



THIS WEEK IN AG HISTORY

BY DARRIN J. RODGERS

Seventy-five years ago, two Assemblies of God colleges experienced unusual seasons of revival. The April 10, 1937, issue of the *Pentecostal Evangel* reported that Central Bible Institute (which became Central Bible College) and Southeastern Bible Institute (now Southeastern University, Lakeland, Florida) experienced “times of refreshing.”

L. R. Lynch related that CBI students began making public confessions, prompted by piercing messages that revealed the darkness of sin. He wrote, “the flood-gates of heaven were opened for us. God heard our humble cries. When we reached the foundation-rock, the heavenly fire

blazed from the supernatural glory, while shouts of praise and thanksgiving rose from exultant hearts.”

The revival lasted five days, and 17 people were baptized in the Spirit.

Edgar Bethany reported a similar revival at Southeastern Bible Institute. Bethany wrote, “Morning chapel service which ordinarily lasts from eight to nine could not be terminated. Volumes of prayer mingled with tears and at times strong crying, ascended to the throne of grace. Messages and wonderful interpretations were given by the Spirit. It resulted in a breaking up in practically every heart.”

Read the two articles on page 11 of the April 10, 1937, issue of the *Evangel* online at s2.ag.org/apr101937.



MARITAL EXPECTATIONS IN ERA OF LEGAL SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

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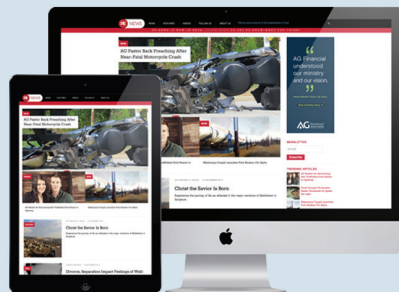
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MARITAL EXPECTATIONS IN ERA OF LEGAL SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

As the one-year anniversary approaches of the U.S. Supreme Court ruling legalizing same-sex marriage nationally, Christians are grappling with the fallout of a culture increasingly opposed to upholding biblical standards on matrimony.

The question of expanding lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights has grown more acute this spring, as technological firms, entertainment conglomerates, and sports teams have threatened to boycott states passing laws designed to provide religious liberty protections for churches, Christian campus groups, and other faith-based organizations that promote traditional views of marriage.

In the wake of the landmark *Obergefell v. Hodges* ruling last June, marriage-specific religious-freedom legislation has been introduced in two dozen states.

However, in recent state clashes over religious liberties and “sexual

liberty,” LGBT preferences increasingly have prevailed. For instance, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal vetoed legislation March 28 that would have exempted pastors from performing same-sex wedding ceremonies and protected Christian schools from renting facilities to organizations advocating same-sex marriage. Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe vetoed a similar bill two days later.

“LGBT groups and their allies have made a show of force in bringing pressure to veto religious liberties laws,” says Tim Schultz, president of the 1st Amendment Partnership in Washington, D.C.

In Mississippi, lawmakers passed the Religious Liberty Accommodations Act on April 1. Gov. Phil Bryant decided to sign the bill Tuesday morning, making Mississippi the first state to ratify such an act.

Schultz says such bills, if enacted, generally would resolve marriage-related conflicts between LGBT rights

BLIND WOMAN LEADS JAIL MINISTRY

BY DEANN ALFORD

Retinitis pigmentosa, a retina disease, had robbed the eyesight of Linda Sue Fears by degrees. Declared legally blind in 1978, she lost her reading vision in the mid-1990s.




Nevertheless, Fears plugged into ministry at First Pentecostal Assembly of God in Ottumwa, Iowa, when she learned the county jail needed a woman’s chaplains. She enrolled with Global University, using audio books and study guides from the Assemblies of God Center for the Blind, and passed tests to obtain ministerial credentials. In 2001, Fears launched Glad & Sad Jail Ministry.

“They wanted somebody who knew the Word and was nonjudgmental, someone who cares,” says Fears, 66. “That job does not require eyesight.”

