

CHRISTIAN HISTORY

Issue 153

Global outpouring

*Revival movements of
the modern era*

Third in our revival series



WAR OF WORDS After many in the Hindu Dalit caste became Christians in the 1920s, Mahatma Gandhi (*far left*) and Bishop V. S. Azariah (*near left*) argued for years about faith and colonialism.

Did you know?

REVIVALS OF THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES HAD GLOBAL REACH AND IMPACT

BUSINESS AS UNUSUAL

In 1857 a struggling New York City church envisioned an outreach to people who worked in nearby companies. They hired a businessman, Jeremiah Lanphier (1809–1898), to make that happen. He put out a handbill that read: “Prayer meeting from 12 to 1 o’clock. Stop 5, 10 or 20 minutes, or the whole time, as your time admits.”

This midday, midweek meeting took a few weeks to catch on, but when a financial crisis hit, attendance soared—not only in that church, but across the city.

According to one report, as ships entered New York Harbor, they were enveloped by God’s presence. On one vessel the captain and 30 crew members found faith in Christ before even reaching the port. Deep within the battleship *North Carolina*, anchored in the harbor, four sailors knelt in prayer. As they sang, some shipmates rushed down to mock them, but overcome by the power of God, these mockers fell to their knees in repentance.

Revival spread across the country in the following years. Some historians have estimated that, during this Businessmen’s Revival, about 1 million Americans, out of a total population of 30 million, professed their faith in Christ (see p. 17).

ELECTRIFIED

Known for his emotional preaching, revivalist Charles G. Finney (1792–1875) described his own experience this way: “The Holy Ghost descended on me in a manner that seemed to go

HIGHER EDUCATION At a few points in the 1900s, revival swept through Christian colleges. At right, students at Asbury College in 1970 offer prayers and praises.

through me, body and soul. I could feel the impression, like a wave of electricity, going through and through me. Indeed, it seemed to come in waves and waves of liquid love; for I could not express it in any other way. It seemed like the very breath of God. I can recollect distinctly that it seemed to fan me, like immense wings.”

Finney’s innovative revival strategies had a profound influence on a young William Booth (1829–1912), who would go on to found the Salvation Army. Another revivalist, Dwight L. Moody (1837–1899), encouraged the world to “Look at the praying Finney, whose prayers, faith, sermons and writings have shaken this whole country.”

FOOTBALL FEVER

When the Welsh revival began in 1904 (see p. 23), its principal preacher, Evan Roberts (1878–1951), was 26 years old. Roberts had been praying for the revival every day for 13 years.

By all accounts, the effects of this movement saturated every level of Welsh society. As Roberts reported,

Wales up to this time was in the grip of football [soccer] fever when tens of thousands of working-class men thought and talked only of one thing. They gambled also on the result of the games. Now the famous football players themselves got converted and joined the open-air street meetings to testify what glorious things the Lord had done for them. Many of the teams were disbanded as the players got converted and the stadiums were empty.

TONGUES IN TOPEKA

Many look back to the Azusa Street meetings of 1906 as the beginning of the modern Pentecostal movement (see pp. 18–21), but some of the seeds of Azusa were sown in Topeka, Kansas, five years earlier. At Bethel Bible School, founder Charles Parham (1873–1929) had begun teaching about the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues, challenging students to do their own study.



MAHATMA GANDHI, GANESH & CO. 1918—PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA
JOSEPH HAWKES, PORTRAIT OF BISHOP V. S. AZARIAH, 1912, LANTERN SLIDE—COURTESY OF SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE, ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
1970 REVIVAL AT ASBURY UNIVERSITY—PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ASBURY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

GOAL!!! The 1904 revival in Wales had a huge impact on that country's obsession with football (*below*).



At a watchnight service leading into New Year's Day, 1901, one woman in Parham's class—Agnes Ozman (1870–1937)—spoke in tongues. Other students and Parham himself did so in the following days.

CONFESSION TO MAKE

As the twentieth century dawned, conflict surrounded the Korean church. Japan and Russia fought for control of this nation, and the United States didn't always have Korean interests at heart. As some Koreans saw it, American missionaries sought to control the church, squelching the rise of indigenous leaders. In 1906 Korean Christians began hearing about the Welsh Revival and expressed a strong desire to receive the same blessing—but they had a lot of frustration and resentment to sort through.

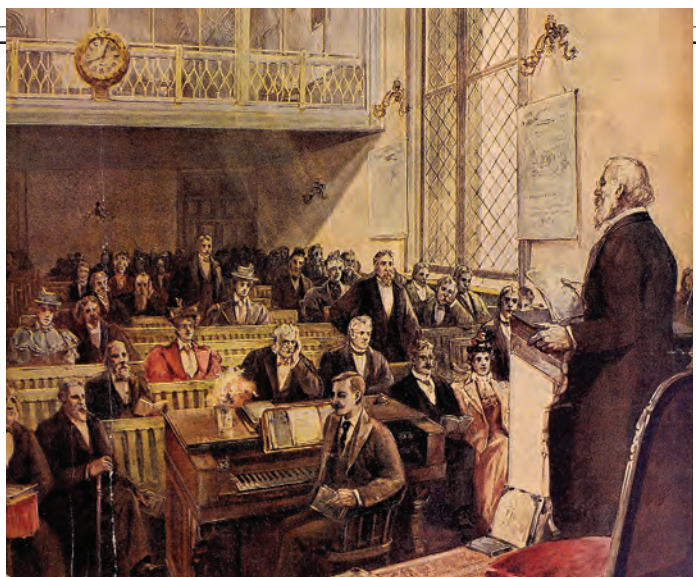
Then in January 1907, the Presbyterian seminary in Pyongyang hosted a two-week Bible conference attended by approximately 1,500 Korean men. Inspired by the sermons of Kil Sun-joo (1869–1935) and his personal confession of sins, hundreds of attendees followed suit with public acts of repentance (see p. 44). As one writer put it, “With such public confession and visible reconciliation the floodgates opened wide.” For several days at this conference, confession and repentance continued through the night. Another observer noted that even the American missionaries seemed “frightened by the presence of a power which could work such wonders.”

