pentecostal experience. Eventually, in 1978, he was sent to Ireland as a missionary of the Assemblies of God and with the blessing of both the Bishop of the Diocese of Youngstown and Thomas Zimmerman.<sup>31</sup>

When asked how he stayed open to the Catholic charismatics in spite of their adherence to doctrines and practices which he thought were suspect, Dear replied:

It was all we could do with keeping up with people's needs, praying them through with whatever they wanted to call it: "new birth," "actualization of what happened to them at baptism," baptism in the Spirit with the laying on of hands — confirmation. I discovered a long time ago, this was the only way I could live in this setting ... I was not responsible for their history, tradition, and practices. I could just be in this flow with the essentials.<sup>32</sup>

Dear also noted that during the



renewal he came to see that Roman Catholicism contained what he called “basic Christianity.” Furthermore, he saw that “God’s touch was upon many people’s lives ... in spite of their different positions, liturgical positions ... and then that enhanced these traditions and sacramental situations that they were involved in.”<sup>33</sup>

Not all Pentecostals, of course, could accept the idea that Roman Catholics should or could remain in the Catholic Church. For example, in 1973 David Wilkerson prophesied an imminent exodus of Catholic and Protestant charismatics from their churches. He explained that the Pope was about to “pull in the welcome mat” from under the Catholic charismatics.

In the wake of Papal disapproval of charismatics, Wilkerson said, Catholic charismatics will face a stark choice. He thought that some Catholics would choose to cling to “tradition and allow the experience to be frozen.” Other Catholics would choose to leave the Church to join with other Spirit-filled Christians. He further predicted that two different churches would emerge in the imminent last days. One church will be apostate. This will be a “super-world church” comprised of a union between liberal and ecumenical Protestants in the traditional churches and Roman Catholics. The “super-world church” will persecute the true church, which will be comprised of true believers who have “come out” from the traditional churches.<sup>34</sup>

Wilkerson’s prophecy, which was given a wide hearing at the time, obviously betrayed skepticism toward the efforts of charismatics to integrate their experience within the traditional churches, to the consternation of Catholic charismatics. Nevertheless, his scenario echoed a stance of early Pentecostal views regarding the relationship between Pentecostal spirituality and the larger church. His prophecy retrieved the idea that in the

“last days” a restored church of Spirit-baptized Christians will emerge separate from and stand in marked contrast to the apostate, traditional churches.

In terms of official denominational policy, the Assemblies of God maintained a stance of cautious openness toward the charismatic renewal movement throughout the early 1970s, in spite of confusing and controversial developments. In 1972, the Assemblies of God issued a statement which recognized that “the winds of the Spirit are blowing freely outside the normally recognized Pentecostal body.” It advocated a balanced approach to renewal, avoiding both “the extremes of an ecumenism that compromises scriptural principles and an exclusivism that excludes true Christians.”<sup>35</sup>

Concerning the 1972 statement, David du Plessis wrote that it marked a “change of attitude” among those classical Pentecostals who “found it difficult to accept the neo-Pentecostals, and even more difficult to accept the Catholic Pentecostals.”<sup>36</sup> Vinson Synan, an official in the Pentecostal Holiness Church and participant in the renewal movement call the 1972 statement “historic” and viewed it as an expression “officially of what has been felt on the grass-roots level by an overwhelming majority of Pentecostal ministers and laymen.”<sup>37</sup>



**Catholic marchers at a Pentecost parade held in Springfield, Missouri in 1972.**

## Conclusion

The story of how the Assemblies of God responded to the charismatic renewal illustrates a persistent tension in Pentecostalism’s relationship with the broader Christian tradition. On the one hand Pentecostals had grown accustomed to emphasizing their distinct identity against other Christian traditions. On the other hand, there was a strong ecumenical vision within early Pentecostalism. Some early Pentecostals believed that Pentecostal spirituality could unify Christians from diverse traditions and even enliven the mainline churches.

During the charismatic renewal, Assemblies of God adherents had an opportunity to retrieve elements of this ecumenical vision. The renewal prompted many in the Assemblies of God to rediscover a common link with Christians from other traditions. And, without compromising their own beliefs, some Assemblies of God participants at the grassroots of the renewal demonstrated a flexibility, openness, and patience with the ways that charismatics appropriated the Pentecostal experience.

Not all Pentecostals were as open or optimistic. Some persisted in framing Pentecostalism in ways that reinforced its distinction from the broader Christian tradition; many worried the renewal had the potential to obscure Pentecostal identity. Yet the Assemblies of God 1972 statement on the renewal officially prescribed an open and tolerant stance toward the renewal, without providing a blanket endorsement of charismatic beliefs and practices.

As the renewal developed, for reasons beyond the scope of this survey, Assemblies of God participation in the charismatic movement eventually began to wane (as did the movement itself, at least in the U.S., by the early 1980s). But for those many Assemblies of God members who

met with, prayed with, and sang with charismatics from different Christian traditions during the 1960s, '70s, and early 1980s, it was an exhilarating, if occasionally bewildering, time. One Assemblies of God pastor summed it up this way: "the charismatic movement [was] a breath of fresh air from the Lord."<sup>38</sup> ✿



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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>David Manuel, *Like A Mighty River* (Orleans, MA: Rock Harbor Press, 1977), 76; Vinson Synan, "Kansas City Conference," *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Eduard M. van der Maas (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 816.

<sup>2</sup>Vinson Synan, *In the Latter Days: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Twentieth Century*. Rev. ed. (Ann Arbor: Servant Publications, 1991), 127; "Pentecostals Meet in Kansas City During Charismatic Conference," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 29, 1977, 25.

<sup>3</sup>See the comments of Russell Spittler, n.a. "A Challenge to the Churches," *New Covenant* (October 1977), 13.

<sup>4</sup>For an analysis of how the charismatic movement prompted Pentecostals to reexamine certain theological positions, see Frank Macchia, "God Present in a Confused Situation: The Mixed Influence of the Charismatic Movement on Classical Pentecostalism," *Pneuma* 18:1 (Spring 1996), 33-54.

<sup>5</sup>Robert Mapes Anderson, *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American*

*Pentecostalism* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, 1979), 108-110, 214.

<sup>6</sup>See Cecil M. Robeck, Jr., "Pentecostals and the Apostolic Faith: Implications for Ecumenism," *Pneuma* 9:1 (Spring 1987), 61-84.

<sup>7</sup>Quoted in B. F. Lawrence, "The Apostolic Faith Restored" in *Three Early Pentecostal Tracts* (New York: Garland Press, 1985), 81-82.

<sup>8</sup>This story is superbly told by David Edwin Harrell Jr., *All Things are Possible: The Healing and Charismatic Revivals in Modern America* (Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1975).

<sup>9</sup>Interview with Paul Dear, July 28, 2005.

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, Leonard H. Evans, "Steps to the Upper Room," *Full Gospel Business Men's Voice* (May 1966), 27, and Ralph Mahoney, "Pentecost in Perspective," *Full Gospel Business Men's Voice* (May 1965), 4-7.

<sup>11</sup>Carl Brumback, "Mountain Movers," *Full Gospel Business Men's Voice* (May 1964), 14-15.

<sup>12</sup>Peter Hocken, *Streams of Renewal: The Origins and Early Development of the Charismatic Movement in Great Britain* (Washington, DC: The Word Among Us, 1986), 181.

<sup>13</sup>Elwood Jensen, "Pentecost Today: As Seen through the Eyes of a Pentecostal Minister," *Full Gospel Business Men's Voice* (May 1964), 6.

<sup>14</sup>Dennis J. Bennett, *Nine O'Clock in the Morning* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1970), 24.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 60.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 83.

<sup>18</sup>Richard O'Driscoll, e-mail correspondence to author, September 10, 2007.

<sup>19</sup>Jean Stone Willans, *The Acts of the Green Apples* (Monroeville, PA: Whitaker House, 1973), 42.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 41, 72.

<sup>21</sup>"Joint Statement Issued by Episcopalians and Assemblies on Manifestations of the Spirit," *Pentecostal Evangel*, January 20, 1963, 4.

<sup>22</sup>Peter Day to Rev. William L. Hargrave (February 4th, 1963), Episcopal Church Archives, Record Group, 119.

<sup>23</sup>Peter Day, "Committee to Hold Discussions with Representatives of the Assemblies of God, Nov. 16-17, 1964," Episcopal Church Archives, Record Group 119.

<sup>24</sup>"The Holy Spirit Among Denominational Churches, Resolution Number 5," General Council Minutes, 1963, 40-41.

<sup>25</sup>David J. du Plessis, *The Spirit Bade Me Go* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos, 1970), 13.

<sup>26</sup>See Russell Spittler's treatment in "Du Plessis, David Johannes," *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, 591.

<sup>27</sup>For example, on the West Coast, North Hollywood Assembly of God, where Rev. Leroy Sanders was pastor, hosted a Monday night prayer meeting for twenty years for charismatics who didn't want to leave their historic churches, but also did not want to give up Pentecostal spirituality. Telephone interview with Dr. D. Leroy Sanders, January 24, 2006.

<sup>28</sup>Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (Parumus, NJ: Paulist Press, 1969), 41.

<sup>29</sup>Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1971), 48.

<sup>30</sup>Joseph R. Flower, "The Charismatic Movement: Some Problem Areas and Solutions," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 29, 1972, 10-11.

<sup>31</sup>Oral Interview with Paul Dear, July 28, 2005.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid. This does not mean, of course, that Dear accepted any spiritual practice. He remarked, for example, that he stopped going to Catholic prayer meetings in Ireland if they began to incorporate Marian devotion and prophecies which would integrate Marian theology.

<sup>34</sup>David Wilkerson, "The Coming Persecution," <http://www.dunamai.com/real-audio-messages/messages.htm>, accessed August, 2008; "David Wilkerson Predicts Era of Persecution for Charismatics," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 14, 1973, 24.

<sup>35</sup>"Charismatic Study Report" in *Presence, Power, Praise: Documents on the Charismatic Renewal* vol. 1, ed. Killian McDonnell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1998), 319-20.

<sup>36</sup>Newsletter, Sept.-Oct.-Nov., 1972. Archives of the David Du Plessis Center for Pentecostal Spirituality, Box 4A.

<sup>37</sup>Vinson Synan, "The Classical Pentecostals," *New Covenant* (May 1973), 10.

<sup>38</sup>Dr. D. Leroy Sanders, telephone interview, January 24, 2006.





Navajo pastor Charlie Lee, about 1960.

# Assemblies of God Missions to Native Americans

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By Angela Tarango

On July 27, 1918, the *Christian Evangel* printed the first known report of an Assemblies of God missionary among American Indians. The missionary, Clyde Thompson, located at Lamoine, California, gave few details of his work among the Indians of Northern California, such as the name of the tribe, or specific numbers, but he did ask for one thing: “I request your earnest prayer for us and the dear Indian people. I have a wider field than I thought of, but God being my guide I will go through.”<sup>1</sup> Thompson’s assertion that he had a wider field than he had realized proved to be true for both him and the Assemblies of God’s missionary program to American Indians — what started with the missionary impulse of a few hardy Anglo missionaries mainly based in the American West would eventually become a national movement.

The history of American Indians within the AG is a story that remains mostly untold. As scholars of ethnic Pentecostalism have gone back to re-interpret Pentecostalism through the lenses of different racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic experiences, a richer understanding of Pentecostal history has begun to emerge. This article will give a short overview of AG missions to American Indians and how American Indian Pentecostals have grown to understand their own religious identities.<sup>2</sup>

Ministry to American Indians began as part of the AG’s greater foreign and home missionary impulse, but it quickly took on a life of its own as the Native leadership emerged and began to press towards more national recognition as well as indigenous, self-supporting churches.<sup>3</sup> So while it started as a missionary movement, it can now be better understood as a move towards developing a new kind of Pentecostal identity — an American Indian Pentecostal identity.

During the early years of AG missions to Indians, missionaries deployed themselves wherever they wanted to go. The missions effort to Native Americans lacked any real direction until the end of the 1930s (the Department of Home Missions did not exist before 1937; previous to 1937 all home missions were under the supervision of the Department of Foreign Missions) and did not really flourish as a missions movement until the 1950s. Thompson’s

report in the *Christian Evangel* is the first mention of AG missionary work after the organization of the denomination in 1914.

