

wesleyan life

THE MAGAZINE OF THE WESLEYAN CHURCH



Filled & Sent



Vision



Together: Pentecost Sunday prayer

There are those holy moments that mark a movement.

They most often occur when the heart of God meets the hearts of those who love him and long for the transforming presence of his Spirit to fall afresh.

May 31, 2020, was one of those moments for The Wesleyan Church. It was Pentecost Sunday, and people from around the world gathered virtually to seek his face and empower Wesleyans to carry the gospel from everywhere to everywhere.

On the original Pentecost (Acts 2), nations gathered in Jerusalem. A prayer meeting in the upper room became a movement across the world. In Peter's message immediately following, he recounted how God promised to pour out his Spirit on all people — women and men, young and old. Those gathered included people of simple means and those with significant resources, recognized religious leaders and devout followers. The result of the Spirit working through his message was thousands of new believers.

This year, we're gathering again on Pentecost Sunday, May 23, 2021. Men, women, teens and children will have an opportunity to engage in this "prayer meeting" as we continue to ask God to Unleash a Kingdom Force in The Wesleyan Church: multigenerational, multiethnic, multieconomic, women and men, lay and clergy, from everywhere to everywhere.

The leaders of The International Wesleyan Church are calling for the church to gather in prayer and be empowered to sense God's calling in order to fulfill Jesus' commission to go and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).

Our desire is to live sent, whether disciple makers in the marketplace or in our neighborhoods, as missionaries, as church planters, as pastors. God will equip us for what he calls us to. Those who experience a new calling to live sent will be given the opportunity to take the next steps in fulfilling that calling.

Would you and your church plan to join in what God will do as we gather across the world to seek his face on May 23? 🙌



DR. WAYNE SCHMIDT
General Superintendent
The Wesleyan Church

THE **wesleyan** CHURCH

Transforming lives, churches and communities through the hope and holiness of Jesus Christ.

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TOGETHER

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PENTECOST SUNDAY
MAY 23

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“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20



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**General
Superintendent
Emeritus**
remembered for
faithful service



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wes.life/earle-wilson-remembered

Dr. Earle L. Wilson, former General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church, died November 24, 2020. He was 85, just days away from turning 86.

He was born December 8, 1934, in Rensselaer, New York, to Lawrence W. and Wilhelmina (Knapp) Wilson. Wilson and his siblings (two brothers and two sisters) were raised by Christian parents who were loyal to God's kingdom and the local church.

Wilson received B.S. and Th.B. degrees from the former Eastern Pilgrim College, Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 1955; a Master of Divinity degree from Evangelical Seminary, Myerstown, Pennsylvania, in 1965 and a Master of Theology degree from Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, in 1967. Doctor of Divinity degrees were conferred on him by Houghton College (Houghton, New York) in 1974 and Southern Wesleyan University (Central, South Carolina) in 2005. He received a presidential citation from Indiana Wesleyan University (Marion, Indiana) in 2007.

He married Sylvia Beck in 1955, whom he met at Eastern Pilgrim College. They were married for 65 years.

From 1956-1972, Wilson pastored former Pilgrim Holiness Church congregations (now The Wesleyan Church) in Gloversville, New York, and Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. From 1962-1984, he was also a professor of New Testament Greek, Christian theology and homiletics at Eastern Pilgrim College in Allentown, Pennsylvania (later United Wesleyan College). In 1971, he became the first president of United Wesleyan College and continued in that office until his election as General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church in 1984. He supervised The Wesleyan Church districts and universities of North America

and chaired conferences, ordained ministers and preached overseas from 1984-2008. In 2008, The Wesleyan Church honored his service by naming him General Superintendent Emeritus. He was the longest-serving General Superintendent in the history of The Wesleyan Church.

A preacher by passion and not just profession, Wilson was known throughout the church world as a dynamic speaker and Bible expositor who preached under the anointing power of the Holy Spirit. It was said that he didn't just grace the pulpit — he grasped it as a pilot at the controls of an airliner. His listeners represented all ages, education and cultural groups and Christian or non-Christian traditions.

Active in other evangelical and holiness organizations, he was a member of the World Methodist Council (members of denominations and institutions who trace their theological origins to John and Charles Wesley) from 1988-2008. In 2000, he became the first non-Methodist president of the World Methodist Council and continued in that role until 2005. Other organizational service included serving on the board of trustees at Asbury Theological Seminary and chairman, program director and secretary of The Christian Holiness Association.

He authored "We Hold These Truths: A Guide to Wesleyan Beliefs;" "Holy and Human: Overcoming Spiritual Struggles to Live a Holy Life;" "Commentary on Galatians, Wesleyan Bible Commentary series" and "The Long Road Home: How God Forms Our Prodigal Souls." He was a contributing author for "Journey into Holiness: Experiencing God's Power for Holy Living," "Wesleyan Life" and "Wesleyan World Fellowship" magazines and "The Preacher's Magazine."

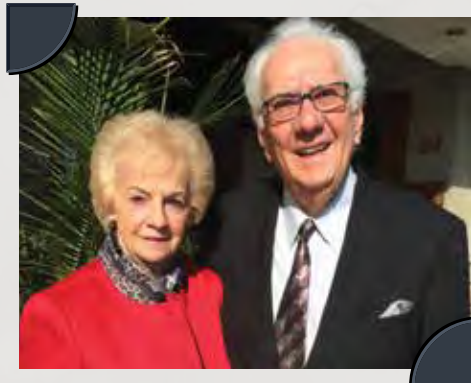
In addition to the offices he held, Wilson preached in camp meetings, ministerial conferences, holiness conventions, revival services in local churches and commencements throughout The Wesleyan Church and in many other denominations.

In a video interview months before

his death, he encouraged pastors not to struggle over presenting something new on Easter Sunday. "Tell us the old, old story." Wilson said to preach the resurrection, that Christ destroyed the end. He said, "The new is going to be better. God has better plans for us. When he appears, we shall be like him. And I am satisfied with that."