The revival spirit spread from the conference to Union Christian College, galvanizing the Korean church's next generation of leaders.

FIGHTING GANDHI

V. S. Azariah (1874–1945) and Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948) fiercely disagreed with each other, despite their similar goals. Azariah became India's first Anglican bishop in 1912, serving the diocese of Dornakal. With a heart for evangelism and a mind for revival, he had a profound effect on the region. In the 1920s the church grew rapidly, especially among villagers of the Dalit caste, people at the low end of the Hindu social structure, once known as “untouchables.”

The Dalit Revival drew international attention from mission leaders and church-growth scholars. It also got the



MIDDAY PRAYER Starting with a noonday prayer meeting in New York City (*above*), the Businessmen's Revival of 1857–1858 spread across the continent.

attention of Gandhi, who strove to improve the situation of the Dalits, but saw Christian conversion as an expression of Western colonialism. In 1938 the two leaders—Azariah and Gandhi—carried on a very public war of words, both fighting for the downtrodden people they loved.

REVIVAL-THON

Revival broke out at Wheaton College in Illinois on February 8, 1950. At a chapel service, one student after another stood up to confess sins and ask for prayer. The meetings continued through the day, for several days, as classes were canceled.

The Chicago papers got wind of it, and then both *Time* and *Life* magazines reported on it. “College Revival becomes Confession Marathon” was the *Life* headline.

Through the years other schools have experienced similar phenomena. In 1962 a revival occurred at Yale University in Connecticut. In 1970, almost exactly 20 years since the Wheaton revival, Asbury College in Kentucky had its own. Some Asbury students took the experience to other colleges.

In 2023 another revival broke out at Asbury, lasting 16 days. It brought at least 50,000 visitors to the little town of Wilmore, Kentucky, and spread to campuses across the country. At one point the hashtag “asburyrevival” had over 24 million views on TikTok. 📺

Chris Rogers is the producer of Asbury Revival: Desperate for More and is working on a Christian History Institute miniseries on revivals.

PIONEER At a Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, Agnes Ozman was reportedly the first person to speak in tongues as part of the modern Pentecostal movement.





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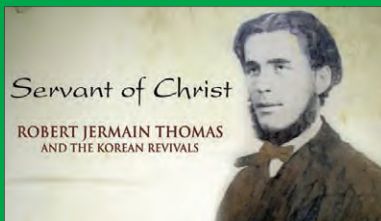
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Letters to the editor

Readers respond to *Christian History*

WHERE'S REPENTANCE?

I found *CH* #151 on “Awakenings” to be one of the most important and interesting issues of *CH* to date. This three-part series on revival will be remembered as some of your best work! Thanks, Bill! However even in issue #151, I was struck by a rather unfortunate glaring omission. In the intro article on “defining revival” and elsewhere, one cardinal factor of true revival is sadly absent . . . the critical feature found in all true awakenings, repentance, is omitted. Why? Finney and other uncompromising revivalists would be aghast. Otherwise, the issue is fascinating, and long overdue. Thanks.

P.S. “Transformative” implies revival, but fails to clearly I.D. it! Not good!—*John Herbst, Dixon, MO*

Thanks for writing in, John. CH identified four characteristics of revival to help readers understand what it has historically looked like in broader terms. You're right in that the “transformative” category covers repentance and conversion—which we do demonstrate in each movement covered in this past issue. All begin with prayer and clear repentance of sin. Perhaps our issue advisor Michael McClymond said it best in #151's interview:

Revival . . . involves a recognition of radical sin and corruption in human life; the conviction that sinners are spiritually lost and unable to save themselves or escape God's judgment; that God alone saves and forgives, cleanses, and renews those who trust in Christ; and that God's forgiveness is complete, since Christ made full atonement for sins.

DRAMATIC STORIES (AND CORRECTIONS)

This new issue (#152) is a really wonderful insight into how Christianity through the ages has used drama and song to present the Bible. A truly interesting read, so glad this subject was chosen for this latest issue.—*Shane Rouse, Sagamore Beach, MA*

Enjoyed the *CH* issue on drama. A memory and an epilogue. My grandmother recalled a period in the early/mid 1900s when her church was doing a renovation and the use of visiting drama and visiting actors in church life was popular. The plans called for a stage and theater-style curtain.—*Paul Bailey, Fayetteville, NY*

I enjoy and admire your magazine. In issue #152, you have incorrectly confused John Heywood with Thomas Heywood. Although Thomas was also a playwright, having written *If you Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605) (a two-part

play about Elizabeth I), as well as *An Apology for Actors* (1612), *The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels* (1635), and other works, he was not “a devout Catholic playwright” who “worked for Henry (and later Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth)” as you have stated. That honor belongs to John Heywood, a “survivor” who orbited the Tudor court under four monarchs (Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth). . . . *The Play of the Wether* is also much more than a piece of advice asking that Henry “not be swayed” by the multiple voices he was hearing. Heywood's play ends by Jupiter declaring that the weather will stay as it is. The drama offers a clear allegory for Henry, and an argument that he not rock the boat, as it were. Heywood was a conservative author who favored Queen Catherine of Aragon's party.—*Mark Rankin, Harrisonburg, VA*



Nothing gets past our readers! Dr. Rankin is correct; we meant John, not Thomas, Heywood. The error is corrected in the online version of the issue. In earlier versions of this article, the correct Heywood and the further explanation on The Play of the Wether were included. The latter was simplified for space.

