



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY RUTHIE EDGERLY OBERG

Early Pentecostals commonly believed that two books were essential for revival: the Bible and the songbook.

Originally, Pentecostals used a variety of non-Pentecostal songbooks. However, at the 1920 General Council of the Assemblies of God, a recommendation was made that “a Pentecostal Song Book, to be used universally throughout the Assemblies of God, be prepared and published.”

In 1924, *Songs of Pentecostal Fellowship* was released. This was followed by songbooks such as *Spiritual Songs* (1930), *Songs of Praise* (1935), and *Assembly Songs* (1948). These collections featured gospel songs, and songs by AG authors. They also began to bring unity to the congregational singing of AG

churches.

In the 1950s, the Music Division of Gospel Publishing House was established. One of its first duties was to produce a songbook for congregational singing that would also encourage the use of orchestrations for instruments.

This new songbook, *Melodies of Praise*, made its debut 60 years ago in the *Pentecostal Evangel*. It was the first AG music publication to be released in both round note and shaped note editions. It is still available through My Healthy Church.

See the original advertisement for *Melodies of Praise* on page 10 of the Feb. 10, 1957, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/feb101957. 



FREEDOM FROM THE PAST

PAGE 2



GETTING THE WORD OUT

PAGE 5



A FAITH OF HIS OWN

PAGE 6



THE BREAD OF LIFE

PAGE 7

Read the full versions of these stories on PENews.org



NEWS FOR, ABOUT, AND FROM
THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

CONNECT WITH US ON

 FACEBOOK  TWITTER

 RSS

AND OUR [WEEKLY E-NEWSLETTER](http://PENews.org).
VISIT PENEWS.ORG FOR
MORE INFORMATION.

MINISTERING TO THE STUDENT BODY [PAGE 3](#) • THE HEADED CALL [PAGE 4](#) • MULTIPLE GENERATIONS UNIFIES CHURCH [PAGE 5](#) • THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY [PAGE 8](#)



FREEDOM FROM THE PAST

BY GINGER KOLBABA

Since childhood, Kristi Lemley has wanted to make the world a better place. Having experienced in her young life the trauma of sexual abuse, she was intrigued to know why people did what they did, so she could, in the simplest terms, help them not to repeat it anymore.

At first, Lemley, who lives in Brighton, Illinois, thought the best way to succeed would be through the criminal justice system, so in the late 1990s, armed with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and psychology plus a master's in social work, Lemley began working as a federal pretrial counselor in St. Louis. She soon discovered her focus had been misdirected.

"I didn't want to be the one getting people in trouble or having them fear me!" she says. "I wanted to be the one to offer grace and help them move beyond pain and hurt and past issues."

With that realization, in 2000 Lemley began her own private Christian

counseling practice, specializing in treating patients who suffered trauma and self-injurious behavior. Yet Lemley couldn't shake off memories of her own trauma, along with a sense of anger that seemed to emerge whenever she counseled clients who had also experienced sexual abuse.

Finally in 2002, Lemley says she felt the Lord telling her she was still holding onto guilt and shame from what happened to her in her childhood.

"I had forgiven the person who had harmed me," Lemley says. "But I was holding on to anger for how I responded because of my pain." One day as she listened to a Christian radio station, a song based on Psalm 103:12 played that declared forgiven sins are as far as the east is from the west.

"It was like a dam broke within me and I was free," she says. That day she vowed that she would tell about God's saving and healing grace to anyone who would listen.

"There's freedom from our past and

THE BREAD OF LIFE

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

A physical appetite, not spiritual hunger, initially pulled Natty Lopez to City Heights Assembly in San Diego.

"I was attracted by the food they were giving out," says Lopez, 68. "I wanted to check out the food, not the church."

But upon later attending a service, Lopez found herself nourished from God's Word as well.

Five years later, Lopez is a member of the church board and involved in the church's food distribution ministry three or four times a week.

Groceries also brought George Villarini to the Assemblies of God church four years ago.

"I had just moved to the neighborhood," says Villarini, 60. "I had nothing in the refrigerator."

That is too common an occurrence in ethnically diverse City Heights, the poorest section of the city.

City Heights Assembly also is a distribution point for a feeding program for children and youth. Villarini is in charge of the church's afterschool lunch program that extends from noon to 5 p.m. He puts in 12 hours a week

overseeing the meal program, which runs six days a week.