After this one brief mention, Thompson does not surface again, but it appears that his mission to Indians in Northern California survived, or that he at least inspired other missionaries, because in 1927, the *Pentecostal Evangel* (hereafter, *PE*) reported that an independent Indian mission, located in Humboldt County on the Hoopa Indian Reservation, had joined the AG.<sup>4</sup> Aside from one mention of a mission to a tribe in the Battle Mountain region of Nevada, missions to California Indians were the only missions of their kind for sixteen years.<sup>5</sup> This emphasis on converting Northern California Indians can be traced to the strenuous efforts of missionaries J. D. Wells and D. L. Brown, both of whom wrote several articles on the plight of these people, which were published for the purpose of raising needed funds for Wells’ and Brown’s missionary work.<sup>6</sup>

Although information in their articles is scant, it appears that these two men were moving among the small bands of Northern California Indians scattered about in the region, hoping to plant churches, because in 1931 it was reported that there were AG mission stations among only eight groups of Indians in the United States.<sup>7</sup> Other than the mission to Indians in Nevada, no other missions were cited by the *PE*. It is possible that all seven of those eight mission stations were scattered among the Indians of rural Northern California.

Recognizing the importance of the work of missionaries such as Wells and Brown and seeing the need for more organized ministry among Native Americans, a resolution was drafted to promote evangelism among Native peoples. The 1929 General Council adopted the following resolution:

Whereas, There is a large Indian population in the U.S.A. among which very little gospel work is being done, therefore, Be it Resolved, That we, as a fellowship, place ourselves on record as in favor of every effort made for the evangelization of this people, and Be it Further Resolved, That the General Superintendent be requested



## Camp Meetings

The first all-Indian camp meeting was held in 1948 on the San Carlos Apache Reservation. Afterwards the Assemblies of God began regularly sponsoring all-Indian camp meetings in the mid-1950s in order to evangelize and network Native Americans. Camp meetings served both as a social and religious function for Native converts where they could gather together with other like-minded Native Pentecostals for worship services, Bible study, and singing. Camp meetings were typically organized by district and tribal areas, and Native people usually camped in the outdoors using improvised tents and brush arbors as the gathering space. Native ministers usually traveled on the camp meeting circuit to preach to their fellow Native Pentecostals. The largest camp meetings drew hundreds of people. According to articles in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, all-Indian camp meetings were by far the most popular form of large-scale evangelism with Native people, and they continue to be a vital part of Native American ministry.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>See also, Victor Trimmer, "Summer Indian Camps," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 6, 1957, 14-15; Ruth Lyon, "Indian Camps Spark Revival," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 30, 1960, 8-9; Ruth Lyon, "All-Indian Camp Meetings," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 28, 1962, 10-11, 14; "Hundreds Saved at Indian Camp Meetings," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 31, 1965, 25.

to appoint a committee of three ministers to make due investigation and formulate a plan for the evangelization of the Indians, and report to the Missionary Committee, who are hereby authorized to take such action as they may deem advisable.<sup>8</sup>

It was also suggested and approved that J. D. Wells of Eureka, California, would be given permission to speak regarding Indian missions at a later session of the 1929 General Council.

In 1937, two missionary couples, with the help of the Texico District Council of the AG, decided to target the largest of the American Indian tribes, the Navajo.<sup>9</sup> The next year the *PE* reported on their work among the Navajo in order to recruit more missionaries.<sup>10</sup> In 1941, the *PE* carried a report on a mission that had been founded in 1934 in Washington State on the Little Boston Indian Reservation.<sup>11</sup> Also during that same year the *PE* reported the beginning of a mission among the Kiowa people in Oklahoma.<sup>12</sup> Similar articles followed: a report of a mission among the Apache on the San Carlos reservation, begun in 1935, which diligent missionaries had grown and fostered.<sup>13</sup> In 1947 a mission was launched among Indians on the Fort Hall reservation in Idaho and another in Montana.<sup>14</sup> By 1949 there were reports of missionary work among tribes in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and North Dakota.<sup>15</sup> These reports on the gradual spread of missionary work among American Indians show that the longest-running missions, those that developed early Native American leadership, were all centered in the western and Midwestern states, with the exception of the Mohawk mission in upstate New York.

The 1940s, a decade of slow but steady growth among missions to American Indians, were the years that brought about the emergence of a few

important Native leaders and their most ardent Anglo supporter. In 1947, the *PE* notes that George Effman and his wife were conducting mission work among an Indian tribe in La Push, Washington.<sup>16</sup> What the *PE* does not say in this article is that Effman was a Klamath Indian, from the area near the border of California and Oregon, who was probably evangelized by the earliest AG missionaries who worked in this region.<sup>17</sup> Effman is not the only influential Native leader who emerges in this period.

In April 1948, the *PE* recorded the first "Indian Conference," a gathering of missionaries and American Indian Pentecostals on the San Carlos Apache reservation. One of the speakers was the young Navajo Charlie Lee who had been saved at an Apache revival and who, the article reported, was "blessed with a fine voice to sing the gospel."<sup>18</sup> The young Navajo student would later become an influential leader who continually challenged the AG to wholeheartedly embrace the indigenous principle and who would train generations of Native leaders to follow these ideas. But at that time, Lee was simply a young Pentecostal exhorter, a Navajo who had not yet fully realized his own identity as a Pentecostal Indian.

Three other major Pentecostal Indian leaders emerged in the 1940s. Although they went unmentioned in the *PE*, their work can be traced through their ordination files and respective autobiographical writings. One was Andrew Maracle, a young Mohawk who became a missionary to his own people.<sup>19</sup> His nephew, John E. Maracle, became in 2007 the first American Indian to hold a seat on the AG's Executive Presbytery. A second was John McPherson, a mixed-blood Cherokee evangelist who, in 1978, became the first Indian Missions Representative (now called Native American Representative).<sup>20</sup> Rodger

Cree, also Mohawk, was a third. Cree's family was evangelized by a disciple of Aimee Semple McPherson near the border of Canada and the United States during Pentecostalism's early decades. Cree is the only member of the first generation of Indian leaders who is still alive (as of 2009) and active in pastoral and evangelistic work among his people. He is currently pastoring in Gresham, Washington.<sup>21</sup>

All of these men, Effman, Lee, Maracle, Cree and McPherson, were in the vanguard of Native leadership. They all received the gospel and then were called into ministry through the AG's early outreach to American Indians: Effman and McPherson received the gospel in California; Lee at an Apache revival; Maracle in a Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Bible study on the Tyendinaga Reserve in Ontario, Canada; and Cree by a French-Canadian evangelist.

The early emergence of these Indian leaders shows that some Anglo missionaries were encouraging towards their Native converts, helping them to achieve Bible school education in order to gain leadership positions.<sup>22</sup>

Most of the missionaries from this period were men, and the American Indian leadership was almost exclusively male, but the most important Anglo supporter of the indigenous principle and Native leadership was not a man. A woman named Alta Washburn arrived on the White Mountain Apache reservation in 1948 after feeling a deep and supernatural call to ministry among American Indians.<sup>23</sup> She would become their most ardent Anglo defender and supporter and was radically progressive for her era. Washburn would have never defined herself as a feminist, but her unshakable belief in the power of

the Holy Spirit allowed her to argue in favor of Native leadership. Throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s, readers of the *PE* were never told her first name — she was referred to as “Mrs. Clarence Washburn,” but her importance to the development of Native leadership cannot be overstated.

Upon entering the mission field, most Indian evangelists and missionaries had to figure out how they were going to go about the process of saving souls. Their financial resources were more limited than those of their Anglo missionary brothers and sisters, and they faced the racism of the broader American society. While working with their Anglo colleagues, they faced everyday, mundane problems, including how they were going to build

**The history of American Indians within the AG is a story that remains mostly untold.**

churches on reservation land, and how they were going to attract potential converts. But they enjoyed one distinct advantage over their Anglo counterparts: they were Indians, and they possessed a better sense of the culture and society of those they were serving.

Within the Assemblies of God system of church-building and evangelizing, they often discovered a great deal of autonomy. Once on the reservation (and this was especially true for those serving on remote desert reservations), they were left to figure out for themselves how to physically build a church and attract potential converts. On the mission field, Indian missionaries used this autonomy to be creative, but they also embraced a distinctly Pentecostal attitude towards innovation, thus helping to define their Pentecostal Indian identity.

One example of Native leadership and innovation is that of Arthur Stoneking, a Winnebago evangelist. He figured out how to build an all-Indian church in the American city with the largest urban Indian population: Los Angeles. Stoneking arrived there shortly after his discharge from the Navy where he had fought in both the battles of Okinawa and Iwo Jima. He married a Pentecostal woman in 1945 and accepted Christ shortly thereafter at the First Assembly of God in Maywood, California.<sup>24</sup> Realizing that the area had a large population of relocated American Indians, he came up with the idea of building an all-Indian Assemblies of God church.

At the time that Stoneking was hoping to build an urban Indian congregation, he was also driving the school bus for the Maywood Christian School. This job gave him the opportunity to identify the local Indian children. Through

the children, he contacted Indian parents. Once he had enough interested people, Brother and Sister Stoneking organized a Bible study in their home, where they converted several families and began the work of building a church.<sup>25</sup> By 1959, before he even had his own church building, Stoneking had established an indigenous Sunday school led by five Indian lay leaders, of the Navajo, Maricopa, and Choctaw tribes.<sup>26</sup>

Arthur Stoneking gained assistance from the local Bell Gardens Assembly of God, which allowed his Indian congregation to meet in their building on Sunday nights. The same congregation later gave Brother Stoneking the empty lot on which to build his church.<sup>27</sup> On June 21, 1964, a crowd of 450 came to the dedication of the Indian Revival Center, the new all-Indian church in Bell Gardens. The congregation rep-



## Music

Music, along with camp meetings, was one of the best vehicles for evangelism of Native peoples. Missionaries (both white and Native) improvised with whatever instruments and talents they had available, and they encouraged their Native brethren to sing and praise the Lord through music. Missionaries often learned to sing in Native languages even if they did not speak the language, in order to share the musical experience with the people. Mohawk missionary Rodger Cree recalled how he learned to sing in local Native dialects among the Pima and Papago tribes even though he did not speak their language. In another example, Alta Washburn related an incident in her autobiography where she told of a fellow missionary, her sister Jean Johnson, who emphasized the importance of music in their ministry. Jean recalled: "Soon we gathered our guitars, accordions, and banjos and started singing Gospel songs and hymns ... As we began to sing, the people all joined in, clapping their hands to songs such as 'Power in the Blood' or 'When the Saints Go Marching in.' One song always requested was 'The Old Rugged Cross.'"<sup>1</sup> Music reached across language barriers and especially appealed to Native peoples because they have a strong tradition of music in their own cultures. For the AG, music was perhaps the most useful tool for reaching Native converts.

<sup>1</sup>Alta M. Washburn, *Trail to the Tribes* (Prescott, AZ: the author, 1990), 24.



**A Native American singing group at a camp meeting.**

resented more than thirty tribes, and three different choirs sang in various Indian languages at the dedication.<sup>28</sup>

Stoneking's choir eventually went on to become one of the most successful ministries in his church. By the late 1960s the choir was traveling the Indian camp meeting circuit, testifying and singing in a variety of Native languages.<sup>29</sup> Stoneking also entered a contract with a Long Beach radio station, KGER, where on Saturday evenings he had parishioners preach in Native languages and then translate the program into English. Eventually his radio program became so popular that it was picked up by Christian stations in Tucson, Gallup, and Phoenix.<sup>30</sup>

By emphasizing the similarities within Indian culture, Stoneking was able to build a successful mission in an urban area where most Indians were scattered about, without the familial or tribal networks that they had on the reservation. The Indian Revival Center stepped in as a community for Indians who had recently left the reservation and what community they had once known. There, they found a family, one made up of a variety of tribes from almost everywhere in the nation, but at the very least, they found fellow

Indians who understood their hardship and homesickness.