WE NEED A HIERO

Have you ever done an issue on the art of Hieronymus Bosch? I'm working on a class about him now and he was very religious, unlike how some have interpreted his triptychs. Or maybe a more general issue on pictures of Jesus in art through the ages.—*Robert L. Anderson, York, PA*

This is a great suggestion. We'll add it to our list of potential topics. You can get a taste of Bosch's work in issue #152: Christianity and Theater on page 1!

SHARING CHRISTIAN HERITAGE

Thank you for considering us prisoners as any way worthy of receiving your magazine. You have gone well beyond all of that and treated me (us) with dignity and compassion, even enlisting our prayers for you. You get it. My thought is to educate the believers here in prison with whatever you choose to send me. Many here are babes in Christ or have no idea about our Christian heritage. Everything you send will prove to be eye opening and a blessing.—*Dean, VA*

Executive editor's note



Revival is an awakening to God's presence that propels us to live different than before.

—Linda Kuhar, Igniting Revival Fire Every Day

In 2019 my life completely changed. My wife and I joined a missions trip to Brazil, where we experienced an outpouring of the Spirit in ways I had only imagined before. When I returned home, I felt God calling me to do something about it, and I explored producing resources about the Holy Spirit via a film series digging deep into revivals. About the same time, our editorial team was considering an issue on revival in the Middle Ages, and thus a three-part series was born. You are holding in your hand the last issue of the three.

As we learned in *CH* #149 and #151, God has used revivals to awaken his people throughout history when they fervently seek him in prayer and repentance. We see in this final issue how the Second Great Awakening continued to spur missions worldwide, how meetings on Azusa Street led to the Pentecostal movement as we know it today, and how revivals are not limited to one region or people but occur globally.

FROM BARREN TO BEARING FRUIT

We also interviewed George Otis (see p. 53), who has spent the last few decades traveling around the world documenting revivals. I found it fascinating to learn how, in some cases, God not only revived the people, but also revived the earth. Before George's very eyes, God caused barren land to become fertile and empty waters to teem with fish.

I love how Pastor Todd Smith described revival in his book *Creating a Habitation for God's Glory*:

Everyone wants revival until it gets messy. By that I mean it gets really uncomfortable when God goes into the areas of our lives that we didn't even know

God had an issue with. This is the side of revival not many people talk about, but it is the product of revival.

God doesn't put his finger on areas of our lives simply to condemn us; rather it's to make us more like his Son Jesus. He wants us to deal with and remove those issues so we can be better conduits and hosts of his presence.

That is what revival is all about . . . not the healings, good feelings, the emotional highs, or the physical manifestations, but being more like Jesus.

DESPERATE FOR MORE

When we began filming our miniseries on revival, we intended to produce an hour on the First Great Awakening, an hour on the Second Great Awakening, and an hour on revivals in the twentieth century. But in February 2023, an outpouring began at Asbury University in Kentucky, and our film team felt the call to capture what was happening live, leading to another documentary—*Asbury Revival: Desperate for More*. The Lord then led us to produce our recently released *Desperate for More: North Georgia Revival*, which tells the story of Pastor Todd Smith's church in Dawsonville, Georgia, that has experienced years of revival and weekly baptisms.

Our planned three-hour miniseries has grown to six hours and will likely continue to grow. It's been quite an unexpected journey, but isn't that fitting? The same God



who continues to revive his people in unexpected places is moving through our ministry in ways beyond what we could ask or imagine. **CH**

Bill Curtis
Executive editor

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Our next issue #154 will explore the life of Oswald Chambers, Scottish evangelist and author of the devotional *My Utmost for His Highest*.

Watch the first two films in our revival series for free on RedeemTV today. Look for our entire revival film series to release in the first quarter of 2025.

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Seven characteristics of revivals

WHAT DO THESE MOVEMENTS OF THE SPIRIT HAVE IN COMMON?

Michael J. McClymond

Revivals in the Christian tradition commonly show seven characteristics. In most revivals we see the first characteristic and a number of the others, but seldom all seven.

1. Intensified experience is a defining quality. Participants in revivals show a vivid sense of spiritual things, great joy and faith, deep sorrow over sin, a passionate desire to evangelize others, and heightened feelings of love for God and fellow human beings. A revival is typically understood as a communal event, in which groups of people share this sort of heightened experience.

2. Bodily manifestations—such as weeping, shouting, fainting, dancing, and so on—are also common. Though some assume that these sorts of manifestations occur only in Pentecostal revivals, the documented history identifies this feature in the revivals of a wide range of religious groups, including Calvinists, Quakers, Baptists, Methodists, and adherents of the Holiness movement, *as well as* participants in the twentieth-century Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. The second characteristic is linked to the first. The intensification of experience is not confined to the spirit,

INTENSIFIED EXPERIENCE Worshippers in Nigeria around 1990 praise, pray, and seek the Lord, expressing their heightened feelings of love for God and others.

heart, or mind, but commonly reveals itself in the physical body. Participants in revivals often report sensations of warmth or electricity in their bodies, while others fall to the ground in an unconscious or semiconscious state. Some experience an urge to dance, shout, or testify to others. Some speak in tongues, see visions, or receive divine healing.