Dr. Wayne Schmidt, General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church, said in announcing Earle L. Wilson's passing, "On a personal note, Dr. Wilson was part of more than a few pivotal and formative moments in my life and ministry, including his prayer for me immediately after my election as General Superintendent at General Conference 2016. We join heaven in rejoicing over his faithful ministry."

He was preceded in death by his parents; a sister, Augusta (Marvin) Wolfe; a brother, Alvin (Marcia) Wilson, and a grandson, Bennet Walter.



Survivors include his wife, Sylvia; brother, Norman (Nancy) Wilson; sister, Marilyn (Bob) Franke; daughter, Debarah Ann (Steven) Walter; son, Stephen Earle (Rebecca) Wilson, and daughter, Colleen Ruth (Wayne) Derr. He is also survived by eight grandchildren, eight great-grandchildren and nieces and nephews.



JERRY BRECHEISEN

is an author, retired Wesleyan pastor and former director of communications for The Wesleyan Church.





ENGLISH



Welcome Bienvenidos *to the Lord's house!*

Being warmly and enthusiastically welcomed means a lot to churchgoers — especially when they are going through hard times and need comfort and encouragement. At Iglesia Wesleyana de Raymondville in Raymondville, Texas, those words are spoken in Spanish, as are the sermons and Sunday school lessons.

In the late 1970s, a 19-year-old girl from Mexico crossed the Rio Grande River with her

mother and sister in search of the American dream. The three women had struggled to make ends meet in their native San Luis Potosí, in the mountains of Mexico, and the idea of earning a livelihood in U.S. dollars sounded like a dream.

The teenager's name was Marina. At first, her story was not much different from most immigrants who cross the border illegally. As a teenager, she lived with an aunt in Monterrey, Mexico. While there, she placed her faith in



Christ but never imagined that such a decision would one day impact her as it has.

Upon arrival in the U.S., the trio settled in Raymondville. Shortly thereafter, Marina began attending Iglesia Wesleyana de Raymondville (IWDR). It was there that she discovered her God-given talents to care for lost souls, giving her a desire to share the love of Christ.

"I worked from dawn to dusk and had no spare time to devote to anything else other than the sleep I needed in order to get up the next morning to do it all over again," Marina said. She did not complain. Instead, she trusted the Lord to provide for her needs as she slowly adjusted to her new country, culture and language.

She later met and married Joe Guzmán. "At first, my husband did not

"I also enjoyed providing meals for those itinerant church attenders who were just there for a short time, passing through in search of the **same dream I once crossed the river to pursue.**"

"I enjoyed welcoming people into the church with a jolly, 'bienvenidos a la casa del Señor!' salutation," said Marina.

"I also enjoyed providing meals for those itinerant church attenders who were just there for a short time, passing through in search of the same dream I once crossed the river to pursue," she said with passion.

During her early years in America, Marina was a hired nanny and housekeeper.

like the idea of me being involved in church so much, but I kept praying, and he accepted the Lord as his Savior and started helping me at the church," she said excitedly.

Marina had a voracious appetite for kingdom-related things, and she viewed her minister, Pastor José Figueroa, as a godly role model from whom to learn. She eagerly took in every word taught by Figueroa, emulating his preaching, leadership skills and love for the Lord. Without formal schooling, Marina, a lay leader, helped care for the small flock at IWDR.

**Without formal schooling,
Marina, a lay leader, helped care
for the small flock at IWDR.**



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But having become such a strong face in the community, it is Marina the people seek as their shepherd.

"If I did not have to earn a living, I would be at church 24/7, to make sure no one was returned home without a compassionate word, a meal, some money for the journey or, even more importantly, a chance to invite Jesus Christ into his or her heart," she said.

In 2001, after 25 years of ministry at IWDR, Figueroa felt called to move to San Antonio, Texas, to help another church. He chose Marina to fill the pulpit in the absence of an ordained minister. She had been working alongside him for years in serving those who attend the church. These years of service equipped her for the role of lay minister, and she eagerly stepped in to continue caring for the church and its people.

From time to time, district leadership has provided pastors to fill the pulpit to support Marina in ministry. But having become such a strong face in the community, it is Marina the people seek as their shepherd.

She continues to serve joyfully in south Texas.

"It has been 19 years of service, and it feels like only days have passed!" said Guzmán. "I am not ready to retire, as there is yet too much to be done for the

Lord. I crossed the border into the United States to seek a better life for myself and found it. Today, I want to help others find that life too. As long as there are people, I will be at the door to welcome them.

"I want to be ready for that day when the Lord calls me home, to hear him say to me, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!' and have my Father welcome me into his house with a loud '*¡Bienvenida!*'!"



LUSKA NATALI
is a freelance writer.



Bienvenidos

a la casa del Señor

Recibir una cálida y entusiasta bienvenida significa mucho para los feligreses, especialmente cuando están pasando por momentos difíciles y necesitan consuelo y aliento. En la Iglesia Wesleyana de Raymondville en Raymondville, Texas, esas palabras se hablan en español, al igual que los sermones y las lecciones de la escuela dominical.

A finales de la década de 1970, una joven mexicana de 19 años cruzó el río Grande con su madre y su hermana en busca del sueño americano. Las tres mujeres habían luchado para llegar a fin de mes a su natal San Luis Potosí, en las montañas de México, y la idea de ganarse la vida en dólares estadounidenses sonaba como un sueño.

El nombre de la adolescente era Marina. Al principio, su historia no era muy diferente a la de la mayoría de los inmigrantes que cruzan la frontera ilegalmente. Cuando era adolescente, vivía con una tía en Monterrey, México. Mientras estuvo allí, puso su fe en Cristo, pero nunca imaginó que esa decisión algún día la impactaría como lo ha hecho.