While Stoneking built his church on this common experience, it was because of tribal differences that he was able to launch his successful radio and music ministries. Since his church was so diverse, and many of the congregants spoke traditional languages, Stoneking utilized this knowledge in order to launch successful evangelization that appealed to a multitude of Indians from different tribes.

While the diversity within the church could have pulled the Indian Revival Center apart, it instead led to its growth and popularity, as local Indians flocked to it after hearing the radio programs or seeing members of the Indian Revival Center choir testify in their own language. By encouraging his congregants to speak in their own languages he stepped beyond the English-only evangelization practiced by many of his Anglo counterparts. This nurtured the Pentecostal Indian identity of his flock and gave members a way to become involved with the church. They were participating in the favored Pentecostal modes of evangelization (music and radio), but they did so using their own languages,

allowing them to maintain their identity as Indians and to gain autonomy within the AG.

Arthur Stoneking's work in Bell Gardens is only one of many successful ministries that were led by Native leaders within the AG. Others who successfully engaged in evangelization included John McPherson, Rodger Cree, Charlie Lee, and Andrew Maracle. While Anglo missionaries were instrumental to the growth of the AG among Indian tribes and the spread of the gospel, it was the Native missionaries who were better able to relate their experiences as Indian Pentecostals to possible Native converts.

This realization is what led to Alta's Washburn's establishment of the first ever all-Indian Bible school in Phoenix, Arizona. Originally an offshoot of All Tribes Assembly of God which she pastored in Phoenix, the Bible school began mainly as a local, small-scale endeavor. Sister Washburn understood her work as being the culmination of God's will, but she was also a pragmatic woman who understood that Native people who understood local customs and languages made efficient missionaries of the gospel.<sup>31</sup> So on September 23, 1957, All Tribes Indian Bible Training School opened with an enrollment of thirty-two students.<sup>32</sup> The school became a success under Sister Washburn's watchful eye.

In 1965, following several incidents of ill health, Sister Washburn stepped down from her leadership of the Bible school. All Tribes was integrated into the AG's network of endorsed Bible institutes and was placed under district and national supervision. Re-christened the American Indian Bible Institute in 1967, the school continued to expand and in 1982 was renamed the American Indian Bible College. In 1988 the school received regional accreditation, and it is now

known as American Indian College of the Assemblies of God.<sup>33</sup> It was Washburn's work that helped encourage the AG to strive towards the indigenous principle in its missions work to Native peoples.

Sister Washburn was not the

Assembly of God in Shannon, North Carolina in 1968, and promoted indigenous church methods, but his tribe remains unrecognized by the federal government to this day (2009). Within six years Locklear's congregation grew from 12 to a high attendance of



**AIBC students in traditional dress, about 1990.**

only missionary who promoted the institutional realization of the indigenous churches. When Charlie Lee, a Navajo, arrived on the Navajo reservation in the early 1950s and began preaching in Navajo, fellow missionaries, Anglo and Indian, took notice.<sup>34</sup> He openly asked his congregation to make the transition from being a supported mission to a fully indigenous, self-supporting, General Council affiliated church. In the process, Lee gave power to the people, developing indigenous leadership, all the way from the church's janitors to the Sunday school teachers.

In 1976, his Navajo church in Shiprock, New Mexico was the first AG Native American church on a federally recognized reservation to become a General Council affiliated church.<sup>35</sup> Montana Locklear, a Lumbee Indian, became pastor of Shannon

300.<sup>36</sup> That church received General Council affiliation in October 1972. Lee's work among the Navajos in New Mexico and Locklear's work in North Carolina helped set off a national movement among AG missionaries to American Indians — a push for indigenous churches among the Native populations of the United States.

Along with the push for indigenous churches, American Indian Pentecostals wanted to gain a national voice for their people and to represent them within the power structure of the AG. The 1977 General Council, following a vigorous debate, authorized the position of a national Indian Missions Representative.<sup>37</sup> In 1978, the mixed-blood Cherokee evangelist, John McPherson, was appointed to fill this position.

The position, however, was not without problems. Although



## Watt Walker

While little is known of efforts to establish Native American congregations in the first two decades of the Assemblies of God, some individual Native Americans became active members and ministers in the young organization. One example is Watt Walker, a self-described “Red Cherokee Indian” evangelist, who was licensed by the Oklahoma District in 1916 and ordained by the Assemblies of God in 1919. His ministry took a different approach. He accompanied healing evangelist Maria Woodworth-Etter on the evangelistic circuit, attracting curious onlookers with his Indian headdress. His ministry was well received, not only at the grass roots, but also by the leaders of the young fellowship. Even though he was not a permanent resident in the district, Chairman E. N. Bell selected Walker to serve on a credentials committee of the North Central District Council (consisting of churches and ministers in the Dakotas, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) during its 1922 organizational meeting. It is significant that a Native American evangelist would be asked to serve in a position of authority in a largely-Anglo district.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Darrin J. Rodgers, *Northern Harvest: Pentecostalism in North Dakota* (Bismarck, ND: North Dakota District Council of the Assemblies of God, 2003), 38; Watt Walker, ministerial file, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center; *Minutes of the North Central District Council*, November 10, 1922.



**Maria Woodworth-Etter standing outside with Watt Walker, ca. 1920s.**

McPherson would be responsible for representing all of the AG’s ministries to Native peoples, the position was initially unfunded, part-time, and it was understood that McPherson would continue to work in his regular appointment.<sup>38</sup> Although the position was not what Native leadership had expected, McPherson did his best to define the job of the American Indian Representative during his tenure, in order to gain some power for the position. Currently the national Native American Representative (as the position is now called) is John E. Maracle, a Mohawk pastor.

The 1995 General Council passed a resolution to allow for the creation of “Fellowships” among certain groups within Intercultural Ministries. The idea was for each ethnic and special group to have a separate Fellowship that would aid in the training and evangelization of their people. Almost as soon as the Fellowships were approved, Indian leaders seized the opportunity to establish one and use it to implement some of the changes that they envisioned. The Native American Fellowship, established in 1996, immediately began to influence how missionary work was conducted

among the Native brethren.

The Native American Fellowship is self-funded and self-supporting and exists separately from both Home Missions (now US Missions) and Special Ministries. The governing board is elected by the participants in the Fellowship, it has three seats on the General Presbytery, and its governing members have the opportunity to serve on the Executive Presbytery.<sup>39</sup> The stated goal of the Native American Fellowship is to facilitate evangelism of Native peoples and to encourage leadership opportunities among Native missionaries and pastors.<sup>40</sup> In August of 2007, John E. Maracle, the Native American Representative and President of the Native American Fellowship, was elected to a seat on the Executive Presbytery, as a representative for the Fellowships and for American Indian Pentecostals.

Pentecostal Indians have long struggled to have their stories included within the greater history of the Assemblies of God. It is a complicated history, which addresses issues of religious identity and Native autonomy, and one that presses the AG to fully realize its own theological potential as a church for all people regardless of race or ethnic identity. The history of missions to Native peoples is not without problems — Native converts had to deal with paternalism, and finding their own way in an unfamiliar and sometimes unfriendly world.

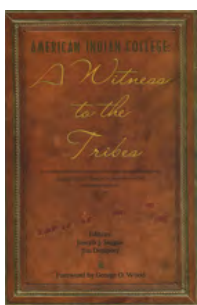
Yet as this brief overview shows, they carved out a space for themselves within the Assemblies of God as proud Pentecostal Indians.<sup>41</sup> The push for indigenous churches that are self-supported and led by Native pastors has proved to be slow going. Locklear’s church in Shannon, North Carolina and Lee’s church (now called Four Corners Community Church) led the way as the first indigenous churches (self-supporting and General Council affiliated), and now there are

191 Native-American churches, many of which have Native leadership. The Assemblies of God has the second-largest Native American constituency of all U.S. evangelical denominations, following the Southern Baptist Convention. As the Assemblies of God moves into the twenty-first century, Pentecostal American Indian believers will continue to transform themselves, the AG, and the greater Pentecostal culture through innovation, hard work, and an unshakable belief in the power of the Holy Spirit. ✨



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**God's Home Missions to American Indians and the Development of an Indian-Pentecostal Identity, 1918-2007." She is currently a visiting instructor and fellow at Oberlin College.**



**The story of an AG Native American college was the subject of a recently-published book: *American Indian College: A Witness to the Tribes***

**(2008), edited by Joseph J. Saggio and Jim Dempsey. The book is available from AIC for \$18 plus \$7 postage. Send a check to: American Indian College, Attn: Sylvia Rivera, 10020 N. 15th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85021-2199. For more information, contact Sylvia Rivera by phone (602-944-3335, ext. 221) or by e-mail (srivera@aicag.edu).**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Clyde Thompson, "Amongst the Indians," *Christian Evangel*, July 27, 1918, 5.

<sup>2</sup>This article is only a very brief synopsis of my dissertation, "Choosing the 'Jesus Way': The Assemblies of God's Home Missions to American Indians and the Development of an Indian-Pentecostal Identity 1918-2007." Because this article is written for a more general audience, it will focus on a narrative overview and raise a few of the main points from the larger work. It will also mainly focus on the Native converts who became missionaries and evangelists because many of their stories remain unknown to the greater Pentecostal public. Most of the source material comes from articles which appeared in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, the weekly magazine of the Assemblies of God. The best secondary works on Native Americans in the AG are Jim Dempsey's two-part article, "Assemblies of God Ministry to Native Americans," in *Assemblies of God Heritage* 22:2-3 (Summer 2002; Fall 2002) and *American Indian College: A Witness to the Tribes*, edited by Joseph J. Saggio and Jim Dempsey (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2008).

<sup>3</sup>While the theology of "indigenous churches" goes back to the beginnings of Pentecostalism, the main inspiration for the Native leadership within the AG is the work of Melvin L. Hodges and his book, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953). Hodges was Charlie Lee's teacher at Central Bible Institute, and it was Lee who took Hodges' ideas and implemented them within his own ministry. He also became an active and vocal supporter of indigenous churches and autonomy.

<sup>4</sup>"Indian Church At Hoopa Now an Assembly of God," *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 5, 1927, 21.

<sup>5</sup>For information on the Nevada mission see Mr. and Mrs. Warren Anderson, "Among the Indians" in the *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 24, 1927, 11.

<sup>6</sup>For examples of these articles see Mrs. D. L. Brown, "Among the Indians of California," *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 1, 1930, 12; J. D. Wells, "A Veteran Enters the Lord's Army," *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 8, 1930, 10; and "Shall the American Indian Know God?" *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 5, 1930, 12.

<sup>7</sup>J. D. Wells, "Among the American Indians," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 18, 1931, 11.

<sup>8</sup>General Council Minutes, 1929, 81.

<sup>9</sup>"A Forward Step to Reach the Navajo Indian," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 17, 1937, 9.

<sup>10</sup>Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Solmes, "What About Our Neighbors — The Navajo Indians?" *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 9, 1938, 6.

<sup>11</sup>"Among the American Indians in Washington," *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 22, 1941, 9.

<sup>12</sup>"Kiowa Indian Work," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 26, 1941, 9.

<sup>13</sup>"Revival Among the Apache Indians," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 8, 1942, 7.

<sup>14</sup>"Our Home Frontiers: Revivals Among the Indians," *Pentecostal Evangel*, March 29, 1947, 11.

<sup>15</sup>"God Moving on American Indians," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 7, 1949, 12.

<sup>16</sup>"A Forward Step to Reach the Navajo Indian," 9.

<sup>17</sup>George Effman, application for ordination, ministerial file, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

<sup>18</sup>"First Indian Convention," *Pentecostal Evangel*, April 10, 1948, 11.

<sup>19</sup>Andrew Maracle, application for ordination, ministerial file, Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

<sup>20</sup>John T. McPherson and Phil Taylor, *Chief: My Story* (Tulsa: Carbondale Assembly of God, 1995).

<sup>21</sup>Darrin J. Rodgers and Angela Tarango, oral history interview with Rodger A. Cree, August 9, 2006.