In all, 2,500 students receive meals. Pastor Bob Mets even takes lunch to teens at a skate park — kids who won't set foot inside the church. Making sure people, especially children, don't go hungry has been a continual concern for Mets in his 18 years as pastor.

"Poverty, alcoholism, and drug abuse makes things complicated," says Mets, 56. "A lack of food, education, employment, and transportation makes things difficult. So often poverty impacts the relationships we have with others and with God."

Feeding kids has been a priority since Mets came. Single moms and teens have consistently come to the church in search of something to eat.

"We fight poverty with food," Mets says. "We give people food to establish a relationship."

Mets hopes to add a Spanish service, an addiction recovery ministry, and a program to disciple adults.

"We must impact the community," Mets says. 

THE ABCs OF SALVATION

ACCEPT that you are a sinner, and God's punishment for your sin is death and separation from God forever.

BELIEVE that Jesus paid God's price for your sin when He died on the cross.

CONFESS "Jesus, I believe You are who the Bible and history declares You are — the Son of God. I humble myself and surrender to You. Forgive me. Make me spiritually whole. Change my life. Amen."



THE HEDED CALL

BY MEGAN WHITE

In the year 2000, Dave and Marie Turner lived in Columbus, Ohio, working for U.S. Missions Teen Challenge and also as inner-city church planters. All the while, they worked toward the goal of going to the foreign mission field with their kids, Rachel and Jason.

However, something unexpected happened.

The couple's 6-year-old daughter was diagnosed with Crohn's disease, a chronic, inflammatory bowel disease characterized by inflammation of the digestive tract.

The heartbreaking diagnosis included a warning from the physician not to leave the U.S. Dave thought, *How can this be? We are called to be missionaries!*

Dave and Marie prayed and sensed God reaffirming their call as missionaries.

"The doctor was totally against it, but we knew the Lord was sending us and He would take care of us," Dave says.

And the Lord did.

When Rachel was 7, the Turners went to an evangelistic outreach. While they worshipped, Rachel says Jesus

healed her. And since then, she has had only a mild case of Crohn's.

While Rachel's doctor still advised the Turners not to leave the U.S., the couple began preparing to move to Costa Rica with Assemblies of God World Missions. After learning the required medicine for Rachel, then 11, could be obtained in Costa Rica, the family moved.

After arriving, however, the Turners discovered that Costa Rica only had a limited amount of the medicine Rachel needed. Once again, God proved faithful. Rachel's doctor petitioned for it, and the Turners purchased the prescription for \$50 instead of the suggested \$900.

During a furlough, Dave and Marie took Rachel back to her doctor in the U.S. After the physician examined her, he told the Turners her stay in Central America had left her healthier.

"I give a lot of credit to my parents because they put my health in God's hands," Rachel says. "To be able to look back and see God taking care of me and honoring my parents' faith is amazing. I was diagnosed with something that should have ended their careers." 

GETTING THE WORD OUT

BY SCOTT HARRUP

"We go into places where they don't like missionaries or Bible publishers," Jim Dearman says of his ministry with Life Publishers, an Assemblies of God World Missions ministry.

Jim and Nancy Dearman served four terms in West Africa before joining Life Publishers in 2008. During their years in Burkina Faso, Togo, and Sierra Leone, they saw the desperate need for literature and the power of printed materials to promote discipleship and church growth.

"As Americans, we take for granted all the printed materials we have," Nancy says. "We saw the great value placed on the printed word and particularly on Pentecostal resources."

Especially helpful to meet needs is Life Publishers' study Bible being translated as a one-volume Bible library for Christians around the world. The *Fire Bible* is equipping pastors and church leaders in regions where other Christian materials are hard or impossible to find.

"The *Fire Bibles* we gave to students in Sierra Leone were required textbooks for their classes every day," Dearman says.

As the Dearmans continue their ministry, Jim travels widely to organize additional *Fire Bible* translations and establish printing and distribution avenues around the world. He helps train local translators, works with on-site or nearby printers, and arranges for shipping of the final product. 

MULTIPLE GENERATIONS UNIFIES CHURCH

BY CHRIS MAXWELL

More than half of those attending Glad Tidings Assemblies of God in Toccoa, Georgia, have migrated from other places. But the church mixture isn't just geographical. It is also demonstrated ethnically — in the congregation and the ministry staff. Three of the seven paid staff are African-American.