Fears meets once each week with a women’s group that averages nine; she meets privately by appointment for pastoral counseling. Ages of the women range from 18 to 57. Each newly incarcerated woman receives a copy of the “Life On the Inside” Bible and other material. Glad & Sad has created a Christian library for all inmates.

Fears’ aim is to lead women to salvation in Christ, and to help them find training, addiction recovery, or other services for full integration back into society and to get plugged into a church. Blindness actually has proven to be a ministry asset, she says.

“I’ve had girls tell me that they feel safe with me,” Fears says. “They say because I can’t see them, I can’t judge them.”

“So many churches overlook the potential of the blind,” says Paul Weingartner, director of the Center for the Blind. “Linda challenges all that.” 

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.”



BOY HIT BY TRUCK IS RESURRECTED

BY CHRISTINE TEMPLE

It's not every day that God performs a miracle right in front of your home.

Pastor Eric Angeles was preparing for a church board meeting in his Bellflower, California, home on a Saturday morning when he heard a loud thud, followed by shouting. Angeles opened the door to see a young boy from the neighborhood lying completely still on the street. A pickup truck had just hit the boy, knocking him 50 feet.

"He was lifeless," says Angeles, pastor of New Hope International Christian Church in Norwalk. "His eyes and mouth were open, but he was motionless."

The pastor's wife, Ruth, and daughter, May, both rushed out of their home to see how they could help. The nine-year-old boy's parents and sister also had heard the thud and already were next to the boy crying.

"When I saw the boy, I immediately asked if I could pray for him," Ruth says. "I prayed in the name of Jesus. 'Lord, bring back life into this boy.'"

Ruth says the Lord impressed upon her to call out the child's name, and she started shouting, "Leonel! Leonel!" That's when Ruth noticed the boy's eyes blink once.

"I announced that he was alive and asked everyone to call on the name of Jesus," she recalls. "Even the man who hit him and other relatives were kneeling around the boy crying and calling on the name of Jesus."

After five times of calling out Leonel's name and the name of Jesus, the boy began gasping for air on that December morning.

Doctors said Leonel wouldn't be able to walk for months, but he was running two weeks later. The boy's injuries included a broken hip, ribs, dislocated shoulder and collarbone, a fractured skull, blood clots, and a fractured spine.

After the Montanez family took Leonel home from the hospital after only four days, they all accepted Jesus as Savior. "We met Him at that moment," Leonel's father said. PE

LEADER PACES FOR FINISH LINE

BY JOHN W. KENNEDY

At 67, Duane Henders has a few more goals in mind before he is finished as Global Teen Challenge Latin America Caribbean regional director. Teen Challenge ministries have been established in 23 nations in the region.

But Henders is passionate about the nine countries where an invitation has been extended to come start the ministry. Henders wants to help plant a Teen Challenge center and train workers in the Bahamas, Belize, Cayman Islands, Nicaragua, Panama, Grenada, Guyana, Colombia, and Antigua.

"The biggest need isn't money or buildings, it's a person willing to labor in the field," Henders says. "I'm praying for the Lord of the harvest to send forth young men and women as mentees who are called to win souls and make disciples. I want to see a Teen Challenge planted and workers trained in every country of Latin America and the Caribbean."

Since 1999, Henders has served as Global Teen Challenge Latin America Caribbean regional director, helping establish Teen Challenge centers as well as conducting extensive staff and leadership training.

Henders anticipates it will take another three to five years to see solid ministries established. PE

CHURCH STARTS VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

BY KEN WALKER

Pastor Aaron R. Burke and a core group of 17 people started Radiant Church in South Tampa, Florida, less than three years ago. Initially, Burke and his wife, Katie, gathered supporters in a hotel, encouraging them to use social media to recruit others interested in joining the church.

That outreach helped expand the core group to 45. The newcomers also jumped on Facebook and Twitter to reach the area's movers and shakers, plus personnel from nearby MacDill Air Force Base.

At the launch service that September, 348 people showed up. Lately, the church is averaging 980 worshippers at three Sunday morning services in a renovated movie theater.

Burke says pastors are fooling themselves if they think the public is going to search for them by traditional means. While seekers used to look for churches with huge buildings, today they want to know about its online presence, the pastor says.