<sup>22</sup>See also Joseph J. Saggio, "Assemblies of God Higher Educational Institutions: A Means to Develop the Indigenous Model among Native Americans," *Encounter* 1:2 (Fall 2004). This article provide an in-depth analysis on the contribution of Bible colleges to the development of the indigenous ministry among Native Americans. Available at: [http://www.encounterjournal.com/articles/2004\\_fall/saggio.htm](http://www.encounterjournal.com/articles/2004_fall/saggio.htm)

<sup>23</sup>Alta M. Washburn, *Trail to the Tribes* [Prescott, AZ: the author, 1990].

<sup>24</sup>Ruth Lyon, compiler, "Evangelizing the American Indian," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 22, 1961, 18.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Arthur T. Stoneking "Indians Teach Sunday School Classes," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 27, 1959, 11.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., 12.

<sup>28</sup>"Attractive New Indian Church Erected Near Los Angeles," *Pentecostal Evangel*, February 28, 1965, 16.

*Continued on page 69*





*Assemblies of God missionaries after they were rescued from Old Bilibid Prison, Manila, February 1945. From the left, Robert Tangen holding Robert Jr., born in Baguio prison; Mildred Tangen; Elizabeth Galley; Doris Carlson (behind Elizabeth Galley); Gladys Knowles; Helen Johnson; and Leland Johnson. In front: Sammy and Constance Johnson. Blanche Appleby and Rena Baldwin were rescued at another prison camp, Los Banos, and not pictured. Also not pictured is Margaret Joy Johnson, born in the Baguio prison camp.*

*Condemned before World War II, Old Bilibid Prison, Manila, was reopened by the Japanese and used as a P.O.W. internment camp.*



# Miracles in World War II P.O.W. Camps

By Paul E. Scull

When the United States entered World War II following the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, Assemblies of God missionaries and their children were trapped behind enemy lines in Japan, China, and the Philippines. Their lives were threatened, possessions taken, and many had to endure a starvation diet. Yet, God provided these missionaries caught in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps with provisions, healings, and protection. The following vignettes share a few of their stories.

Leland (1901-1968) and  
Helen Branch Johnson (1912-2001)  
Missionaries to South China



The dreaded day came on December 29, 1941. Japanese soldiers arrived at the missionary quarters and forced the occupants, including Leland and Helen Johnson and their children, to march to Camp John Hay in three

separate groups. One day the men in the camp were taken to the Military Intelligence Division for questioning. Before the interrogation, Leland Johnson remembered one thing: "I must rely upon the name of Jesus and His blood." He returned unharmed.

Margaret Joy, a baby girl, was born to the Johnsons during their internment. The little girl soon came down with dysentery. The illness took her to the point of death, and her father cried out to the Lord. The Holy Spirit reminded him to put her under the blood, and Johnson complied. He recalled, "'She is under the blood; she is under the blood.' I knew she would recover."<sup>4</sup> God was faithful to His promises, and Margaret was healed.

The Japanese came to the Johnson home one day and asked if they had any radios. Leland Johnson led them to three radios that were stored in the garage but which had not been used for several months. Convinced that he was a spy, they slapped Johnson in the face and took him to the cold storage building in Baguio.<sup>5</sup> They stripped him of his belt and other items, incarcerated him in a cell which was

constructed beneath the mezzanine floor in the building, and tortured him.<sup>6</sup> God was with Johnson, for his spirit did not break nor did his trust in God.

Elizabeth Galley Wilson (1911-1998)  
Missionary to the Philippines



On December 27, 1941, Japanese soldiers arrived at the house where Elizabeth Galley had been staying, and they took her to the internment camp for civilians at Camp Holmes in the Philippines. She later recounted, "At all times we were enclosed by barbed wire and armed guards often with fixed bayonets stalked the grounds. We lived in a little world of our own, cut off from all that was dear to us."<sup>1</sup> By February 1944, conditions in the camp grew worse and food was at its lowest. "Yet in the midst of these trials God was with us. In all our losses He sustained us and even at times gave us favor."<sup>2</sup>

On December 27, 1944, the internees, including Galley, were at the Old Bilibid Prison near Manila. The U.S. Armed Forces were near the gate of the prison fighting to free the internees. She wrote, "All night the battle raged around us. The heavens were ablaze with fire. Explosion after explosion rocked the city as ammunition dumps were destroyed."<sup>3</sup> As the fight raged on, a mortal shell exploded "about ten feet" from where Galley was standing. She was not scratched. God had protected her.



Gladys Knowles Finkenbinder (1917- )  
Missionary to the Philippines

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The missionaries, along with other civilians in Baguio, gathered at the Brent American School and waited for the Japanese who had already invaded the Philippines. The Japanese overran the school at 2 a.m. on

December 29. Gladys Knowles was herded into one room with all the other civilians. The place was so crowded there was no room for anyone to lie down. The guards walked around all night with bayonets fixed on their guns. God was by her side, giving her strength to endure not only this but what was yet to come.<sup>7</sup>

The Japanese had bombed Camp Hay before their invasion of the island, which had destroyed the plumbing for water at the camp. There was “no access to water, not even to wash diapers ... and a dysentery epidemic erupted.”<sup>8</sup> Gladys recalled how God provided water by allowing it to rain a record of 25 inches during the month of January. The internees collected the rainwater for drinking and washing.

Robert (1916-1975) and Mildred Cole Tangen (1917-1988)  
Missionaries to North China

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On December 26, the Japanese finally reached where the Robert and Mildred Tangen were staying and ushered them to Camp Holmes internment camp.

Because of the lack of food, Mildred Tangen, when seven months pregnant, developed vitamin B deficiency. She described her state: “... with swelling all over, especially the ankles. I also had nausea, vision problems, extreme weariness, and flabby heart muscles.”<sup>9</sup> By God’s providence, a bottle of vitamin B was purchased from the market downtown and helped reverse the symptoms for Mildred and her baby.

In 1944, flu went through the camp and she got hepatitis. Tangen recalled, “I was so yellow I would wake up with my arms and legs bleeding from scratching the itch.”<sup>10</sup> She had already been in the camp hospital and had her stomach pumped, and she refused to have it done again. Instead,



she believed that God wanted to heal her: “I felt someone touched God for me, and I began to mend from the moment I said, ‘I trust God.’”<sup>11</sup>

Jessie Wengler (1887-1958)  
Missionary to Japan

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When war broke out between the U.S. and Japan, Jessie Wengler decided to stay in Japan with her flock of believers. Wengler was the only Assemblies of God missionary who remained in Japan after the war started.

The Japanese never interned Wengler. She had the dubious privilege of being bombed by her own people.

From November 1944 until the end of the war, Tokyo was bombed almost every night. Wengler recalled that pamphlets were dropped on Tokyo, warning the people to leave before the bombing commenced. Then hundreds of B-29s, B-24s, and P-51s at a time would drop incendiary bombs.<sup>12</sup>

By this time, the police had moved Wengler from her home in Mitaka to Tokyo. The bombs started falling on the neighborhood where she was now in Tokyo. She recalled the harrowing experience: “... soon our immediate neighborhood was on fire ... it became a raging inferno and nothing could stand before it ... we ran through the blazing streets to a large School house.”<sup>13</sup> Wengler stayed in the schoolhouse all night and prayed to the Lord. When the fires were out she returned to her home. God was gracious to her. As the fire neared her home, the wind changed direction and not only was her home spared but all her possessions were intact!



Blanche Appleby (1887-1968)  
Missionary to China



Blanche Appleby first went overseas in late 1910 as an independent missionary to Hong Kong and Kwangtung, China. When home on furlough she united with the Assemblies of God in 1917. Appleby said that

when her funds were low she ate “poverty gravy” which consisted of “grease, flour, salt, and water,” but when her funds were plentiful she ate “Pentecostal gravy” which “contained some meat!”<sup>14</sup>

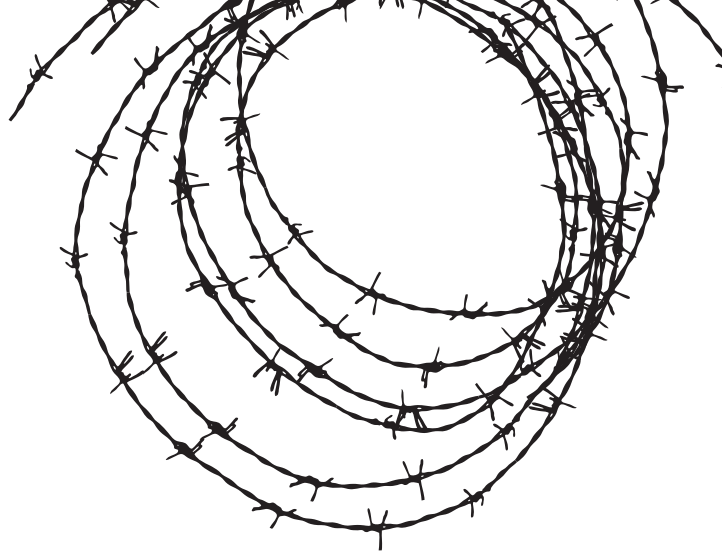
The Japanese invaded the Philippine Islands on December 27, 1941. Appleby was first interned at Camp Holes and then at Los Banos. She wrote, “When we got to camp the Japanese searched our belongings. They went though [fellow missionary] Rena Baldwin’s Bible, leaf by leaf, to see if by any chance there were any dollar bills in it.”<sup>15</sup> However, Appleby had a hundred dollar bill in the pages of her Bible. She hid her Bible in a tree before the Japanese could search it. God hid the Bible from the Japanese and they never found it. She was later able to use the money to buy food for herself and others.

A. Walker (1908-1990) and  
Nell Funk Hall (1909-2004)  
Missionaries to South China



On December 8, 1941, when the Japanese invaded Hong Kong, the Halls were in the village of Tai Po Market, China. After Kowloon fell, Chinese traitors entered the house on December 21 where the Halls and the other

missionaries were staying.<sup>16</sup> Walker described this harrowing experience: “It was just as if hell had opened its mouth and demons were running up and down the street. They came into the house carrying knives and choppers and screw drivers, threatening our lives and repeatedly asking for money ... One of them even took our small son, put a knife to his throat and told my wife she had better show them where the money was.”<sup>17</sup> Giving in to the traitor’s demands, no one was hurt. God’s protective hand was evident once more. The Halls, along with their two children, were interned at Weihsien P.O.W. Camp.



Lula Bell Hough (1906-2002)  
Missionary to South China



On December 8, 1941, Lula Hough was living at Fan Ling. While eating breakfast she heard the sound of planes. She ran outside and saw eighteen Japanese planes making their way to Hong Kong.

At noon, she tuned in her radio and heard “that heavy fighting and bombing were going on in Pearl Harbor, Singapore, and Hong Kong.”

At noon on December 8, as Hough was praying, she heard the Japanese soldiers enter Fan Ling. They came to her house and told her that 150 soldiers would be staying there that night. “Soldiers kept placing a bayonet to my throat and threatening to cut it.”<sup>18</sup> During the stay of the soldiers, an army officer took Hough’s Bible woman off at bayonet point to rape her. Hough recalled, “I plead(ed) the Blood of Jesus to cover that girl.”<sup>19</sup> A bugle blew at that moment and the soldiers went off to eat. Hough and the Bible woman fled the house.

Hough was taken to the Door of Hope Mission in Tai Po Market where she was interned for seven and one-half months. The food left something to be desired: “The first two weeks we lived on nothing but wormy, mouldy whole wheat ...”<sup>20</sup> She reported that over one thousand people died each day from starvation, and that some in Hong Kong resorted to eating human flesh.<sup>21</sup> Hough lost 38 pounds in about six months.<sup>22</sup> Yet through this entire ordeal, God brought her home safe at the end of the war.





Lula Ashmore Baird (1908-2008)  
Missionary to South China

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When Singapore was bombed, Lula Ashmore was in Kuala Lumpur, Malaya. She recalled, “Later that day we received news over the radio that Penang ... was not only being bombed, but that the Japanese

army was already invading the shore of Malaya.”<sup>23</sup>

As Ashmore was making her way to the American consulate, she arrived in Singapore where she stayed with fellow missionary Lawrence McKinney in the church. During the middle of the night, two days after Christmas, they had to run for cover due to the bombing in the city.