3. Extraordinary occurrences often accompany revivals, interpreted by the participants as “signs and wonders” of God’s presence. These may involve unlikely coincidences—someone prays for financial help and suddenly money turns up from an unexpected source. They may involve supernatural knowledge in the form of dreams, visions, or revelations regarding the secrets of an individual’s life or concerning future events. They may involve spiritual or divine healing. Whether or not these events are proper miracles as such—however one defines that term—they strike the participants as signs that God is working among them.



CONFESSING SIN Revival broke out at several Christian colleges in the early 1950s, as students openly sought to get right with God (*above*). This scene is from Central Bible Institute, Springfield, Missouri, 1954.



IN THE PUBLIC SQUARE Christians in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, make a joyful noise as they rally outdoors in 1939 for revival in their community (*above right*).

4. Issues of spiritual discernment. Religious revivals almost always force participants to distinguish between nature and grace, between human initiative and divine influence. They may also stimulate discussion regarding God and Satan, or angelic versus diabolical manifestations. Critics of revivals often utter charges of manipulation by leaders, mass hysteria, or emotionalism. Defenders, though they see the revival overall as a divine work, usually acknowledge that at least some participants in the movement are carried away by their own emotions and thus are not being “led by God.”

5. Issues of lay and clerical authority: Who is in charge? People in the midst of an intense spiritual experience often feel that their words and actions carry special authority and may be directly sanctioned by God. Consequently lay participants may believe that they are not bound to follow the directives of their clerical leaders. Thus a familiar clash arises between “charismatic” and “official” leadership in the midst of and in the aftermath of a revival. (This fifth characteristic is often tied to the fourth, as people seek to discern which leaders are speaking on God’s behalf.)

6. Conflict and division in church and community. Religious revivals are almost always controversial, causing deep disagreements between the participants and the nonparticipants, and/or among participants themselves. These conflicts usually center on the characteristics already mentioned—intensified experience, bodily manifestations, extraordinary



SEEKING WHOLENESS Divine healing has long been a characteristic of revivals. Evangelist W. V. Grant prays for the restoration of a man at a service in Milwaukee, 1982 (*above*).

occurrences, and issues of discernment and authority. Since different people assess the revival phenomena in different ways, disagreements are bound to arise. Often the participants in a revival stigmatize the nonparticipants as unspiritual, while nonparticipants regard the participants as fanatical. While these disagreements may occur during the period of a religious revival, they typically take place later. Much of the controversy concerning the Great Awakening, for example, did not take place in the heat of the revival in 1740–1741, but rather in 1743–1745.

Sometimes disagreements over revivals lead to permanent organizational and institutional divisions (e.g., “New Light” vs. “Old Light” Congregationalism, the Methodist churches vs. the Holiness churches, the Holiness churches vs. Pentecostalism).

SACRIFICE OF PRAISE In a spiritual awakening, people lift hands and songs to the Lord. Here we see (right) a praise band leading an early Vineyard service, with John Wimber on the keyboard; worshipers in Argentina (next page); and an artist's rendering of a church service (below).



7. The emergence of new associations, organizations, and institutions. Revivals not only bring conflicts and divisions, they also engender new forms of association and connection between individuals and groups. The Great Awakening helped to spawn a new kind of transdenominational evangelicalism in North America, while the Second Great Awakening encouraged the formation of numerous voluntary associations devoted to various social causes (abolitionism, temperance, women's rights, etc.). The social and institutional legacy of a given revival may be extremely complex, involving both the severing of old ties and the forging of new alliances.

REVIVAL: IDENTITY AND EFFECTS

These seven characteristics indicate that religious revivals, for all their influence on the individuals who undergo them, have definite social, historical, and cultural effects. The shared ecstasy that often occurs in the midst of revivals can have lasting impact on the participants.

The sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) referred to this as “collective effervescence,” noting that powerful, shared experiences can engender a new sense of social identity. It may lead people to view themselves and one another in new ways. It may lead laypeople to challenge those in positions of authority. It may lead people of differing social classes, races, or genders to discover a new affinity with one another.

One enduring—and notoriously complex—issue pertains to the social effects of religious revivals. Was the 1740s Great Awakening—in stressing the religious identity, value, and dignity of ordinary people—a kind of inadvertent preparation for the American Revolution in 1776? Was the Second Great Awakening of the early 1800s a key factor in promoting opposition to slavery in the United States prior to the Civil War? Some scholars say yes in both cases. Though the matter is hardly settled, there is at least some evidence linking religious revivals with movements of social change and reform, and this underscores the fact that revivals are corporate, collective events that may affect large groups of people at significant times in history. **CH**

Michael J. McClymond is professor of modern Christianity at St. Louis University and scholar of the history of Universalism, global evangelicalism, and the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement.

Fiat or partnership?



Does the vitality of a religious revival come directly from God, apart from human efforts, or is revival fervor channeled through the human efforts of preachers or seekers?

The two sides in this debate are often termed “Calvinist” and “Arminian,” even though many participants in the historical controversies were not at all dependent for their ideas on John Calvin (1509–1564) or Jacob Arminius (1560–1609).

Calvinists—who believe that God’s purpose and power undergird all human decisions—distinguish between “revival” and “revivalism.”

They see *revival* as an unplanned event that reflects God’s initiative and *revivalism* as a humanly orchestrated effort to stir up religious interest. A Calvinist revival is unpredictable and powerful, like a sudden summer storm.

By contrast Arminians assert that revivals occur through divine-human cooperation, including such strenuous exertions as prayer, fasting, and the persuasion of potential converts. Beginning in the 1830s, American revivalists tended to emphasize strategies to promote revivals, and we see this later in the mass-evangelism techniques used by Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, Aimee Semple McPherson, Billy Graham, and others.