A su llegada a los Estados Unidos, el trío se instaló en Raymondville. Poco después, Marina comenzó a asistir a la Iglesia Wesleyana de Raymondville (IWDR). Fue ahí donde

“Disfruté de dar la bienvenida a la gente a la iglesia con un alegre saludo de ‘bienvenidos a la casa del Señor!’”

descubrió los talentos que Dios le había dado para cuidar de las almas perdidas, lo que le dio el deseo de compartir el amor de Cristo.

“Disfruté de dar la bienvenida a la gente a la iglesia con un alegre saludo de ‘bienvenidos a la casa del Señor!’”, Dijo Marina.

“También disfruté de brindar comidas a los asistentes ambulantes de la iglesia que estuvieron ahí por un corto tiempo, en busca del mismo sueño que yo una vez tuve de cruzar el río”, dijo con pasión.



! PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN
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Durante sus primeros años en Estados Unidos, Marina fue contratada como niñera y ama de llaves.

“Trabajé desde el amanecer hasta el anochecer y no tenía tiempo libre para dedicarme a otra cosa que no fuera dormir, lo cual necesitaba para levantarme a la mañana siguiente y hacer todo de nuevo”, dijo Marina. Ella no se quejó. En cambio, confió en que el Señor proveería para sus necesidades mientras se adaptaba lentamente a su nuevo país, cultura e idioma. Más tarde conoció y se casó con Joe Guzmán. “Al principio, a mi esposo no le gustaba tanto la idea de que yo participara en la iglesia, pero seguí orando y él aceptó al Señor como su Salvador y comenzó a ayudarme en la iglesia”, dijo emocionada.

Marina tenía un apetito voraz por las cosas relacionadas con el reino, y veía a su ministro, el pastor José Figueroa, como un modelo devoto del cual aprender. Ella asimiló con entusiasmo cada palabra enseñada por Figueroa, emulando su predicación, sus habilidades de liderazgo y su amor por el Señor. Sin una educación formal, Marina, una líder laica, ayudó a cuidar del pequeño rebaño en IWDR.

“Si no tuviera que ganarme la vida, estaría en la iglesia las 24 horas del día, los 7 días de la semana, para asegurarme de que nadie regrese a casa sin una palabra compasiva, una comida, algo de dinero para el viaje o, lo más importante, la oportunidad de invitar a Jesucristo a su corazón”, dijo.

En 2001, después de 25 años de ministerio en IWDR, Figueroa se sintió llamado a mudarse a San Antonio, Texas, para ayudar a otra iglesia. Eligió a Marina para ocupar el púlpito en ausencia de un ministro ordenado. Ella había estado trabajando junto a él durante años para servir a los que asisten a la iglesia. Estos años de

servicio la prepararon para el papel de ministra laica, y ella intervino con entusiasmo para continuar cuidando de la iglesia y su gente. De vez en cuando, los líderes de distrito han proporcionado pastores para llenar el púlpito y apoyar a Marina en el ministerio. Pero habiéndose convertido en un rostro tan fuerte en la comunidad, es a Marina a quien la gente busca como su pastora.

Ella continúa sirviendo con alegría en el sur de Texas.

“¡Han sido 19 años de servicio y parece que solo han pasado unos días!” dijo Guzmán. “No estoy lista para jubilarme, ya que todavía hay mucho por hacer para el Señor. Crucé la frontera hacia los Estados Unidos en busca de una mejor vida para mí y la encontré. Hoy, quiero ayudar a otros a encontrar esa vida también. Mientras haya gente, estaré en la puerta para darles la bienvenida.

“Quiero estar lista para ese día en que el Señor me llame a casa, para escucharlo decirme: ‘¡Bien hecho, buen y fiel siervo!’ Y que mi Padre me reciba en su casa con un fuerte ‘¡Bienvenida!’” 🌸

TO A
Remote Village
in the Himalayas
ON THE RANCH FOR
GWBOW CHURCH
into the city with
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ONLINE TO EXPAND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION
into the aftermath of a disaster
AROUND the globe
to share the gospel

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Joy that *multiplies*

Rev. Michael Rogalski, LifePoint Church senior pastor, and Earl McJett, lay leader, used to meet for lunch at an authentic Szechuan restaurant that left Rogalski sweating from the spices. Since the pandemic began, they connect in other ways — the pastor texting his friend daily.

Their friendship has created space for a particular kind of grace: McJett is African American, Rogalski is white. Both are leaders of LifePoint Church in Waldorf, Maryland, a congregation merged from two church plants. The resulting multiethnic congregation reflects the surrounding community, and that's no accident. Even before The Wesleyan Church's Marketplace Multipliers initiative, LifePoint prioritized equipping laity for kingdom work.

As McJett observed joyfully, "The Lord is moving, and the Holy Spirit is prompting different people at the same time. We were already commissioning our laity to go out and act on the Great Commission.

"I'll never forget — it's such an indelible image in my mind and heart," McJett said. "We started discussing funding to build a sanctuary. We were standing on the property, and the road is a busy thoroughfare that goes between two communities. Pastor Michael looked up at the traffic, and you could see his heart breaking. He said, 'there are so many people in those cars going by who need Jesus so desperately.' He began to weep. That was genuine concern and love for people. It has to start with the kind of love that Jesus has for us. He loved us so much that he gave his life for us. The closer we get to

that kind of love, the more genuine our outreach can be. People recognize that; they know when they're loved."

Before the merger, Rogalski recalled when someone pointed out the absence of diversity in the church and decided to pray about it. Rogalski promised, "we'll be praying together," for the congregation to resemble its community. Now, "We make sure that when people walk into the congregation, they see people in the parking lot, at the doorways and on the platform that look like them."

Before Marketplace Multipliers, LifePoint leaders referred to equipping laypeople as "everyday missionaries."