Of the 88 family units who regularly attend, 19 represent minority or interracial households. Josh Garner, lead pastor of Glad Tidings for two years, also is pumped about the spread of ages among adherents: 48 families are under 40 years old, 25 are between 40 and 65, and 15 are 65 and older.

Most of the 90 people who regularly attended when Garner arrived were 50 and up.

"The existing older church and new younger church have melded into a cohesive body," Garner says.

Garner, 36, worked to put younger people on the church board so they could learn from the leaders who had served for years.

That has helped bring church unity, rather than division. The older generation mentors, embraces, and engages the college-age students and young adults. This harmony has become exponential, helping the congregation reach unchurched young adults as well. 

A FAITH OF HIS OWN

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

David M. Herndon grew up as the son of Assemblies of God missionaries to Africa, Bob and Linda Herndon. But civil unrest in the nation, as well as Linda's diagnosis of breast cancer, obligated the Herndons to move back to their native Texas in 1993. In high school in Dallas, David ran into a multitude of classmates who prodded him to use illegal drugs.

"I was looking for some sort of acceptance, and I felt like I found it in the addictive drug subculture," Herndon recalls.

Although missionary parents raised him, Herndon hadn't make a commitment.

"I had a borrowed faith," Herndon says. "I could sing all the songs about Jesus, but there was a disconnect."

The drug addiction continued during Herndon's college years. Bob and Linda practiced tough love, stopping David's college tuition payments and refusing to buy groceries.

Herndon hung out with drug users who culled credit card information to steal others' identity. Following Herndon's arrest, a judge sentenced him to prison for two years.

In prison, Herndon connected with the Lindale, Texas-based Calvary Commission. Finally he made a real commitment to follow Christ.

Herndon, who ended up serving just a yearlong term, enrolled in Calvary Commission's prison aftercare



program in 2010, and graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology in 2013. He also met his wife, Krysta, on a short-term missions trip to Romania, where she served as a Calvary Commission missionary.

Now Herndon serves on the Calvary Commission Leadership Council that conducts the organization's daily operations and he also is the ministry's foreign missions coordinator. Along with Krysta, he is youth pastor at Church of the Living Hope, an AG congregation in nearby Tyler.

David and Krysta, who wed in 2013, have a 2-year-old son, Elijah, and a 1-year-old daughter, Evangelyn.

"The Lord has exceeded our expectations," says Linda. "We had no idea he would become a licensed minister, work as a youth pastor, or get involved in missions with a wife who wanted to do missions." 

its pain," Lemley declares. "We don't have to live that way!"

Subsequently, Lemley formed Living in the Light Ministries, began speaking nationally, and obtained ordination with the Assemblies of God as a minister and evangelist. And she widely shared God's message of physical, emotional, and spiritual freedom.

Nancy Bishop felt stuck in grief after the death of her mother until she attended a Bible study led by Lemley.

"Kristi encouraged me to get closer to the Lord and to allow Him to heal what had brought me such pain," Bishop recalls. But then Lemley went further and encouraged Bishop to

share her story with others — not just about being healed over the loss of her mother, but also the healing that took place over a painful divorce she experienced years before.

"Kristi's passion for the Lord to heal people who are broken or hurting comes through in everything she does," Bishop says. "Her whole mission is about directing people toward the Lord."

In the 13 years since she first received that call to teach, Lemley has ministered to thousands of people, including through her ministry's TV program and her book, *Broken and Transformed*. 

MINISTERING TO THE STUDENT BODY

BY IAN RICHARDSON

Cornerstone Assembly of God in Pender, Nebraska, is a small church looking to make a big impact in the village of 1,000 and the surrounding area.

Recently, the church of about 50 attendees helped to feed international students at the nearby Western Iowa Tech Community College on the weekends, when food service is unavailable.

"If following Jesus doesn't lead you to hurting, hungry people, then you're not following Jesus," says Randy L. Nelson, lead pastor. "That's the motto that we're trying to follow at Cornerstone."

"International students for the most part don't have vehicles, nor do they bring in a lot of extra money with them,"

says Juli Albert, who serves as vice president of learning at the college. "I was afraid that our students were going without meals on the weekends."

After consulting with the church board, Nelson invited the students over for a potluck dinner the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Twenty students representing about nine countries attended. Following the meal, the church sent all the rest of the leftovers home with the students.

"They were amazed that this church would come forward and offer up a meal and also that level of hospitality," Albert says.

Cornerstone AG sponsored another meal in January, and has started providing students with grocery store gift cards. 