Ultimately it is hard to draw a clean line of division between these two strains of thought. Calvinists, who wait on God to bring revival, still exert themselves and prepare for it to happen. Arminians, who exert themselves to cause revival, also wait on God. These two theologies of revival may be closer in practice than they are in theory. —Michael McClymond



Limitless *Thoughts on discerning the Spirit*

This issue of Christian History goes back through the last century or two, tracing spiritual revivals and awakenings that have transformed the church. Most of these events ignited controversy when they happened, and some still do. In light of these sometimes sensitive topics, we asked our issue advisor, Michael McClymond, who has taught extensively on this subject, to give his thoughts on how to discern the movement of the Spirit.

First of all: be wary of people who present themselves as experts on the Holy Spirit—including people like me, who write articles such as this. No one has the Spirit figured out. Each of us is a learner.

Scripture says: “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good” (1 Cor. 12:4, 7 ESV). A recognition of the Spirit’s diverse work should deter us from spiritual snap judgments. We should not rely on our own experience as the measuring rod for evaluating everyone else’s. Because the Spirit is God, the Spirit is infinite. The ways in which the Spirit may find human expression are literally endless. How can we limit the infinite Spirit to only certain manifestations?

Lu Xiaomin (b. 1970) is a contemporary Chinese woman, born into a peasant household, who consecrated her life to Jesus, and then, despite her lack of

musical training, began writing Christian songs that today are sung by millions of believers across China. She has now composed some 1,800 hymns. Who can say that this was not a gift of the Holy Spirit?

Pentecostals and Charismatics, as well as Christians who oppose their views, all run the risk of limiting the Spirit’s work. Whenever the first group treats spectacular experiences, or the 1 Corinthians 12 list of charismatic gifts, as the only supernatural phenomena, they omit a wide range of possibilities. Scripture teaches that the Spirit is the Convicter, the Converter, the Comforter, the Sanctifier, and the Spirit of Truth, just as he is the Healer and the Gift Giver. Just as one should not exclude the 1 Corinthians 12 list of spiritual gifts, one should also not limit the Spirit’s work to the 1 Corinthians 12 list.

Salvation is supernatural. God’s Word is supernatural. Conviction of sins is supernatural. Compassion for the suffering or the lost is supernatural. For this reason we need a broad bandwidth and a full-spectrum picture of the Spirit’s work. Such a biblically informed perspective can free us to take a more open—though still discerning—stance toward the reported spiritual experiences of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

—Adapted and revised from Michael J. McClymond’s “What Revivals Can Teach Us,” originally published by Christianity Today.



Remembering revival

THE ENDURING IMPACT OF THE MORAVIAN STORY

Jared S. Burkholder

The Communion service on August 13, 1727, at the Berthelsdorf Lutheran Church was one of several transformative events that took place that summer among the early residents of the religious community named Herrnhut. This little Pietist group, which would be known in Europe as the *Brüdergemeine* and among English speakers as the Moravian Church, emerged from this summer with a strong sense of identity, unity, and mission.

That Communion service has become the stuff of legend among missionary-minded and revival-focused evangelicals. A quick online search reveals hundreds of aspirational descriptions of the revival origins of the Moravian movement. If the Moravians once occupied an obscure corner of church history, it would seem this is no longer the case, at least among evangelicals with a bent toward missions and pentecostal experiences.

AN INSPIRING NARRATIVE

The reasons for this interest in the early Moravians are readily apparent. Eyewitness accounts imbued the events of 1727 with all the marks of evangelical spiritual fervor and special measures of divine grace. Original sources report that love triumphed over division, people prayed a lot, and even children were awakened. The Holy Spirit seemed to be moving. The Herrnhutters quickly began a round-the-clock prayer chain and in a few short years, Moravian missionaries began

CELEBRATING MINISTRY This 1748 painting, *First Fruits* by Johann Valentin Haidt (1700–1780), depicts earthly and heavenly scenes connected to Moravian missionary efforts.

canvassing the far corners of the globe. It is no wonder that Moravian founder Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700–1760) compared these events to the biblical Pentecost.

While these events solidified the Moravians as a part of revival history, there's more to the story. As we examine the Moravian tradition, we might ask: how do we celebrate revival stories while recognizing historical complexities?

Evangelical interest in these inspiring events can be traced to the efforts of Moravian evangelist John Greenfield (1865–1941). In 1927 he wrote a small book, *Power from on High*, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of that famous Communion service. Greenfield hoped to inspire Christians, including his fellow Moravians, to embrace the kind of tabernacle-style revival and mass evangelism that Billy Sunday was then bringing to the revival circuit across America's cities. Although Greenfield's book did not convince all of his fellow Moravians, it was immensely successful in introducing the Moravians to Christians across the evangelical spectrum. Greenfield's narrative has largely remained unchanged as it has been told and retold: a small band of misfits who descended from the persecuted Hussites experienced revival



ON A MISSION Moravian missionaries had Arawak converts in Guyana in the 18th c. (*above*) and a mission station in Greenland in the 19th c. (*above right*). Greenfield's 1927 book (*below right*) helped spread the Moravians' global evangelistic vision in the 20th c.



under the leadership of a uniquely pious nobleman, after which a 100-year “prayer meeting” broke out, resulting in missionaries and preachers being sent throughout the world, some of whom converted John Wesley (1703–1791) and influenced George Whitefield (1714–1770). While this simplified narrative is certainly inspiring, there is much more to say about the Moravians and their place in the captivating (and tumultuous) history of revival.