"The congregation not only comes from different ethnic backgrounds but from different social and economic backgrounds," said McJett. "Each one has a marketplace they go to — school, home, work, even sports. In all our different spheres of influence, we connect with people. It is our responsibility to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit to connect in a way that reflects Jesus' love for them. When we come together on Sundays, we're being equipped to go out and be the church in all different areas of our community, of our economy."

"God is at work as we are at work, regardless of our vocation, position or geographic location."

God seeks to use each of our unique gifts right where we are to integrate our faith with work and expand our everyday influence to make disciples, far outside of Sunday services," said Carrie Whitcher, a healthcare insurance executive who is a strategy team leader with Marketplace Multipliers.

According to McJett, race and ethnicity discussions have been part of the LifePoint DNA, citing, "the intentionality of Pastor Michael and the vision he shared with the rest of us." Community discussions flow from

relationships where there is space for love — and where there is love, there is space for shared grief, humility and joy.

"I've had clarifying conversations so I could better understand," said Rogalski. "Shortly after Ahmaud Arbery was murdered in Georgia, we had a board meeting, and Earl shared his own story about why Georgia was close to his heart. It gave me a greater understanding of our differences and how unity in Christ is so important in understanding the differences. Earl was brave enough to share and to let me share part of his story with our congregation."

"As a multiethnic congregation, we value that everyone is created in the image of God. Where there's oppression and evil, as God's people, we have to stand up and stand against that. It led to a conversation that Earl and his wife, Patrice, were part of, along with other members. What society would use to divide, we have made an intentional decision to understand and to work for the unifying power of the gospel of Christ."

Rogalski knows that for a multiethnic church to flourish, it requires intentionality and humility from everyone. That is happening at LifePoint. McJett and Rogalski know great joy because of it. 🐦



ELIZABETH GLASS TURNER
is a writer and speaker.



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IMMIGRATION IS AN ISSUE,
BUT IMMIGRANTS ARE PEOPLE.



GIVE
ME YOUR
TIRED,
YOUR POOR...

PEOPLE FIRST

NUMBERS
FOLLOW

In February 2021, Immigrant Connection (IC) celebrated its seventh anniversary. Since its conception, 22 churches have answered the call to launch local IC legal offices, which makes IC the largest local church-based immigration legal network in the United States. This movement has directly served over 10,000 individuals and families from over 125 different countries of origin and successfully filed over 4,500 immigration cases with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The Wesleyan Church believes in transforming lives, churches and communities through the hope and holiness of Jesus Christ.

Transformation requires connection. God uniquely calls his people to tangibly care for and welcome foreigners living in their midst.

Immigrant Connection exists to fulfill this call.

More people are migrating around the world than ever. Today, over 272 million individuals live outside their country of origin. Over 45 million immigrants live in the U.S., representing 13.7 percent of the nation's population. The last time this high percentage of immigrants lived in the U.S. was in 1910. In fact, first- and second-generation immigrants comprise more than 28 percent of the U.S. population.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has a program that allows nonprofit organizations to be recognized and individuals to be accredited to provide low-cost immigration

legal services. Few local churches initially utilized this impactful opportunity.

Since The Wesleyan Church (TWC) is historically rooted in justice and acting on behalf of those who are marginalized, IC launched one of the first local church-based immigration legal services offices on February 27, 2014. We reflect on what Jesus has accomplished since.

For the more than 75 individuals serving as DOJ accredited legal representatives, site leaders, legal assistants, staff and volunteers, it's not about numbers; it's always been about individual lives. Immigrant Connection is named aptly because the focus is not on immigration — it's on immigrants. Immigration is an issue, but immigrants are people.

IC has seen individual lives transformed.

There's the story of an Arabic Christian Church without a pastor and IC helping bring a pastor

from Egypt to lead the church.

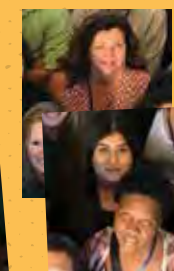
There's the story of our first client — the daughter of a victim of domestic violence and assault who received a visa. She is now attending school to become a teacher and has a green card, a daughter of her own and leads youth at a Wesleyan church.

And there's the story of a young woman who had already wasted thousands

of dollars trying to receive help until she came to IC, which helped her proceed with a complex application. This allowed her to escape an abusive husband and become a U.S. citizen.

These are just a few of the countless individuals who've experienced trauma and have found hope and opportunity through IC.

IC has reunited families that have been separated for decades, sometimes driving



IC leaders share that their hearts and lives have been transformed as they practiced biblical hospitality — that they have received far more than they've given.

This movement has directly served



10,000+
People



4,500+
Cases



125+
Countries

clients to the airport and watching firsthand as a husband, wife and children have their first family hug in years. IC has helped immigrant students receive Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) status and become their family's first generation to attend and graduate from college.

Asylum seekers and refugee newcomers have been accompanied through legal pathways and provided support in a new city. Our offices have cared for human trafficking and domestic violence victims, offering pathways toward lawful status as well as support, hope and restoration. Over 1,000 clients have been helped to take the final step in the immigration process and become naturalized U.S. citizens. IC workers have often attended oath ceremonies and subsequent celebrations.

Individuals may start as clients, but relationships quickly form, as IC staff are invited to baby showers and weddings, holiday celebrations and worship services.

Carole, a Jamaican immigrant, left a high-paying job in corporate America to become a DOJ legal representative and provide legal services in her community. Countless clients have moved forward in the immigration process due to Carole's diligent work, but her clients talk most about her compassion and hugs.

Carina and Joanna arrived at IC as clients. "Now they are DOJ accredited legal representatives who have served hundreds of clients. Several pastors have found a crucial bivocational ministry through IC, and their pastoral ministry has had an exponential impact. Dozens of lay people joining IC as DOJ legal representatives, legal

assistants or volunteers discover a deep sense of purpose. Some are new to TWC, drawn in by the local church's mission of welcoming and serving immigrants.

IC leaders share that their hearts and lives have been transformed as they practiced biblical hospitality — that they have received far more than they've given.

