

REPORT OF ASSISTANT GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT

L. Alton Garrison

The opportunity to steward the initiatives that support a healthy church and the ministries loved by so many churches within our Fellowship is unmatched in my ministry experience. It is an honor to share with you the report for Acts 2 and Church Ministries for the past 12 months.

ACTS 2 JOURNEY

- Of the 1,346 churches from 40 districts that have participated in the Acts 2 Journey Cohorts, 1,015 have received full scholarships.
- Twenty-seven Acts 2 Journeys are in process or scheduled for 2019. Each Acts 2 Journey involves four Cohorts, Friday afternoon leadership training for pastors, and Saturday for pastors and their vision teams (usually 8-15 people).
- Since July 2018, the Acts 2 Journey team has trained nearly 700 leaders to lead Acts 2 Journey Cohorts in the USA, Tanzania, Kenya, and Malaysia.
- Eleven districts and networks that have sent representatives to take part in the Acts 2 Journey Intensive Training events have begun leading Acts 2 Journey Cohorts at the district level.
- The Acts 2 Journey is partnering with The Warrior's Journey and has been approved by the Army Chief of Chaplains for use by chaplains on Army bases worldwide.
- The next Acts 2 Journey Intensive Training is scheduled in Malaysia on November 7-9, 2019, and in Springfield, Missouri, on November 19-21, 2019, and March 31-April 2, 2020.
- After a five-year process of statistical analysis, survey design, and validation, we have launched the Acts 2 Church Survey which is our tool for measuring Spirit-empowered church health for the Acts 2 church. Our development and subsequent testing revealed the following insights:
 - The single greatest factor for achieving Spirit-empowered church health is (1) outward focus demonstrated in community engagement. As the local church directs its attention outward, its focus shifts, its priorities shuffle, and its purpose comes into clearer view. We have been teaching this for years, and we are finding that the data overwhelmingly confirms this message.
 - The other dominant factors that influence Spirit-empowered church health are (2) absence of unhealthy conflict, (3) Spirit-led worship, and (4) the pursuit of Spirit-empowerment. Each of these plays a major role in supporting the first component of outward focus. Collectively, they now provide us with the targets that can drive us toward establishing a Spirit-empowered local church in every community in our nation.

CHURCH MINISTRIES

Church Ministries is fully engaged in supporting biblical literacy within the local church. Over the past several months, each of the ministry departments has been bringing the Bible Engagement Project to the forefront in the work they do. Following are some of the examples of work accomplished toward this goal:

AG CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

- The leadership development training series *Hydrate* begins with a session focused on making God's Word the first read of the day. More than 400 children's leaders have engaged in this content within the first year. Additional trainings help leaders understand how to build a deep faith and give the importance of biblically-sound scope and sequence to support raising kids who are biblically fluent.

- Girls Ministries resources are anchored in biblical and doctrinal themes. In the 3rd-5th grade age group, the girls will memorize more than 27 Scripture verses and read the entire New Testament.
- Junior Bible Quiz has released a fresh look which includes an updated website, logo, and focus on helping those in the local church fall in love with teaching kids the Word of God using the *Bible Fact Pak*. This is resulting in a greater level of engagement across the country.

AG YOUTH MINISTRIES

- A 56-day devotional for students going on AIM trips has been developed and given to more than 2,000 participants in short-term missions experiences.
- A new curriculum, *Deeper: The Book of John*, is in development and scheduled for release in the fall of 2019. This curriculum will have students reading the entire Book of John, journaling answers to questions, and participating in small-group discussions.

AG ADULT MINISTRIES

- AG Men is focused on ensuring **every missional man is disciplined and every disciplined man will be missional**. The vision is for every man to become the priest in his house, church, and marketplace.
- AG Men has produced a visionary discipleship resource network of small group/individual Bible studies which include 46 series (206 individual lessons). Thirteen series are in Spanish (54 individual lessons), and every series is a FREE download at men.ag.org. Since the launch of this discipleship resource, we have seen more than 26,000 FREE downloads.
- AG Women is introducing *Chasing Truth* during General Council 2019. This daily Bible reading journey will walk women through the Bible in one year by using a downloadable reading plan, weekly devotionals, memory verses, and more.

MISSIONS INITIATIVES

God has blessed our efforts in raising funds for our missions giving arms within the Assemblies of God. The giving totals from 2018 and insights below show Church Ministries is making a significant impact in supporting missions within our Movement.

Of significant interest, AG Women is launching *Light the Way*, a focused missions funding project designed to challenge women in giving to REACH the lost, RESCUE the hurting, and RESOURCE those seeking truth.

Ministry	2018 Giving Total	Giving Insight
Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge	\$8,541,018.67	Four-year growth of 34%
- Masters Toolbox*	\$190,705.95	Record-giving year
- Coins for Kids*	\$282,701.38	\$3,598,306.09 since 1993
Speed the Light	\$9,836,273.66	Highest total in 12 years
Women Touching the World	\$588,152.06	Launching <i>Light the Way</i> in 2020
Light for the Lost	\$5,822,615.84	3.5% increase over 2017
2018 Total	\$24,788,060.23	

As executive director of Church Ministries, I am privileged to have Mark Entzminger serve as Church Ministries administrator and also as national director of Children's Ministries.

Church Ministries is blessed with amazing directors. We celebrate those God is sending our way to provide leadership but also rejoice with those who are responding to God's call on their life as they move to a new ministry assignment. Below are the changes to the Church Ministries leadership team since the last GP report:

Joining the Church Ministries Team

- Elly Marroquin – national director of Christian Education and Adult Discipleship
- Darin Poe – national director of Youth Discipleship
- Lori Warning – national director of Girls Ministries and Children's Discipleship

Transitions from Church Ministries

- Ryan Horn – transferred internally to work on the Bible Engagement Project
- Alycia Horn – resigned to pursue a different career path and spend more time with family

PERSONAL

After prayerful consideration, I have decided not to allow my name to be placed in nomination for reelection as the assistant general superintendent. For the past 12 years, it has been a great honor to have served God and the Assemblies of God in this role. The Church Ministries team is comprised of spiritual, godly, and talented people who are dedicated to advancing the ministries of the districts, networks, and churches through equipping and resourcing those they serve.

I am grateful for the capable assistance of Jackie Chrisner who has served the office of the assistant general superintendent for the past 25 years. Her attention to detail, editorial skills, and pleasant personality have been invaluable.

Johanna and I value all our friendships but are especially grateful for the opportunity to have served for 14 years on the Executive Leadership Team with all its members, past and present. The current team is poised with visionary leadership and anointed to lead our Movement to greater victories. The best days for the Assemblies of God are ahead!

Our love for the local church and passion to see churches become healthier and more missional have been the key factors in the decision Johanna and I have made to dedicate the next season of our ministry to leading the Acts 2 Journey Initiative. We are happy to help support the vision of our General Superintendent Doug Clay "to see a Spirit-empowered church that is marked by spiritual and numerical growth in every community."

* Masters Toolbox and Coins for Kids are focused missions projects included within Boys and Girls Missionary Challenge.