Ashmore was able to escape Singapore on December 31, 1941. She left in a convoy of three ships. Only her ship made it to the Cristobal Canal Zone, Panama, and then home to America. God was with her on the ship all the way.<sup>24</sup>

Leonard (1900-1961) and  
Ada Buchwalter Bolton (1893-1984)  
Missionaries to China

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By June 1941, the war forced the closure of the Chinese school where Leonard and Ada Bolton were teaching. All missionaries were advised to leave China. The Boltons asked themselves, “Should we leave China

or should we take our children with us back to Wei-hsi?”<sup>25</sup> They decided to go back to Wei-hsi but, enroute, realized that it was the wrong decision. They turned around and arrived at Hsia-kuan. There they met Dr. May, who offered to transport the family to Kunming in his ambulance. As the Boltons traveled to Kunming in the ambulance, they came under enemy gunfire, but the Lord protected them.

Howard (1899-1992) and  
Edith Lockwood Osgood (1901-1997)  
Missionaries to China

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On December 7, 1941 Howard Osgood and his daughter, Anita, were in Kunming to visit the dentist. While they were there, the Japanese bombed the city. He wrote, “We had just gotten outside the big East Gate when we heard

the sound of the Japanese planes immediately overhead.”<sup>26</sup> As they were running from Kunming, the bombs started falling. “Not knowing of any safer place, [we] threw ourselves on the dirt sidewalk, faces downward.”<sup>27</sup> He put his arm around his daughter to protect her and prayed.

He later recalled, “I myself felt wondrously comforted as if God Himself had just put His hand upon me and taken away all fear.”<sup>28</sup> Anita turned to her father and said, “Dad, when we were lying there on the sidewalk did you feel the wings of God?” “Yes dear,” he replied, remembering that he “felt what had seemed to be the hand of God.”<sup>29</sup> Had they been two minutes sooner in fleeing the bombs they would not have escaped the carnage and might have been killed.<sup>30</sup>

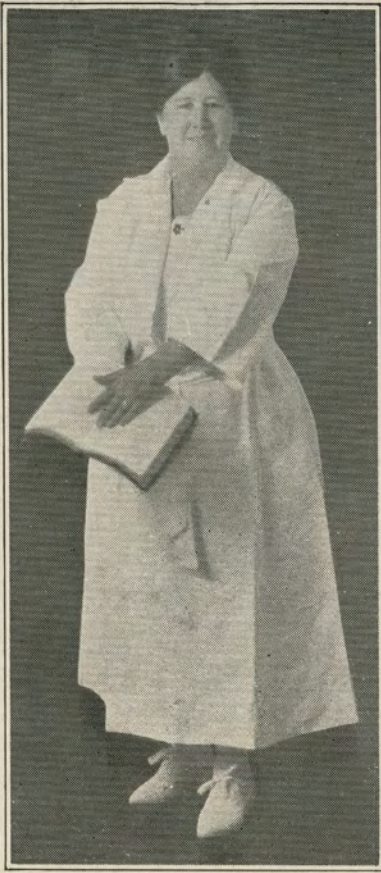
Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday, today, and forever.” The same God who provided for these missionaries under fire continues to provide for His children today. ✝

**Additional testimonies of missionaries in World War II POW camps have appeared in previous editions of *Assemblies of God Heritage* which may be accessed on the FPHC website. A few of these include: “Delivered From Destruction in Tokyo” (Spring 1985); “Missionaries Caught in the Crossfire” (Winter 1991-92); “A Hong Kong Prisoner During World War II” (Summer 1997); “World War II Heroes of the Faith” (Winter 2004-0); “The 1945 Rescues in Manila” (Winter 2004-05); and “The Dramatic World War II Liberation at Los Banos” (Spring 2005).**



**Paul E. Scull, an ordained Assemblies of God minister and veteran of the U.S. Air Force, is on staff at Chestnut Assembly of God (Vineland, NJ). He also is founder and director of Turning Point Community Counseling Center.**

*See page 69 for notes*



# HEAR Evangelist MAE-FREY

ONCE A GREAT NEWSPAPER WOMAN  
NOW WORLD-WIDE EVANGELIST

Thousands Blessed under her ministry. She will conduct an

EVANGELISTIC and HEALING

CAMPAIGN

AT

The Pentecostal Church

81 Drummond Street  
near St. Catherine St.

STARTING OCTOBER the 7th

(OVER)

Advertisement for one of Mrs. Frey's meetings in the 1930s.

## Mae Eleanor Frey: Pentecostal Evangelist and Novelist

By Gerald W. King

It was dark, and an inky blackness spread over the lifting clouds. A small life raft was being tossed by huge waves on the Pacific ocean like an immense piece of cork. Now and then a bolt of lightning zigzagged across the sky and heavy peals of thunder rolled over the waters. It was when great drops of rain started to fall that the man lying on the raft began to stir and show signs of life.<sup>1</sup>

– Mae Eleanor Frey, *Altars of Brick*

High drama on the high seas from the pen of one of Pentecostalism's early novelists.<sup>2</sup> Mae Eleanor Frey, nee Edick, was born in Deposit, New York on August 5, 1865. She was raised by an aspiring playwright of a mother and a journeyman father. Her mother believed that predestination had made her family Christians already while her father

espoused few opinions on religion. The family moved to Pennsylvania before Mae turned two, and at age five she tasted the stage in a role written specifically by her mother. Suitably encouraged, Mae entertained literary distinction and launched her career as the social reporter for a newspaper in 1882.<sup>3</sup>



God had other plans, however. On assignment to cover a local revival, she came under the charms of the Holy Spirit and her future husband, Peter Frey, receiving salvation from actual sin and potential spinsterhood.<sup>4</sup> Her radical conversion at the end of the meetings disappointed her family and friends as she gave up high society and focused her attention on evangelism. “My only desire was to win souls for Jesus,” she recalled.<sup>5</sup> The couple wed and entered the ministry as Baptists. Mae Eleanor took two years of courses at a Bible institute and three more at a Baptist seminary.<sup>6</sup> In 1905 they affiliated with the newly-formed Northern Baptist Convention (NBC). The Western New York District ordained her in October despite her protests.

At the ordination service, the elders prayed that she would recover from a lingering illness and preach the gospel around the world. Stricken for years with tuberculosis, often coughing up blood in the pulpit, her condition only worsened thereafter. Weak and near death, someone suggested that they call a Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) minister, George Davis, to pray for her healing.<sup>7</sup> Lying on her bed, she testified that during Davis’s intercession “a thrill like electricity passed through my body,” healing her instantly. She dropped into peaceful slumber, woke up refreshed and asked for her clothes. An older woman watching over her declared, “They often get like that just before they die.” Frey insisted she was quite well and proved it by living to age ninety.

In 1907, she was stirred one night by the Lord to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. She attended the CMA convention in New York that year.<sup>8</sup> She was particularly impressed with the Pentecostal testimony of African

missionary Mary Mullen. The Spirit was poured out with a number of future Pentecostal leaders receiving the gift of tongues, including D. W. Kerr and David McDowell, though Frey was not among them. She gave instead a word of prophecy under the power of the Spirit. Not satisfied, she continued to minister among CMA congregations with charismatic leanings in Pittsburgh and Scranton, Pennsylvania. Later that year at a convention in Chicago, CMA founder A. B. Simpson assured her with his standard reply that not all who received the baptism spoke in tongues. She dropped the matter.

After various pastorates in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the Freys took charge of Echo Lake Baptist Church in West Milford, New Jersey in 1918. A friend named Martha was

**Frey’s remarkable life intersected with so much of the American story of religion.**

reported to her as having “gone crazy for religion.” She happened to meet Martha on a New York City street shortly afterwards and asked if it were true. Martha answered that she had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit at the Pentecostal Assembly on Park Avenue, which Mae had assumed to be a Jewish congregation.<sup>9</sup> She also dissuaded Mae from the popular evangelical notion that Spirit baptism accompanied conversion. (This position was taught by C. I. Scofield in his reference Bible.)

Frey decided to attend services at the small mission. She found the meetings odd, with no preacher and no beginning or end, but the people were genuinely happy. One Saturday evening, in a cynical mood, she listened to W. I. Evans speak on Habakkuk 3:10, “The just shall live by faith.”<sup>10</sup> Feeling chilled, she left, but the power

of the Spirit remained on her, convicting her for not seeking the baptism twelve years prior. It would be three months before she returned to the mission, and again it was Evans at the pulpit, this time armed with Hebrews 4:12, “The Word of God is powerful.” Instead of being cut to the quick, she was angry, for Evans’s depiction of dry-boned preachers rattling off arid sermons were still echoing in her head as she approached her own pulpit the next morning. She was spiritually dry, and she knew it.

Other baptized saints such as William Faux and Emmie Little convinced her to attend the annual Easter convention at Bethel Pentecostal Assembly in Newark, New Jersey.<sup>11</sup> (Evans was an instructor at the training school attached to the church.) It

was at this convention, in 1919, that at last she succumbed to the gentle pleading of her Lord and was baptized in the Spirit. “I never knew just how

I got to the floor, but for hours I lay there while streams of Glory flooded my soul,” she testified.<sup>12</sup> After she arose, a strange language burst forth from her lips. The Lord also gave her a vision to preach the gospel far and wide though she had rarely set foot outside the Northeast.

In 1920, her church sent her as representative to the Northern Baptist Convention in Buffalo, New York. Prior to the main proceedings, a group of Fundamentalists led by Minneapolis pastor William Bell Riley devised a strategy to rescue the NBC from modernism. From this occasion the editor of the *Watchman-Examiner*, Curtis Lee Laws, first coined the term “Fundamentalism.”<sup>13</sup> Frey reported on the event to Assemblies of God readers, remarking on how thrilling the meetings had been to her and the knowledge that some at least were

# The Gospel Highway

Editor—Evangelist Mae Eleanor Frey

“Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. Luke 14:23.

Vol. I.

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, FEBRUARY, 1927

No. 3

## Evangelistic Campaign at the Upper Room Assembly

SAN JOSE, CAL., REV. F. FREIMARK, Pastor.

From March 8th to April 6th

MEETINGS CONDUCTED BY EVANGELIST MAE ELEANOR FREY

A feast for the Spirit, soul and body. The full Gospel will be preached. An old time Pentecostal meeting is expected. If you are sick in body COME; if you have lost the glory of your soul, COME; if you want to be revived, COME; if you want to see souls saved, COME!

CLYDE PIERCE, Pianist, Trombone and Mirimba Player, and Soloist, will have charge of the music in the Frey campaigns. He is a young man with a pleasing personality and has a soul for music. Moreover, he loves the Lord with all his heart and has the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

### AWAKE, AWAKE!

#### Sermonette by the Evangelist

God speaks, God calls, God warns, He intreats. Eph. 5:14. Wherefore He saith; awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O, Zion; put on thy beautiful garments.—Shake thyself from the dust. Isa. 52:1.

Church of Jesus Christ, beloved Bride of the Lamb, when wilt thou heed the voice of thy Bridegroom, who calls to thee to bestir thyself and go with him, “for, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;—the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise my love, my fair one, and come away”. Song 2.

O cannot we discern the signs

### THE STREETS OF LOS ANGELES

We had occasion to spend a week in a downtown hotel in Los Angeles some time ago, and while there we had an opportunity of seeing a good deal of this, the beautiful, widely known from coast to coast city of California.

Of course, one sees about the same things in every city, for cities are alike; they have their great departmental stores, hotel, restaurants, churches, parks, office buildings, their suburbs and residential sections, the slum districts, altho such places as we term “the slums” are fast passing into history, but we have something possibly far worse, beautiful places made attractive by music and flowers, splendid furnishings, everything that would appeal to the aesthetic, but where their paths lead down to hell, as we read in the Book of Proverbs. Weary, tired faces. Sitting in the lobby of

### CAMPAIGN NOTES

As the Highway goes to press we are closing a campaign in Watsonville, California, where we have been preaching the Gospel of Salvation, Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Healing of the body and the Coming of Jesus Christ. This four square Gospel is what the people need.