Churches have also been transformed. A diverse cross-section of churches has launched IC local sites: small, large, urban, rural, monoethnic, multiethnic, historic, established and new plants. Many small and declining churches launching IC offices became healthy and growing congregations recognized as core strategic leaders in their communities.

Over 1,000 clients have been helped to take the final step in the immigration process and become naturalized U.S. citizens.

Other churches have used IC's ministry to launch new services and outreach ministries like citizenship classes and conversational English programs. IC has assisted church-planting efforts, providing crucial connections and a sustainable approach to outreach and community involvement. IC's legal ministry has helped other churches receive religious worker visas in order to





hire immigrant pastors resulting in church planting efforts from Boston to San Antonio and South Dakota to Florida.

These transformed people and churches have created transformed communities and ZIP codes. Rather than being reactive to changing community demographics, IC leaders have proactively led efforts to have a localized global impact.

In 2020, IC was organized as a nonprofit subsidiary of TWC, allowing IC to remain firmly rooted in TWC while reaching out and starting sites in non-Wesleyan churches. A recent one-million-dollar gift from Tyson Foods will significantly help IC expand its services. The hope for the next seven years is to have 50 local church-based IC offices.

May the Lord persist in opening doors and providing resources for IC's continued engagement in kingdom impact. 🙌



ZACH SZMARÁ is the national director of Immigrant Connection and pastor of The Bridge Community Church in Logansport, Indiana.



Launching a church-based immigration legal services office

Assessment

Your team fills out the assessment form, and Immigrant Connection joins your team on a call to discuss the process and specifics related to immigration legal services (ILS) and your specific church and context.

STEP
01



STEP
02

Learning

Specific individuals (1-2) on your team will get training in immigration law and program management; at the same time, your whole church will learn about a biblical perspective on immigrants through online cohorts, small group curriculum and sermons.

Experience

The same individuals (1-2) will continue on to "shadowing" — gaining firsthand experience in ILS and program management. The church and other leaders will continue their own learning and connecting with immigrants and community partners.

STEP
03



STEP
04

Application

Working with World Relief and IC, your team will create and submit your application for site recognition and representative accreditation to the DOJ and United States Citizenship and Immigration Services.

Launch

After your application is approved, your site can begin accepting clients, giving legal advice and working on immigration cases. As a part of the IC Legal Network, you will receive continued guidance through network calls and conferences.

STEP
05

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about Immigrant Connection
icwelcome.org

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Where Everybody is

SOMEbody

Agapé International Church and Ministries (AICM), of Antioch, California, strives to be a place, “where everybody is somebody, and Jesus is Lord.”

Comprised of Nigerians, Liberians, Sierra Leoneans, Ghanaian, Congolese, Caucasian Americans and African Americans, AICM is dedicated not only to multiethnic outreach but also serving people “regardless of their religion, regardless of their nationality, regardless of the place they live,” said Dr. John Ojewole, AICM senior pastor.

“We are a church with a focus on mission, a church that believes in winning the lost and also

touching lives,” said Ojewole.

This dedication to serving all extends into the church’s food pantry ministry.

“This [ministry] is about meeting needs, just like Jesus said: ‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink ... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me’ (Matthew 25:35, 40),” said Ojewole. “We believe that this is an extension of what Jesus Christ would do in our neighborhood.”

Open every Thursday, the AICM food pantry makes groceries, clothes, shoes and other household

We embrace all people groups that come to our door, and that is the same kind of principle that we carry not only with our food pantry but also our church and every other ministry that we do.

items available to the community. With people lined around the block, the food pantry serves 60-70 families weekly.

“We embrace all people groups that come to our door, and that is the same kind of principle that we carry not only with our food pantry but also our church and every other ministry that we do,” said Ojewole.

AICM food pantry Director Lilian Ademola said, “Most of our clients always offer their heartfelt thanks, and some have often expressed how fortunate they are to be the recipients of God’s blessing through this food pantry.”

Serving people and families with low income, adults, seniors and home bound, the AICM food pantry has ended the hunger some families were experiencing, while improving the quality of the food available.

“We look forward to [Thursdays] because we

enjoy seeing the smiles and happiness displayed on the faces of our clients when they get their groceries, clothes, shoes and other household items,” Ademola said.

Ademola and Ojewole, along with other volunteers — which include some consumers of the food pantry and some members of the church — use the Thursday opportunity not only to serve those who come but to “offer prayer and thanksgiving to God for his continued support and blessings,” said Ademola.

Many of the AICM’s food pantry items are donated through local organizations: the local food bank, as well as White Pony Express, an organization designed to pick up excess products from local stores and businesses and distribute the products to those in need.

In addition to church funding, anonymous donations are also sent to the church, intended specifically for the food pantry ministry.

Ojewole received such a donation in January 2021, with this letter attached from a woman named Ingrid: “Dear loving people of Christ, I came to you in need (2017), and you blessed my household with great, healthy food! Thank you so very much for all these times we fell short. We moved out of California (2018), and God has provided even in this pandemic. He placed you in my mind and heart and here is a small token to help you help others, or if you have a need in your home that you prayed for, then use it for your need. God will continue to abundantly provide as we stay obedient to his will.”



! LEARN MORE

Agape International Church and Ministries
agapeicm.org

Ojewole says that AICM does not offer this ministry to force consumers to come to Jesus Christ, “but because we believe that through the channel to adopt the true love of Christ in the neighborhood, many of them will see how Jesus can touch even people that do not belong to the kingdom of Jesus Christ. We can also extend the care and the love to people that do not even belong to him yet and that may even turn them around to become a part of the kingdom.”

AICM serves by adopting the Apostle Paul’s example to “become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some,” (1 Corinthians 9:22).

“We believe that by doing this, we are really extending the love of Christ to these people,” said Ojewole. “And there is no restriction about who they are. There is no restriction about where they come from; we just love them.”