"People are online looking for someone who can connect with them," Burke says. "There's a purpose for social media, and that's to reach people."

"Social media allows for the message to be multiplied to a much wider audience," says Chris Railey, director of the Church Multiplication Network. PE



KENTUCKY SENIORS YOUNG AT HEART

BY ROBERT E. MIMS

After half a century as a children's pastor for various Kentucky Assemblies of God congregations, Patsy Dennis felt she should bow out. But the grandmother of three insisted it not be considered retirement.

"I stepped down from being a children's pastor, but I did not step out of ministry," says Dennis, who at 67 years old has a reputation for having lost none of the inspirational creativity – and energy – she had when she first began pastoring youth at age 16.

What has changed is her constituency. Today, she is focused on an often overlooked component at churches: men and women 50 years and older, comprising the baby boom generation, and even their parents.


"I never dreamed I would be working with senior adults," Dennis says.

A year ago, the Kentucky Ministries Network launched the Young at Heart senior adults ministry, with Dennis as director. While she still lends oversight to the state's children's ministries network, these days she most often is rallying Kentucky AG churches

to a vision of engaged, active, and spiritually renewed seniors.

Young at Heart activities may be as simple as monthly informal get-togethers over coffee, prayer, and devotions. Or they might involve lunches, home and nursing facility visitation, or door-to-door witnessing excursions. Dennis believes there is no area of ministry where church seniors cannot serve – and thrive. Young at Heart programs have launched in 17 Kentucky congregations.

The new ministry course represents a 180-degree turn for Dennis, who credits the Holy Spirit for leading her to do volunteer work in a senior assisted living setting. She found many older lonely and isolated Christians, both in assisted care and in the church pews. Dennis saw wasted potential.

"I fell in love with the idea of senior ministry," Dennis says. "We want to see our seniors get out of the corners of their churches and enabled to do things. Our seniors always were the backbone with their giving, but now they are getting as active as our youth." 

and religious freedom in favor of religious freedom.


In Missouri, conservatives are pushing to get a religious freedom constitutional amendment on the fall ballot, meaning it would bypass the potential of a governor's veto if approved. Last week, Assemblies of God General Superintendent George O. Wood sent a letter to AG ministers in the state urging them to support the proposed ballot measure.

Wood is perplexed that in a nation with a long history of tolerance toward minority views – including allowing conscientious objectors to serve elsewhere as noncombatants during

conscripted times of war – suddenly those with moral objections to certain sexual behavior are labeled as hatemongers.

"The LGBT community is insisting that regardless of one's conscience, it must be violated," Wood says. "There actually is discrimination against people who have a strong view of life and marriage based on their reliance on sacred texts."

Wood urges pastors to uphold sexual standards on teachings beyond homosexuality, including areas such as divorce and cohabitation.

"Churches must have sufficient intentional discipleship," Wood says. 

PASTOR'S JOURNEY THROUGH ISRAEL RESULTS IN HOUSE OF PRAYER

BY DAN VAN VEEN

The dream for Senior Pastor Jamie Morgan of Life Church (AG) in Williamstown, New Jersey – to walk where Jesus walked – became a reality when her church presented her with a trip to Israel last year. Choosing to travel with the Center for Holy Lands Studies, she expected to encounter God during the experience, and she did!

While in the old city of Jerusalem, Morgan says the Lord told her He was raising up leaders to call the Church back to being a place of prayer; then, while in the Garden of Gethsemane, He told her that Life Church was to be one of those houses!

"Prayer reformation leads to prayer

awakening," Morgan explains. "Prayer awakenings are always a precursor to revival – the Assemblies of God was birthed from Azusa Street, but Azusa Street was birthed from cottage prayer meetings!"

Morgan says Life Church dedicated three rooms to prayer – personal prayer, world and/or themed prayer; and corporate prayer. The church also holds bimonthly prayer times where prayer is continuous for 24 hours.

"The prayer rooms are filled with the presence of God," Morgan says. "When they enter a prayer room, they encounter God. And God is responding to their prayers!" 