Rev. E. V. Bronson is pastor of Bethel Tabernacle and has a band of faithful saints with him. We had a fruitful ministry here and praise the Lord for it. This was our second campaign in this city and it seemed good to meet those who had been saved and baptized in the Spirit when we were here first, standing true to God and living the victorious life.

Arrangements are being made with the Assemblies of God churches in Waterville, N. Y., for a meeting in the early part of the summer. Brother John B. Jacobs

Part of the February 1927 issue of Mae Eleanor Frey's paper, called *The Gospel Highway*.

fighting for the truth in the denominations.<sup>14</sup>

By the fall she and her husband took up the life of itinerates, criss-crossing the U.S. and Canada as evangelists. She affiliated with the AG on February 4, 1921.<sup>15</sup> She did most of the preaching and was particularly adept at communicating to fellow Baptists.<sup>16</sup> At First Baptist Church in San Jose, California, Pastor William Keeney Towner called her the best evangelist next to Aimee Semple McPherson,

under whose ministry he had been baptized in the Spirit in 1923.<sup>17</sup> In a meeting at Glad Tidings Temple in San Francisco she barely spotted a hand around a pillar signaling that the owner desired salvation. It belonged to Myer Pearlman, a Jewish immigrant born in Scotland, whose conversion she would often recount to audiences.<sup>18</sup> In 1924 she toured missionary stations in Egypt and Palestine, fulfilling in part God's call to world evangelism.<sup>19</sup> She returned via England, encouraging the

brethren over tea to form a British version of the Assemblies of God, which they were in process of doing.<sup>20</sup>

Peter's failing health forced them to settle in Glendale, California in 1925 and afforded their daughter Catherine opportunity to further her education.<sup>21</sup> By this time, an older daughter, known to us only as Mrs. H. C. Dargert, was already married and living in Huntington Park and their son Stuart was then living in Philadelphia.<sup>22</sup> Mae briefly published *The Gospel Highway*



as a monthly periodical. Peter died on November 25, 1928, aged 68, leaving her free to pursue far-flung engagements. Her ministry as an evangelist over the next nine years were spent extensively throughout the U.S. and Canada in both Pentecostal and mainline churches, and even one appearance at the Mormon Tabernacle in Salt Lake City.



MAE ELEANOR FREY

**Evangelist Mae Eleanor Frey in about 1936.**

One evening, probably late in 1924, she was “kidnapped” by the Ku Klux Klan and “forced” to preach a sermon to their members. She reported to AG chairman J. W. Welch, “They clapped and seemed to like it.”<sup>23</sup> Frey was surprised at the number of Pentecostals, both ministers and laity, who had joined the KKK. Their rituals and symbols did not impress her as being Christian. The room was dimly lit by candles, and the head “spook”

explained their organization’s aims to her at the conclusion. They came in large numbers to the last day of her campaign to swell her offerings.

The Klan offered her a position as “International Speaker for the Women’s Society,” “but I shall never join them,” she told Welch. She was uncertain as to what attitude to take as she was “... meeting up with this thing in nearly every Assembly.” Certain that one lost the Spirit’s anointing if caught up with it, she queried Welch as to the AG position.<sup>24</sup> Welch replied that the Council had taken no official position, but that they were not in sympathy with them. He regretted that some in the AG had been drawn into their ranks, for “God is not in it.”<sup>25</sup>

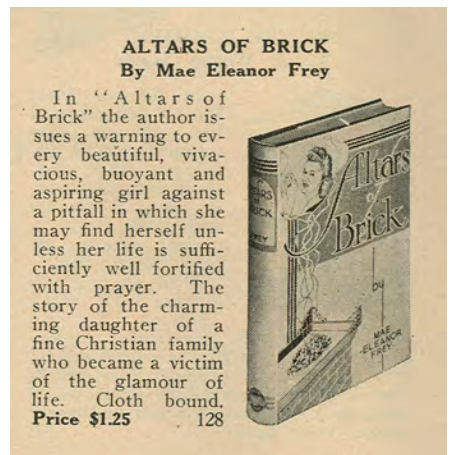
It should be remembered that while history has rightly condemned the KKK as a racist organization, it did not necessarily appear so in the early 1920s. After years of dormancy, the Klan was re-formed by Methodist minister William Simmons in 1915. As an organization of hate, he had recruited less than 5000 members by 1920, so he hired two publicists to revamp their image.<sup>26</sup>

The reinvented Klan promoted itself as a “pro-American” organization, feeding into the country’s fears over communism and the influx of immigrants, many of them Jewish or Catholic. The KKK’s numbers ballooned to over 4 million in just four years, made up of white Protestants who believed foreign elements were threatening the American way of life. While not excusing the Pentecostal presence, to what degree those members participated in the more sinister and secretive activities of the Klan is undocumented. The Klan’s membership dropped precipitously once people discovered its true intentions.

In 1937, now aged 72, Mae Eleanor Frey slowed down enough to take up a temporary pastorate in Watertown, New York. It also gave her time to

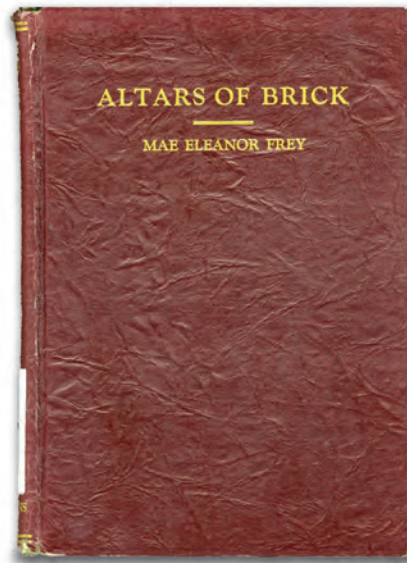
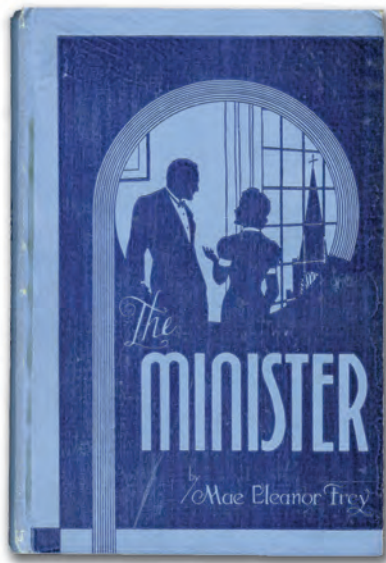
pick up her pen in semiretirement. Two years later she published her first novel, *The Minister*.<sup>27</sup> Frey interwove incidents of her own experience into the narrative, although the story itself was a fabrication.

The novel opened with the Easter service of Hempstead Memorial Church, a nondescript mainline congregation and its liberal shepherd, Rev. Dr. James Stillwell. It was not long before Alice, a Pentecostal transplant and the niece of one of the church’s biggest supporters, occupied the front row. Stillwell, smitten in her presence, pursued a romance. Like oil and water, Pentecostals and modernists do not mix, which set the relationship on a precarious edge. A Pentecostal revival in town split the couple apart, with Alice enthusiastically embracing its spirit and Rev. Stillwell stiffly resisting its impulses. Happily, Stillwell repented of his opposition and marital chimes flowed.



**A promotion for *Altars of Brick*, taken from the Gospel Publishing House catalog, 1945-1946.**

A second novel, *Altars of Brick*, came out in 1943 while she was filling in as pastor at Bethel Full Gospel in Rochester, New York.<sup>28</sup> Published by Eerdmans, an evangelical concern in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the story reflected the newly-cemented relationship of Pentecostals and “neo-evangelicals” in the National Association of



***The Minister* (1939) and *Altars of Brick* (1943), both written by Mae Eleanor Frey.**

Evangelicals (NAE), which organized the same year. Gone were references to Pentecostal peculiarities so evident in *The Minister*, although, in step with other evangelicals, the common enemy remained theological modernism.

The protagonist this time was Mrs. Smartwood, whose daughter Janet had become engaged to the ultra-rich banker, Earl Montgomery, who attended Center Church under Dr. Marshland (with a rather centrist and mushy theology, no doubt). The Smartwoods, on the other hand, congregated at Calvary Temple under the learned Dr. Townsend (who, like Dr. Towner above, preached a solid message on the cross). Again, Frey intertwined aspects from her own life into the account, particularly in the locales of Glendale and of Paterson, New Jersey, where she had recently moved to be closer to her sister. A reporter also appeared intermittently throughout the narrative. Mae Eleanor Frey's skills as a writer are evident in the passage at the beginning of this article, demonstrating a sharp, active mind into her

late seventies.

Energetic and indefatigable, Frey enjoyed a long life. In 1944, J. Roswell Flower had to apologize for suggesting that Mrs. Frey should join the "super-annuated" list of retired ministers.<sup>29</sup> Frey pointed out that she had enough engagements to keep her busy until 1948. "Mercy!" she cried, "Wait until I'm dead, but not while I'm alive."<sup>30</sup> At age 80 she was still contributing to the "aged ministers fund," from which she by all rights should have been benefiting.<sup>31</sup> Flower was still marveling at Frey's endurance in 1950, remarking, "My own mother is 85, but she could not keep pace with you, we are sure."<sup>32</sup>

Frey was also vitally concerned with the development of Pentecostalism and gave whole-hearted support to the General Council. "God gives me health and strength and life is simply so wonderful since I came into Pentecost," she wrote to Brother Flower. "I have never been without work or calls. Hallelujah! I am glad to have cast my lot among you."<sup>33</sup>

By the late 1940s she was expressing her delight that Pentecostals had been accepted into the NAE while maintaining a definite attestation to the Spirit's work. Writing to Flower from Carberry, Manitoba, she noted, "We are a distinctive people holding the truth in a sane and humble way not hiding our light under a bushel. We have carefully threaded our way after a term of years through the maze of fanaticism to the real manifestations of the Holy Spirit. We have not quenched the Spirit but we have learned to be regulated according to the Scriptures and by wise leadership."<sup>34</sup>

She nearly left the AG in 1928 when the Southern California District debated banning women from the pastorate, but the storm passed and she remained.<sup>35</sup> There was no truer fellowship for her than the one that she embraced through the years.

A gifted communicator in person and on paper, Mae Eleanor continued to preach the gospel until at last she retired from this life on December 4, 1954 at her son's home in Stamford, Connecticut. Norman Farrington, for whom Frey had preached late in life in Huntington, Long Island, presided over her funeral.<sup>36</sup> She is interred at Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Paterson, New Jersey.

Frey's remarkable life intersected with so much of the American story of religion. She witnessed the first outpouring of the Spirit in the CMA, was present for the historic meeting that officially launched Fundamentalism as well as at meetings during the formative period of the British Assemblies of God. More importantly, she was a pioneer in Pentecostal literature, fulfilling her childhood dream to produce engaging stories with her reporter's eye for detail. Instead of wasting a career as her mother had feared, the Lord redeemed one through Frey's raw talent.<sup>37</sup> ✠





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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, *Altars of Brick* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1943), 193.

<sup>2</sup>Sven Lidman wrote a Swedish-language novel in 1920. Some other early Pentecostal fiction writers include Siri Andersson, Brita Lidman, Ulla Lidman-Frostenson, Kristian Nielsén, Clara Brooks, Clara B. Clark, Stanley Frodsham, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Bertha B. Moore, Jewell Ready, Charles Elmo Robinson, Lillian Trasher, and Amy Yeomans.

<sup>3</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, "An Evangelist's Story," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 15, 1926, 8.

<sup>4</sup>Mae Eleanor Frye [sic], "From Press to Pulpit: Turning God's Way at the Cross Roads." *Latter Rain Evangel*, February 1926, 20-23. An article printed in a special souvenir edition of *Word and Work* in May 1989 states that the revivalist was Billy Sunday, but I have not been able to collaborate this from other sources. Sunday assisted evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman from 1894-1896 and did not launch out on his own until 1897, and even then mostly in the Midwest. Peter held his first pastorate in 1897 in Plainfield, New Jersey, but the couple had been married for some time before then.