MICAH KIMBALL
is a freelance writer.

Story



HOCKEY DADS

and discipleship

“

What would happen if each of you committed to forming a group dedicated to intentional disciple making?”

The question asked of a Wesleyan leaders' group at Exponential in the fall of 2019, a church multiplication conference with an emphasis on disciple making, stayed with me. I accepted the challenge, despite my busy, dual role as a local church pastor and district superintendent. This initiative was worth prioritizing.

There were some men in our church who were irregular Sunday attenders. Their teenage sons' participation in hockey, a beloved Canadian pastime, was the main

factor inhibiting their families' ability to attend church.

I invited them to join me in forming a disciple-making group and they accepted. We chose a simple format: meet before work on Tuesday mornings at a coffee shop, read a portion of Scripture from the Discovery Bible app and ask each other the app-provided questions. We'd then pray for each other and conclude to go about our day. I affectionally referred to the group as “hockey dads.”

The experience has been enriching, and watching these men grow spiritually is a joy.

A question began forming in my mind. How do I help in



Without *multiplication,* you don't have a movement.

equipping these men to form their own groups and disciple their peers? The question became a dilemma, as I have seen multiple groups grow spiritually but never multiply into more groups.

One example stems from years ago when Paul Henderson, a famous Canadian hockey star, came to our city and shared his faith. Because he scored the most famous goal in Canadian history to beat the Russian national hockey team in 1972, he drew a crowd. Henderson challenged the attendees to gather in disciple-making groups upon returning home.

After that night, multiple groups formed. While many people have been disciplined in those groups, few have become disciple makers and multiplied to create new groups.

The Wesleyan Church's vision is to become a movement again. We know disciples multiply disciples and disciple-making groups multiply disciple-making groups, leading to churches multiplying churches. Without multiplication, you don't have a movement.

My desire was to inspire the "hockey dads" to disciple their peers.

My dilemma was the recognition of being stuck at the level of multiplying groups. God offered me clues for moving forward, both from the New Testament and my own spiritual growth journey.

While reading the Gospel of Mark, I reflected on how Jesus spoke to his disciples. I became fascinated that he related to them the way coaches relate to players or teachers relate to students. In that moment, I heard God say to me, "Jesus didn't disciple his peers. Why are you trying to get the 'hockey dads' to disciple their peers?"

This insight caused me to reflect on my personal discipleship journey and the realization that I was first disciplined by my youth pastor.

out younger men in their lives who look to them as leaders and to invite them into a disciple-making group of their own. The "hockey dads" have embraced this idea of developing disciples themselves, and in the first half of 2021 our group will be preparing to multiply with each member becoming a disciple maker.

A new Wesleyan movement of disciple making will flourish as each person rediscovers ways to encourage our disciples. In the instance of the "hockey dads," disciples make disciples by finding people in their lives who naturally look up to them as mentors and coaches.

In order to be effective, movements need full participation.

A new Wesleyan movement of disciple making will flourish as each person rediscovers ways to **encourage our disciples to make disciples.**

Pastor Dale MacDonald was eight years older than me, and when I was a teen, he intentionally gathered a few friends and me with the express purpose of making us disciples of Jesus. In weekly meetings outside of church and youth group, he taught us how to pray, how to read the Bible, how to share our faith and how to worship God. I was one of dozens of teens who became a disciple of Jesus under Pastor Dale's leadership. Many of us attended Christian universities and are serving the Church as disciple makers.

My challenge, moving forward, is to encourage the "hockey dads" to multiply our group by seeking

How about you? What "hockey dads (or moms)" in your life might you encourage to disciple the next generation of disciple makers? 🙌



ERIC HALLETT

is district superintendent of the Central Canada District.

VISIBLE ★ REMINDERS OF THE HOLY



You can understand a human being, connect with them and hear their pain — rather than put them in a place of condemnation.



Most ministers serve in churches, working alongside leaders in their congregation to train, equip and mobilize laity for the work of discipleship. Some of The Wesleyan Church's (TWC) most load-bearing ministry, however, is carried out by chaplains, ministers whose congregations gather without a church building and whose laity often have no ongoing relationship with a local church.

"Chaplains are seen as visible reminders of the holy," said Rev. Amber Kunkel, an Air Force chaplain stationed at Maxwell Air Force Base in Montgomery, Alabama.

That "visibility" is more constant for military chaplains than for most clergy, as their ministry is situated within their constant presence in a military unit. Many chaplains' most meaningful ministry moments occur "not at the chapel, nor with people who have a particular faith that's well-defined," said Dr. Gary Carr, TWC associate chaplain endorser. "Ninety percent of the people chaplains have an impact upon are not people of faith who would be a part of a traditional congregation."

Carr served as an active-duty chaplain in the U.S. Navy from 1987-2007 and was recently selected as vice chair of the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF). A liaison between the Department of Defense and TWC, he offers perspective on how chaplains can teach about Unleashing a Kingdom Force around the globe.

In addition to pastoral skills needed to navigate the usual questions of life, death, connection and meaning present in any ministry, military chaplains help parishioners cope with separation from family, fraught relationships with fellow servicemembers and post-traumatic stress. Because of the depth of shared experience, military chaplains serve as a prayerfully attentive presence amidst a group of soldiers who, because of their drive and determination, often need a reminder to care for their emotional health and to tend to spiritual connection and community with others.

"You can understand a human being, connect with them and hear their pain — rather than put them in a place of condemnation," said Kunkel. "Some of the most intense warriors out there have fragile hearts."



Like any pastoral position, chaplaincy requires organizational structure administration. Because chaplains occupy a dual role — as clergy and government employees — they must be conversant in both godly counsel and government policy. They must help protect those of different faiths — or no faith — from undue harm or ostracization.

“Chaplains do their entire ministry in a pluralistic environment,” said Carr. “And we find ways to navigate these situations as a trusted agent, helping those we serve navigate these situations according to their beliefs, even as we hold fast to our own.”