CHALLENGING REALITIES

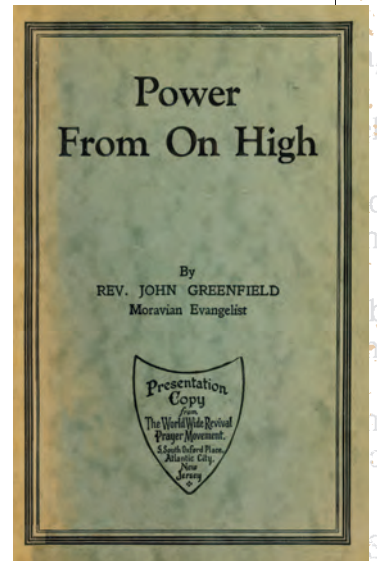
Modern evangelicals may be surprised to learn that, around the time of their renewal, Moravians were considered the radicals of their day because of their unique and innovative spirituality. In fact many evangelical leaders of the time viewed the Moravians as dangerous heretics of the worst sort. Rival Pietists and other opponents published thousands of pages of slander about Moravian theological and supposed sexual perversions. Revivalist Gilbert Tennent (1703–1764) once declared that he would give his last drop of blood in the effort to stop the spread of the Moravians and their heresies. And although it is true that Wesley and Whitefield were at first absolutely infatuated with the Moravians, these relationships soured. Both joined the chorus of voices condemning what they saw as theological errors among the early Moravians.

Moravians were undeterred by all this controversy, however, and succeeded in building a dynamic culture of spirituality that continued through subsequent centuries. In fact they constructed a tradition that far eclipsed the events of that summer in 1727. Among the congregations and communities Moravians established throughout the world, this spiritual culture sometimes included alternative patterns of life, where individuals might live in large shared houses rather

than with their families. An especially important part of Moravian spirituality was their innovative worship. They composed hymns, set aside regular “singing hours,” and became well known for their musical virtuosity, especially during holiday worship. Moravians wrote new liturgies that reflected their Christocentric Pietism and crafted catechisms to instruct new converts.

This spiritual culture placed a high importance on prayer. “Hourly intercession,” the practice that has received so much attention by those leading the modern “24/7” prayer movement, began within weeks of the 1727 renewal, with volunteers organized to pray individually during hourly time slots. According to the Herrnhut diary, the reason for this special prayer effort was not specifically to inspire missions, but rather to defend and guard the young community from satanic influences (by which they may have meant local opposition parties).

Although the nonstop prayer meeting is sometimes portrayed as a centralized practice that lasted for more than a century, it is difficult to know how successful it was. Throughout the decades, as the practice was replicated in new congregations, it would have become decentralized. It is likely that many individuals were praying at once among various congregations, and at other times, especially during night hours, there were gaps in the chain. In any case the practice was officially discontinued in 1818—nine years short of a century, but impressive nonetheless. Of course Moravians didn’t stop praying in 1818. In fact they revived the hourly intercession in 1957 as part of the 500th anniversary of the founding of their predecessor group, the United Brethren, in the old regions of Moravia, and it continues to be practiced among many Moravian congregations today.



St. Tho. 29 June 1744. On Trombone Hill.
 Tenderly beloved Cross, Junior Church off Houghton
 Sub of God in Bethlehem.

My heart thinks on you very often with many Tears of Love
 & those is scarce a Day in which I don't feel in my Heart
 That unprocurable Blessing & Grace which I have enjoyed
 amongst you; & when I hear any Thing of Bethlehem I
 can't express to you how happy I am, & I thank my Lamb
 with many Tears for y^e great Election of Grace of our
 GOD & Lamb, y^e he hath number'd me ^{among} such a happy flock.
 I feel for my Part y^e I see myself daily more unprofitable
 Corrupt, & y^e if I had not a Lamb y^e I should not come thro'
 sometimes I know not what to think because I believe I am
 the most Miserable amongst his People, & am wanting on
 all sides, to be that which I ought, but my Lamb gives
 me nevertheless continually more & more such a happy
 & sinners feeling, & such a continual sinking into his Wounds
 that I don't esteem my Life Precious, but am willing to
 spend myself in y^e Doctrine of Galat. 2 his Appellat.
 & his Death & sufferings. This makes me wish & long
 y^e all my black Lambs might be quite offer'd to him.
 The Devil is very busy with them, & not willing they should
 enjoy that Happiness, & seeks by all Ways & Means to
 hinder us by the White People, but he succeeds but very
 little therein. There is at present such a powerful
 stirring of Grace & Spirit among y^e Negroes thro' out
 y^e whole Island, y^e some times we scarce know where
 we shall begin first, We want ^{companion} Labourers to help draw
 y^e Net, since we are so weak, nevertheless we do what we

Another notable part of the spiritual tradition of the Moravians has been their ability to replicate themselves and their communities, which nineteenth-century Moravians called “diaspora work.” From the start of their renewal movement at Herrnhut, Moravians developed a systematic approach that fit the different places they worked. For instance, even in the eighteenth century, they fostered grassroots connections in Europe and England among other Christians who embraced a Pietist or “awakening” orientation. They also used Zinzendorf’s political connections to establish religious societies made up from the various existing Christian churches.

Wherever they went Moravians often found themselves embroiled in the difficult political realities of empire. In the Caribbean, Moravians set up mission stations within the plantation societies and established new congregations among the enslaved. They even purchased a plantation, along with its enslaved laborers, which of course raises uncomfortable moral questions. In Greenland Moravians established churches among indigenous communities and became early linguists and ethnographers. Similar work continued among indigenous communities in the Americas.