<sup>5</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, "An Evangelist's Story," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 15, 1926, 8.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. I suspect that the Bible institute was A. B. Simpson's in Nyack, which would explain her later connection to the Christian and Missionary Alliance. The seminary may have been Rochester Seminary in Western New York, which was still evangelical in the late 1800s.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>The timing is confirmed in the postscript of a letter from Frey to J. W. Welch, dated April 11, 1924 (FPHC). Faux served as AG missions secretary in the mid-1920s.

<sup>12</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, "An Evangelist's Story."

<sup>13</sup>C. L. Laws, "Convention Side Lights," *Watchman-Examiner*, July 1, 1920, 834.

<sup>14</sup>"A Crisis in the Baptist Church," *Pentecostal Evangel*, July 10, 1920, 5.

<sup>15</sup>While Frey never states her reasons for leaving the Baptists, it is likely that she became uncomfortable with their lack of openness to the gifts of the Spirit. There is no indication that she was ever asked to leave the denomination or that her church at Echo Lake was unhappy with her. She also had developed ties with AG leaders in the Northeast through her experiences at Bethel and through the CMA. The AG had strong centers in the Northeast, making them a natural choice for her.

<sup>16</sup>E.g., Baptists invited Frey to address businessmen in Denver in 1926; "Good Meeting in Denver," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 7, 1926, 12.

<sup>17</sup>"Frey Evangelistic Campaign," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 14, 1925, 18. Towner's church became a charismatic lighthouse in the Bay Area with at least four Baptist churches becoming Pentecostal and one Fundamentalist pastor from Santa Cruz, J. N. Hoover, received his baptism there, traveling extensively thereafter as an AG evangelist.

<sup>18</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. Roswell Flower, dated August 2, 1943 (FPHC). Pearlman became an instructor at Central Bible Institute and wrote multiple books on the Bible and theology.

<sup>19</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, "An Evangelist's Impression of our Missionary Work in Egypt," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 3, 1924, 10.

<sup>20</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. W. Welch, dated April 11, 1924 (FPHC). She found the Brits "... awful nice folks, but my land! they are stiff."

<sup>21</sup>*Glendale City Directory*, 1926 [courtesy Glendale Public Library]. Peter Frey is listed as moving to 323 Mission Road, home of the Glendale Missionary Colony, and in 1927 rented rooms at 323 East Eulalia. Mae Eleanor's address remained at Paterson, NJ until 1927 on her ministerial card (FPHC), though in a 1925 letter she listed her address as 1506 S. Glendale Ave., Glendale, CA. Catherine was attending a boarding school. See Mae Eleanor

Frey letter to J. W. Welch, dated January 31, 1925 (FPHC).

<sup>22</sup>"Rev. I. P. Frey," *Glendale News-Press*, November 29, 1928, n.p. [A special thanks to George Ellison and the staff at Glendale Public Library for tracking down this obituary.]

<sup>23</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. W. Welch, dated January 9, 1925 (FPHC).

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>J. W. Welch to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated January 21, 1925 (FPHC).

<sup>26</sup>Eric S. Jacobson, "Silent Observer or Silent Partner: Methodism and the Texas Ku Klux Klan, 1921-1925," *Methodist History*, January 1993, 104-12.

<sup>27</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, *The Minister* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1939).

<sup>28</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey, *Altars of Brick* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1943); Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. Roswell Flower, dated July 21, 1943 (FPHC).

<sup>29</sup>J. Roswell Flower letter to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated September 5, 1944 (FPHC); J. Roswell Flower letter to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated September 14, 1944 (FPHC).

<sup>30</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. Roswell Flower, dated September 11, 1944 (FPHC), underscore in the original.

<sup>31</sup>J. Roswell Flower letter to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated May 15, 1945 (FPHC).

<sup>32</sup>J. Roswell Flower letter to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated September 14, 1950 (FPHC).

<sup>33</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. Roswell Flower, dated July 21, 1943 (FPHC).

<sup>34</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. Roswell Flower, dated August 24, 1948 (FPHC).

<sup>35</sup>Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. R. Evans, dated September 8, 1928; J. R. Evans letter to Mae Eleanor Frey, dated September 14, 1928; Mae Eleanor Frey letter to J. R. Evans, dated October 31, 1928 (FPHC).

<sup>36</sup>Norman S. Farrington, "Remembering Mae Eleanor Frey," *AG Heritage* (Summer-Fall 2005), 54.

<sup>37</sup>The author wishes to express thanks for the preparation of this article to Phyllis Funk, Glenn Gohr and Darrin Rodgers, and the following libraries: Glendale Public Library (Glendale, California), Huntington Public Library (Huntington, New York) and The Ferguson Library (Stamford, Connecticut).

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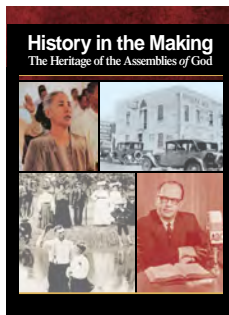
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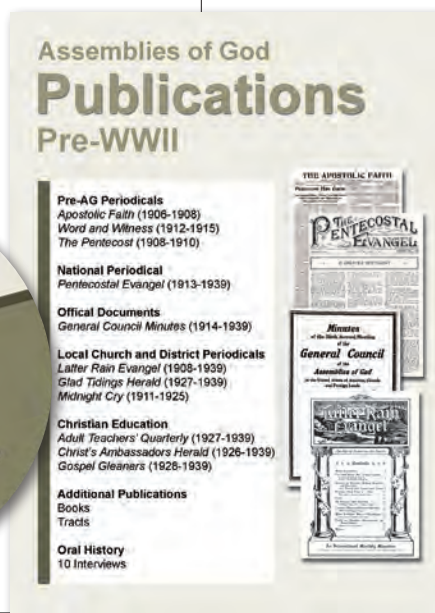
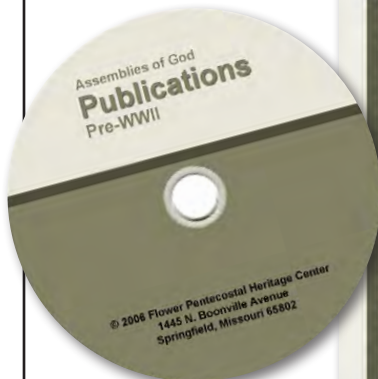
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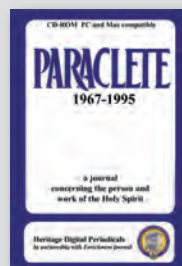
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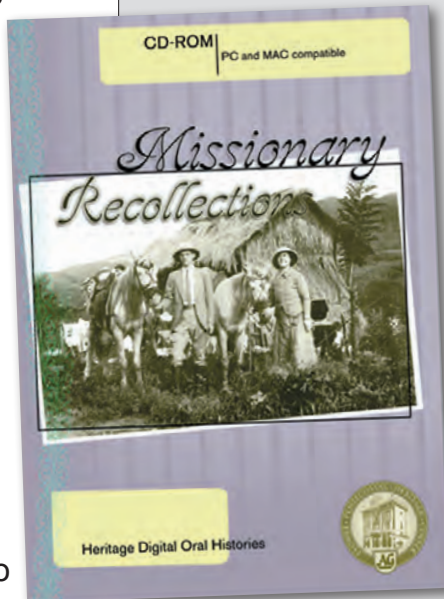
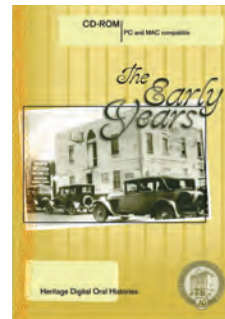
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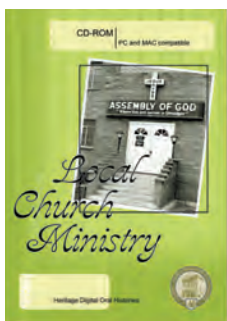
Hugh and Betty Baker, H. C. Ball, Ada Bolton Bard, Eva Bloom, Murray N. Brown, Sr., John H. Burgess, Alfred and Elizabeth Cawston, Charles Greenaway, Melvin L. Hodges, J. Philip Hogan, Maynard L. Ketcham, Howard C. Osgood, Everett L. Phillips, Harriet Williams Schoonmaker, Anna Stafsholt, Esther Harvey, 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

## From the Editor

(Continued from page 3)

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 432.

<sup>2</sup>*General Council Minutes*, 1929, 39; Charles Stelzle, ed. *The New Handbook of the Churches* (New York: J. E. Stohlmann, 1933), 259.

<sup>3</sup>Benson Y. Landis, ed. *Yearbook of American Churches, 1945 edition* (Lebanon, PA: Sowers Printing Co., 1945), 144.

<sup>4</sup>Gary B. McGee, *This Gospel Shall Be Preached: A History and Theology of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions to 1959* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1986), 132-143.

<sup>5</sup>"A God-blessed Convocation," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 7, 1933, 2.

<sup>6</sup>"The Hoover Corner," *Latter Rain Evangel*, July 1934, 13.

<sup>7</sup>C. M. Ward, *In Perils of... Brethren* (Columbus, GA: Quill Publications, 1991), 55-57.

<sup>8</sup>Christine Kerr Peirce, "Men of Vision," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 14, 1935, 2.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

## Native Americans

(Continued from page 51)

<sup>29</sup>"Indian Revival Crusades Are Successful," *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 18, 1967, 26.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup>Washburn, 49.

<sup>32</sup>Pauline Dunn, *A Trail of Beauty: A Short History of American Indian Bible College* (Phoenix, AZ: American Indian Bible College, 1984), 5; "A Word to the Reader" in Joseph J. Saggio and Jim Dempsey, eds., *American Indian College: A Witness to the Tribes* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2008), xiv.

<sup>33</sup>Dunn, 12-55; Saggio and Dempsey, 412.

<sup>34</sup>Glenn Gohr, "Charlie Lee: Bringing the Gospel to the Navajos," *Assemblies of God Heritage* 25:1 (Spring 2005): 8-13.

<sup>35</sup>"Navajo Indian Church Becomes Indigenous," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 10, 1978, 8-11.

<sup>36</sup>"The Indigenous Principle Works," *Pentecostal Evangel*, September 22, 1974, 20.

<sup>37</sup>General Council Minutes, 1977, 66.

<sup>38</sup>Home Missions Board Minutes, September 15-16, 1977; Home Missions Administrative Committee Minutes, February 14, 1978. Both filed under "Indian Representative: John McPherson." Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

<sup>39</sup>One ethnic representative is chosen through a vote from all of the different representatives from the various ethnic fellowships (Native American, African-American, Latino, Gypsy, Jewish, etc.) to hold a seat on the Executive Presbytery. According to John E. Maracle, who is the current president of the Native American Fellowship, for the last three years the Fellowship leaders have chosen the African-American Fellowship President as their voice on the Executive Presbytery.

<sup>40</sup>Angela Tarango, interview with John E. Maracle, August 1, 2007.

<sup>41</sup>Cherokee Evangelist Bruce Thum and the Sunshine Party, creators of the well-known drama, *Heaven's Gates and Hell's Flames*, are one example of Native evangelists who gained acceptance and recognition in the Assemblies of God and in the broader Christian world. This evangelistic drama has been performed in thousands of churches across the U.S. from the 1960s to the present time.

## Miracles

(Continued from page 56)

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Galley, "'Behind Barbed Wire': God Gives Favor," *Full Gospel Herald* (February 15, 1946): 13.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>Elizabeth Galley, "Deliverance," *Full Gospel Herald* (June 15, 1946): 4.

<sup>4</sup>Leland E. Johnson, *I was Prisoner of the Japs* (Los Angeles, CA: the author, n.d.), 133.

<sup>5</sup>Donald E. Mansell with Vesta W. Mansell, *Under The Shadow of the Rising Sun: the True Story of a Missionary Family's Survival and Faith in a Japanese Prisoner-of-War Camp During WWII* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press

Publishing Association, 2003), 160.

<sup>6</sup>Johnson, 82.

<sup>7</sup>John W. Kennedy, "P.O.W.: Former Prisoner of War Still a Missionary at 85," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 10, 2002, 17.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>9</sup>Mildred E. Tangen, autobiographical sketch, 1984, 4. Typed manuscript. Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup>Jessie Wengler, *Letters from Japan* (Pasadena, CA: the author, [1952?]), 48.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>14</sup>Blanche Appleby, "I Remember," *Pentecostal Evangel*, May 24, 1964, 5.