Pastors working within an increasingly pluralistic society could learn from chaplains who see the underlying spiritual needs of their peers, even when those peers do not engage within a distinctly Christian paradigm. Engaging in non-anxious conversation with those who believe differently, offering

presence and creating space for others to consider spiritual matters are part of “compassion, care, dignity and respect,” Carr said, “which goes a long way in the process of providing ministry.”

Chaplains offer care in numerous contexts worldwide, deploying with their units as assignments change.

“If you’re a chaplain, you can make calls [for resources, help and assistance] and make things happen that others wouldn’t,” said Kunkel, recounting times she and other chaplains have worked with providers to advocate for others.

“We have chaplains serving with the Marines, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, deployed all around the world. On any given day, 24 hours a day, we have a chaplain doing evangelism, pastoral care and professional education, reaching hundreds, thousands, and their influence is far and wide,” said Carr.

Annually, 30 percent of troops rotate out of a unit. Within three to four years, a chaplain has a completely new congregation, hopefully sending their initial congregation out to disciple others. Carr mentioned how this short tenure with their parishioners often helps the best chaplains build ministry structures that encourage the

“seeding” capacity of the people under their care, “so they can fan out and be a discipling presence wherever they go.”

Amidst all this load-bearing discipleship work, chaplains face the same stress of other soldiers: family separation, interpersonal challenges and the need to cultivate habits of health and connection with God.

Carr and Kunkel encourage readers to pray for chaplains and their families, as they face the challenges, pressures and needs present in ministry and the military, and to look for how they might partner with chaplains (in military, fire department, law enforcement, hospitals, hospices or other local contexts) through their own congregations. 🌿



ETHAN LINDER

is the pastor of hospitality, collegians and young adults at College Wesleyan Church in Marion, Indiana, and contributing editor with The Wesleyan Church’s Education and Clergy Development.



! **LEARN MORE**
Wesleyan chaplains
wesleyan.org/ecd/chaplains

We have chaplains serving with the **Marines, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force**, deployed all around the world.

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BY A GLOBAL PARTNERS MISSIONARY

Stop.
 Stay in your house.
 Cancel your plans.
 And wait. Wait until it is safe.
 Wait until you can see your family
 again and explore the world.
 Wait for opportunities.
 Just wait.

Stay-at-home orders implemented. School taught online. Virtual church services held. Not to mention, lost jobs, canceled trips and, most poignantly, lives lost.

COVID-19 has completely changed every person's life in some way.

"Normal" has not been reestablished. The present normal has become virtual experiences for almost everything in life, and the craving to have physical connections has never been more real. The implementation of the virtual experience has caused us to realize there is quite a bit we can achieve online, but the onset of "Zoom meeting fatigue" shows us that we were not created to live separately from others.

We were created to live in community, to be immersed in the lives and cultures surrounding us. We were made out of the holy love of the Trinity, which causes us to desire to be in relationships. God exemplified the importance of experience and interaction through the event of the incarnation. It is through the love of the Trinity and the life of Jesus Christ that we see the calling to live a life in participation with God, others and creation. Our need for interaction beyond a screen has become apparent.

Even before COVID-19, I recognized my need to be immersed in the world. The summer before my senior year of college, I spent three months in Eastern Europe exploring the Lord's call on my life.

I began my internship with Global Partners with an anticipation of new friends, cultures, languages and experiences, but I was not expecting the ways the Lord would use my internship to draw me closer to him. I recognized my profound need for God and that people all around me needed him too.

As I walked along the Adriatic Sea, I noticed how its waves followed the ways in which the wind carried it. That's how God the Father carried me. I witnessed his love manifested in new ways through deep conversations with non-believers — and that brokenness is not a barrier but a bridge of connectedness for all people. There are no boundaries to God's power because he is boundless. There are no borders to his grace because he is borderless. There are no hindrances to God's love because he hinders no one. God's arms open wide to make those who are lost, found.

Immersion experiences help us recognize our need for God and illustrate God's desire for us to engage with his world and people. In a time when immersion is abnormal, the NEXT Internship is unique. NEXT internships enable young adults to journey, learn and engage in mentored cross-cultural immersion experiences. These NEXT opportunities enable participants to explore who they are in God's mission and focus on developing Kingdom Force leaders who desire to follow the Lord's call on their lives.

We may not know what tomorrow looks like, but we do know that the Lord wants us to fully immerse ourselves in relationship — with him, others and creation. NEXT provides that next right step of obedience for those like me who want to engage in relationships — even amid difficult COVID-19 days. 🐦

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NEXT

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GENERAL BOARD MAKES DECISION ON GENERAL CONFERENCE

General Conference postponement was made at first-ever General Board virtual meeting.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/general-board-gc20

News



GLOBAL



GENERAL



COLLEGE



Through These Hands meets everyday needs

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/through-these-hands



Houghton's Mullen announces retirement

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/mullen-retirement



SWU's Voss announces retirement

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/voss-retirement



Canada church shows love in COVID season

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/church-shows-love



"Venturing" out and connecting others in Montana

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/connecting-in-montana



CHACON RETIRES AS SUPERINTENDENT OF DISTRITO HISPANO SUROESTE

In 47 years of ministry, he planted 26 churches.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/chacon-retires



ASSESSMENT PROGRAM SEEING INCREASE IN NUMBER OF TWC MULTIPLIERS

Lay and clergy can be assessed to determine multiplication roles.