Among the colonial populations in North America, Moravians created travel networks that expanded outward from Bethlehem in Pennsylvania and from Salem in the Carolinas. These networks established preaching stations or small societies, some of which later grew into congregations. In turn some of these grew into structured religious towns. Missionaries who went to remote parts of the world

PRAYER LETTER A 1744 letter from Johann Brucker, a Moravian missionary in St. Thomas, updates a friend on the ministry there.

or foreign climates faced physical hardship and sacrificed greatly, even accepting the possibility of their deaths—something that has contributed to their legendary status among evangelicals.

In establishing these outposts, Moravians maintained and fostered a sense of global interconnectedness as a worldwide community of the awakened. They constructed a culture of journaling and correspondence that encouraged anyone who was involved in travel or missionary work to send regular reports back to their sending congregations. These reports were often copied, transcribed and/or translated as needed, and then circulated through their international network. Moravian ministers would often read these reports to their churches during special “congregation days.” In this way Moravians could see themselves as part of a global community as they celebrated the work of their members and incorporated mission efforts into their prayer lives. Thus the Moravians were instrumental in helping to construct the sort of missionary infrastructure many twenty-first-century Christians take for granted.

SHEDDING CONTROVERSY

After the death of Zinzendorf in 1760 and over the course of the nineteenth century, Moravians shed their controversial reputation. Moravian mission reports were published in evangelical periodicals and read by non-Moravians. Many began to see the Moravians not as dangerous heretics, but as heroic saints rising from humble beginnings. At times this enthusiasm for the Moravians has led some to claim that Moravian missionaries packed their own headstones and coffins or sold themselves into slavery. Although one early Moravian expressed willingness to become a slave to evangelize the enslaved, claims such as these are exaggerated.

Over the centuries, as their church became a more mainstream denomination, Moravians have had differing perspectives on their revival history. Some, like Greenfield, worked to reawaken their revival heritage, while other Moravians (especially in Europe) have been reticent to embrace revivalism, seeing it as an extension of American religious trends.

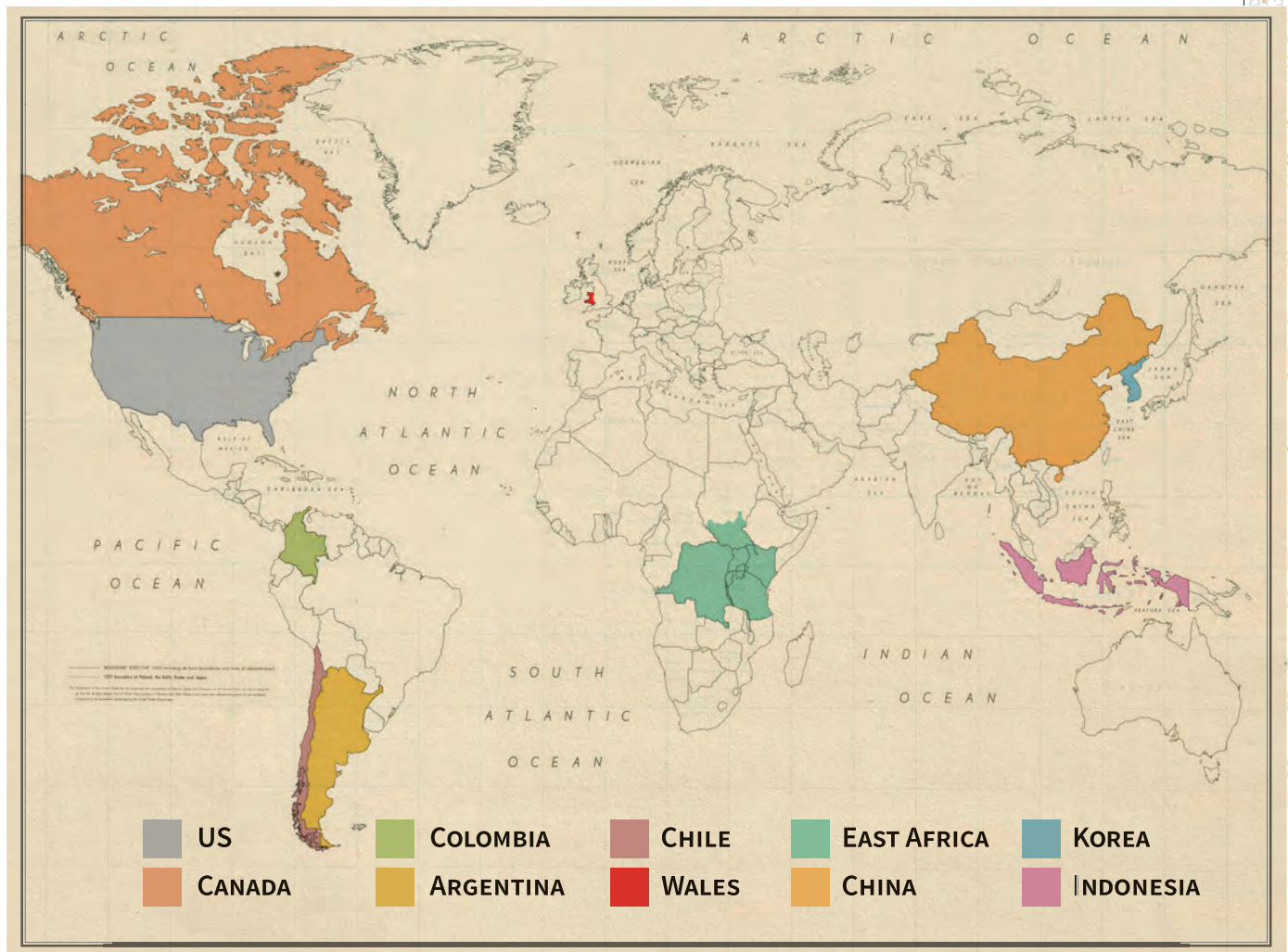
The Moravian spiritual tradition consists of much more than the revival event that took place 300 years ago at the little church in Berthelsdorf, and the larger story of this heritage is a fascinating case study in the messiness of revival history and memory. Regardless of these historical complexities, however, the revival ideal, which links special movements of divine grace, prayer, outpourings of the Holy Spirit, and a resulting witness of expansion and renewal, remains for many a compelling part of the Moravian tradition. **CH**