<sup>15</sup>Blanche Appleby, "Our Remarkable Deliverance from Los Banos Internment Camp," *Pentecostal Evangel*, June 16, 1945, 1.

<sup>16</sup>Walker and Nell Hall, *For The Duration* (Hobe Sound, FL: Midnight Cry Publishing Corp., [1992]), 46.

<sup>17</sup>"Experiences in Japanese-Held Hong Kong," *Pentecostal Evangel*, October 31, 1942, 8.

<sup>18</sup>Fred Lawson, "Huber Heights Woman Spent 45 Years in China," *Dayton Daily News and Journal Herald*, May 12, 1987, Z5-1.

<sup>19</sup>Lula Bell Hough, "The Angel of the Lord Encamping Around," *Pentecostal Evangel*, November 14, 1942, 5.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>22</sup>Lawson, Z5-1.

<sup>23</sup>Lula M. Ashmore, "When the Japs Invaded Malaya," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 8, 1942, 1.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 10-12.

<sup>25</sup>Leonard Bolton, *China Call* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publish House, 1984), 174.

<sup>26</sup>Howard C. Osgood, "'Under His Wings Shalt Thou Trust': The Story of the Bombing of Kunming," *Pentecostal Evangel*, August 29, 1942, 1.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>30</sup>*Ibid.*



# Donation of Rare Hispanic Historical Materials

Additional missing issues of *La Luz Apostolica* sought

**When Felix Posos, former superintendent of the Northern Pacific Latin American District, passed away in April 2008, his widow, Mary, realized the historical importance of the old Spanish-language magazines and other historical materials that he left behind.**

She contacted the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center (FPHC) and discovered that Felix had corresponded with the director, Darrin Rodgers, several years earlier and had expressed interest in donating those materials to the FPHC! Mary Posos finished the task that her husband had begun and sent a large box of treasures to the FPHC. Historians now have access to these materials, donated in memory of Felix Posos, documenting the story of Hispanic Pentecostalism.



**Felix Posos**



**La Luz Apostolica**

The Posos collection includes many issues of *La Luz Apostolica* from 1960 through 1973 that were missing from the FPHC's collection, as well as Spanish-language hymnals, photographs, and funeral booklets honoring deceased ministers.

The primary magazine for Hispanic Pentecostals in the early decades of the twentieth century, *La Luz Apostolica* was published from 1916 to 1973. *La Luz Apostolica* contains a treasure trove of information, but very few issues prior to 1960 are known to have survived.

"This is an exciting donation," states Rodgers. "The stories of how God has worked through the Hispanic Pentecostal churches have often been left out of the history

books, because historians have not had easy access to materials documenting this important part of our Pentecostal heritage."

The title of Victor DeLeon's 1979 history, *The Silent Pentecostals*, highlighted this marginalization of Hispanic Pentecostals. He wrote that Hispanics "did not receive the recognition they deserved," because they were minorities without the educational and cultural advantages of Anglo church members. Existing histories of the Assemblies of God primarily included the stories of Anglos, because historians – who were largely English-speaking – were most familiar with Anglo sources.

While recent histories, such as Gary McGee's *People of the Spirit*, intentionally include sacred stories from across the ethnic and linguistic divides within the Assemblies of God, much work remains to be done.

Church of God Theological Seminary professor Paul Elbert, when researching about Hispanic AG missionary Alice Luce for his recently-published book, *Pastoral Letter to Theo*, discovered that most of her devotional writings from 1917 through 1955 were lost to history. Elbert explained, "Luce and countless other Hispanic pioneers whose inspiring stories need to be told cannot, because publications such as *La Luz Apostolica* simply are not available to researchers."

The FPHC, located in the Assemblies of God Headquarters in Springfield, Missouri, holds one of the largest Pentecostal archival collections in the world. The FPHC has already begun digitization of *La Luz Apostolica* and plans to place these historic magazines on its website, [www.iFPHC.org](http://www.iFPHC.org).

"The donation of the Felix Posos collection honors a well-loved Hispanic church leader in the Assemblies of God," notes Rodgers. "But it also draws attention to the need to locate and preserve additional Hispanic materials."

**Readers who are aware of the existence of old issues of *La Luz Apostolica*, as well as other Hispanic Pentecostal historical materials, are encouraged to contact the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center by email at [archives@ag.org](mailto:archives@ag.org) or toll free at 877-840-5200.**

# Recent Acquisitions

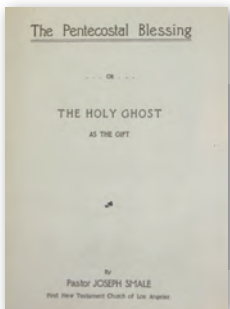
The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center has an amazing collection of printed materials, oral histories, artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia – making it one of the largest Pentecostal archives in the world. Duke University professor Grant Wacker calls the collection “unparalleled.” Many scholars and church leaders, when writing about the Pentecostal movement, first do their research at the FPHC.

We are indebted to the hundreds of people who donated materials to the FPHC during the past year. The following are just a few of the exciting new acquisitions.



## Cornelia Jones Robertson

When AG Chaplain Emanuel Williams (East Point, GA) saw a picture of Cornelia Jones Robertson in the 2008 edition of *AG Heritage*, he couldn't believe his eyes. Robertson, his childhood pastor, is the first known African-American female ordained by the AG (1923). Williams contacted the FPHC and donated rare photographs and materials relating to Robertson. FPHC Director Darrin Rodgers also recorded an oral history interview with Williams, which is available on the FPHC podcast site: <http://ifphc.podbean.com>



## *The Pentecostal Blessing*

Joseph Smale, influenced by the Welsh Revival, delivered a series of sermons in his Los Angeles church in the Fall of 1905 that helped to set the stage for the Azusa Street revival. These sermons were published in book form as *The Pentecostal Blessing*, but no copies of the book were known to have survived. That is, until Dr. Gerard Flokstra's son, Gregg, found a copy at a garage sale in Oklahoma for 25 cents. Flokstra deposited the book at the FPHC, just in time to aid Tim Welch as he finished his dissertation on Smale (see Welch's article on p. 26).



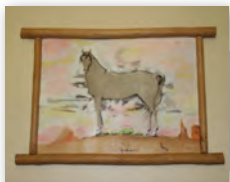
## Latin American Bible Institute yearbooks

Mary Posos' donation of early issues of *La Luz Apostolica* (see p. 70) inspired several other people to donate Hispanic materials. Anita Torres (La Puente, CA) donated several photographs and a number of yearbooks from two AG schools, both named Latin American Bible Institute, located in La Puente, California and in San Antonio, Texas.



## Swedish-language Pentecostal books

What happens to duplicate books received by the FPHC? Some are sent to overseas Bible college libraries and archives! The FPHC shipped a large collection of U.S. Pentecostal books to the Institute for Pentecostal Studies (Uppsala, Sweden), and IPS Director Jan-Åke Alvarsson shipped about 200 Swedish-language Pentecostal books to the FPHC. Such exchanges enhance the global conversation about Pentecostal identity by making the varied testimonies in our Movement accessible in multiple locations.



## Charlie Lee painting

This 1949 watercolor painting by Navajo AG pastor Charlie Lee was donated by Derald and Peggy Musgrove (Springfield, MO). The Musgroves were classmates of Lee at Central Bible Institute. The Smithsonian also holds a Lee painting in its Navajo art collection.



# Make a Difference!

Help the FPHC to share the story of the Assemblies of God

**D**o you ever wonder what the Assemblies of God will be like in years to come? You're not alone. That is why the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center aims to preserve and promote the heritage and distinct testimony of the Assemblies of God.

Do you remember C. M. Ward, Dan Betzer, and the Revivaltime choir? Was your life changed by a pastor, evangelist, missionary, church, or Teen Challenge center? God uses people, places and events to change the course of history — for individuals and for entire nations.

We in the Assemblies of God have a tremendous heritage! You and I know this, but many people have not had the opportunity to learn from the wisdom of those who came before.

**There are four ways that you can help us to preserve and share our Pentecostal heritage with the next generation:**

## 1 Entrusting us with materials from your life and ministry

The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center is actively seeking the following materials related to your ministry and the worldwide Pentecostal movement:

- Magazines
- Sermons
- Photographs
- Diaries
- Interviews
- Scrapbooks
- Books
- Audiovisual Resources
- Memorabilia
- Newsletters
- Correspondence
- College Yearbooks
- Tracts
- Congregational Histories

Your contribution might be just what we need to fill gaps in one of our many collections.

## 2 Donating your used books

Direct your used books back into ministry by donating them to the Assemblies of God Used Book Clearinghouse.

The Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center has always accepted donations of archival materials, including books, but sometimes people offer collections of books outside of the FPHC's collecting interests. Now, in conjunction with the libraries of AGTS, Central Bible College, and Evangel University, the FPHC is able to accept donations of personal libraries for the benefit of AG ministries. The archives or library which directs a donation to the Clearinghouse shall have first choice of materials from that donation. Remaining books will be made available by 4WRD Resource Distributors to missionaries, overseas Bible schools, individuals outside the U.S., and stateside non-profit organizations.

While all materials are accepted, the following are of particular interest:

1) Anything related to the Assemblies of God or the broader Pentecostal and charismatic movements, including books, tracts, pamphlets, magazines, unpublished manuscripts, audio recordings, video recordings, correspondence, scrapbooks, local church histories, and artifacts.

2) Any books religious in nature (including theology, church history, missions, biographies, commentaries, etc.).

3) Any academic books (in general, books with numerous footnotes or endnotes, or those published by university presses).



# Assemblies of God

## 3 Supporting the Wayne Warner Research Fellowship

Wayne Warner, former director of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center (1980-2005), is a familiar name across the Assemblies of God. Under his leadership, the Center became a leading Christian archives and developed one of the largest and most accessible collections of Pentecostal historical materials in the world. He was the founding editor of *Assemblies of God Heritage* and has authored or compiled eleven books and countless articles.

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.

Have you been encouraged by Wayne's writings or friendship? Do you appreciate our Assemblies of God heritage? By making a financial contribution to the Warner Fellowship, you will honor Wayne's significant contribution to the preservation and understanding of Assemblies of God history, and you will encourage scholarship in the field of Pentecostal history.



## 4 Contributing to the FPHC endowment

You may wish to consider making a financial contribution to the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center endowment to help ensure the long-term future of this ministry of remembrance. You can give needed support for the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center by making a gift of cash or property or simply by including the following words in your will:

I give, devise, and bequeath to the Assemblies of God Foundation, 1445 N. Boonville Ave., Springfield, MO 65802 (insert amount being given here) to be used to support the ministry of the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center.

Bequests are free of estate tax, and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government. A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living.

It is recommended that an attorney help in drafting or amending a will. Please contact the Assemblies of God Foundation ([www.agfoundation.com](http://www.agfoundation.com)) for additional information by phone at (800) 253-5544.

Please contact me if you would like to discuss how you can help us to preserve and share our Pentecostal heritage with future generations. Thank you for your dedication to God and to the Assemblies of God!

*Darrin J. Rodgers*

**Darrin J. Rodgers, M.A., J.D.**  
email: [drodgers@ag.org](mailto:drodgers@ag.org)

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web: [www.iFPHC.org](http://www.iFPHC.org)





# Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center



## Come Explore Assemblies of God History

The above exhibit, displaying William J. Seymour and other leaders in the Azusa Street revival, is part of the inspiring Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center Museum.

- **Museum Hours:** Open daily, Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **Admission:** No admission fee. Free parking. Handicap accessible.
- **Tours:** Guided tours are available for interested groups.

Please contact us for further information:

**Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center**

1445 N. Boonville Avenue - Springfield, Missouri 65802

(417) 862-1447 ext. 4400 - E-mail us at [archives@ag.org](mailto:archives@ag.org)





Assemblies of God  
**HERITAGE**

1445 N. Boonville Avenue  
Springfield, Missouri 65802-1894

Stanley M. Horton seated (front row, far right) with the faculty of Metropolitan Bible Institute in the 1940s.