 **FULL STORY**
wes.life/increased-multipliers

SAINT LOUIS
2022

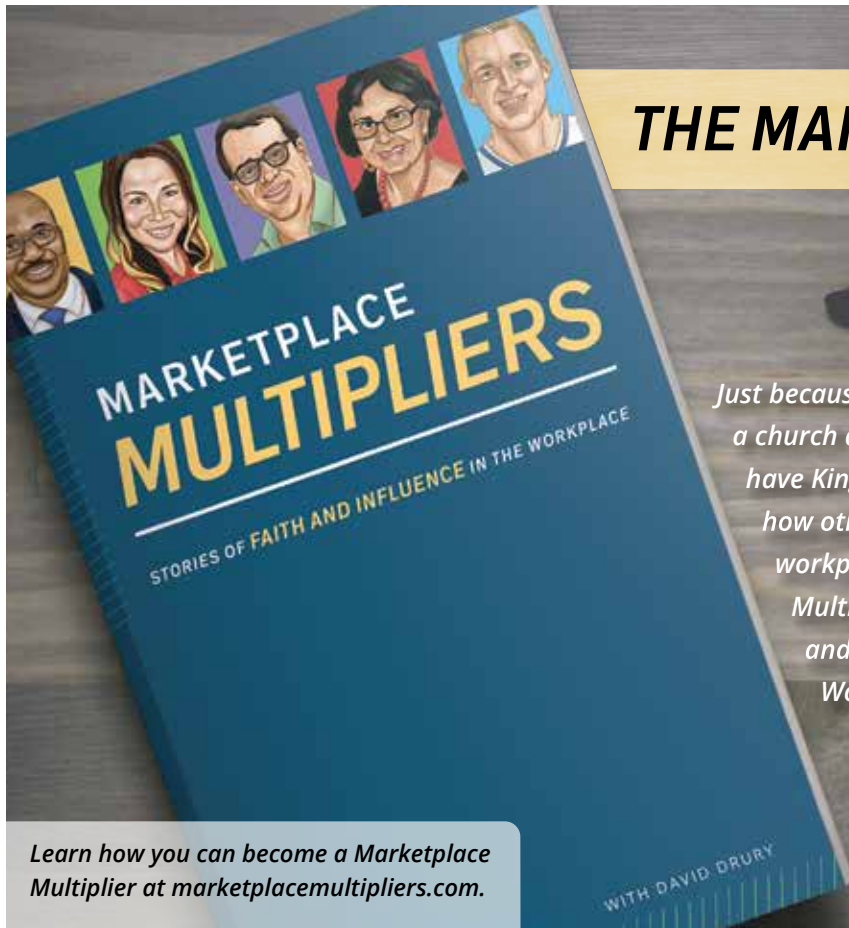
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Remembered

"His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'" (Matthew 25:21a)

REV. RICKARD "DICK" BENNETT (82) died December 22. He pastored in New York and previously served as a missionary in Albania with Global Partners.

REV. CHARLES CARROLL (88) died January 14. He pastored in Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, New Jersey and Delaware.

REV. JOHN COLE (87) died December 12. He pastored in Ohio.

PASTOR ANGELINA COVARRUBIAS (49) died October 13. She pastored in North Carolina.

REV. CARL FIELDS (86) died December 4. He pastored in Indiana and Virginia.

REV. EVERETT FREELS (85) died November 15. He pastored in Indiana.

REV. ARCHIE FULKERSON (81) died August 27. He pastored in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, North Carolina and Georgia.

REV. WALTER DARREL HANSEN (73) died July 30. He pastored in Missouri.

REV. CINDY HARDY (55) died October 27. She pastored in Minnesota.

REV. DARELL HARRIS (92) died December 16. He pastored in Pennsylvania.

REV. PAUL "RAY" HOOD (71) died August 25. He pastored in Indiana.

REV. RAYMOND JODON (86) died December 16. He pastored in Pennsylvania and Virginia.

REV. ROD LAWRENCE (64) died September 15. He pastored in Michigan.

REV. LAWRENCE "LARRY" MACK (72) died August 28. He pastored in Canada.

REV. WILLIAM MERRILL (89) died November 20. He pastored in Pennsylvania.

REV. RAY PUDLINER (78) died December 15. He pastored in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

REV. KENNETH REED (85) died October 11. He pastored in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

REV. RONALD RICKARD (78) died November 11. He pastored in Michigan.

REV. ROCHEMOND SAINT LOUIS (67) died February 6. He pastored in New York.

REV. ELWOOD STUART (91) died December 2. He pastored in Illinois and Ohio.

REV. PAR THOO (71) died February 7. He pastored in New York.

PASTOR GARY WAISNER (86) died October 21. He pastored in North Carolina.

REV. M. GAIL WHITMIRE (76) died August 14. She pastored in Indiana.

REV. PAUL WILCOX (85) died September 16. He pastored in Ohio and South Carolina.

PASTOR JOHN "J.W." WILLIAMS (82) died September 5. He pastored in South Carolina.

DR. EARLE WILSON (85) died November 24. He served as General Superintendent of The Wesleyan Church from 1984-2008 and was named General Superintendent Emeritus upon retirement. Prior to 1984, he pastored former Pilgrim Holiness Church congregations in New York and Pennsylvania and served as president of United Wesleyan College from 1971 to 1984.



PASTOR RYAN WOLFORD (46) died August 10. He pastored in North Carolina.

REV. EDWARD WYATT (79) died November 3. He pastored in the western part of the U.S.

VISIT [WESLEYAN.ORG/REMEMBERED](https://www.wesleyan.org/remembered)
TO READ A FULL LIST OF OBITUARIES.

Events

The following are events designed to help The Wesleyan Church flourish. Visit each link to learn more about how you can increase your faith, knowledge and well-being.

2021

19-20
OCT

AMPLIFY CONFERENCE

Wesleyan Shoulder Day (October 18, 2021)

wheatonbillygraham.com/amplify

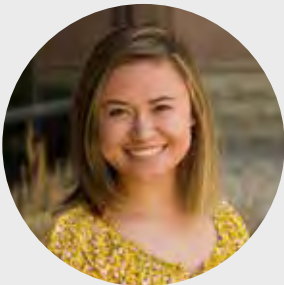
10-13
NOV

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Wesleyan Shoulder Day (November 10, 2021)

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