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LETTER FROM JOHANN BRUCKER TO "ANTON," JUNE 29, 1744. TROMBONE HILL, ST. THOMAS—COURTESY OF MORAVIAN ARCHIVES, BETHLEHEM

Into all the world

COUNTRIES THAT EXPERIENCED REVIVALS FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE



This issue of *Christian History* covers a wide range of spiritual awakenings that occurred all around the world in the 1900s. And there were many more revivals we didn't have room for.

Moving west to east, we begin with the Azusa Street Revival in Los Angeles, California (p. 18). Events in Topeka, Kansas, and Houston, Texas, helped prepare for Azusa, and we could also point to Van Nuys, California, and Duquesne University near Pittsburgh as key US sites in the Charismatic movement of the 1960s. The Brownsville Revival in Pensacola, Florida, was part of a Third Wave, along with Canada's Toronto Blessing (p. 48).

In South America we find Colombia's spiritual transformation documented by George Otis Jr. (p. 53). Despite political and social upheaval, Argentina has witnessed

the working of the Spirit (p. 34), and its neighbor Chile experienced an awakening in 1909 (p. 37).

The 1904 revival in Wales had enormous influence on many other spiritual movements around the world (p. 23). The region of East Africa (including Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Congo, Tanzania, and South Sudan) went through decades of spiritual transformation midcentury (p. 38).

In the East, John Sung preached revival effectively in China (p. 41); Korean believers met in Pyongyang in 1909, confessing and unifying (p. 44); and Christians in Indonesia saw the Lord do amazing things in the 1960s (p. 45).

Seeing it mapped out like this, and acknowledging God's work in many other countries, reminds us of the biblical promise that "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14). **CH**



A new model for missions

VOLUNTARY SOCIETIES AND PARACHURCH ORGANIZATIONS

David W. Kling

In the summer of 1806, five students met in a grove of trees at Williams College in Massachusetts to pray for divine guidance and to discuss their religious faith and calling. During an afternoon rainstorm, they sought refuge under a haystack. Undeterred, they continued their prayer meeting and consecrated their lives to overseas missions. This incident became a pivotal event in launching the foreign missionary movement of American Protestantism.

Several of those students at the Haystack Prayer Meeting carried their vision from Williams College to Andover Theological Seminary, where they created a more formal organization that eventually led to the establishment of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1810. Two years later five ABCFM missionaries—Adoniram Judson Jr. (1788–1850), Samuel Nott (1788–1869), Samuel Newell (1784–1821), Luther Rice (1783–1836), and Gordon Hall (1784–1826)—set sail for India, accompanied by three wives—Ann Hasseltine Judson (1789–1826), Rosanne Peck Hall, and Harriet Atwood Newell (1793–1812).

This was not an isolated event. Over the next two decades, American evangelicals founded and staffed dozens of voluntary societies to promote missions, moral reform, education, Bible reading, and prison reform. These included the American Education Society (1815), the American Bible Society (1816), the American Colonization Society (1816), the American Sunday School Union (1817), the American Tract Society (1825), the American Home Missionary Society

LAUNCHING In 1812 a newly formed mission society consecrates five new missionaries for foreign service.

(1826), and the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance (1826). This burst of Christian activism in the United States was a natural outgrowth of the Second Great Awakening, but it also sprang from other sources.

CHURCHES CUT LOOSE

In the decades following the American Revolution, the United States experienced a profound shift in religious authority. State-sponsored religion slowly collapsed state by state under the weight of the First Amendment's establishment and free exercise clauses, and religion had to find a new place in American society. This disruption created new space for populist churches, denominational institutions, and voluntary societies to flourish.

Lyman Beecher (1775–1863), one of the best-known pastors of the early 1800s, originally favored state-sponsored religion. When Connecticut officially disestablished the Congregational Church in 1818, Beecher said it was “as dark a day as ever I saw. The injury done to the cause of Christ, as we then supposed, was irreparable.” But he soon changed his mind, concluding that it was “the best thing that ever happened to the state of Connecticut. It cut the churches loose from dependence on state support. It threw them wholly on their own resources and on God.” He acknowledged the fears

AFTER GEORGE CHINNERY, ROBERT MORRISON AND HIS CHINESE ASSISTANTS, 1846. STIPPLE ENGRAVING—SARIN IMAGES / GRANGER
JONATHAN EDWARDS, AN HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO PROMOTE EXPLICIT AGREEMENT AND VISIBLE UNION OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN EXTRAORDINARY PRAYER, 1747—PUBLIC DOMAIN, BEINECKE RARE BOOK AND MANUSCRIPT LIBRARY, YALE UNIVERSITY
SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL SEAL, ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, HAMPTON, VIRGINIA, STAINED GLASS—JANET CUMMINGS, THOROUGHGOOD WORLD

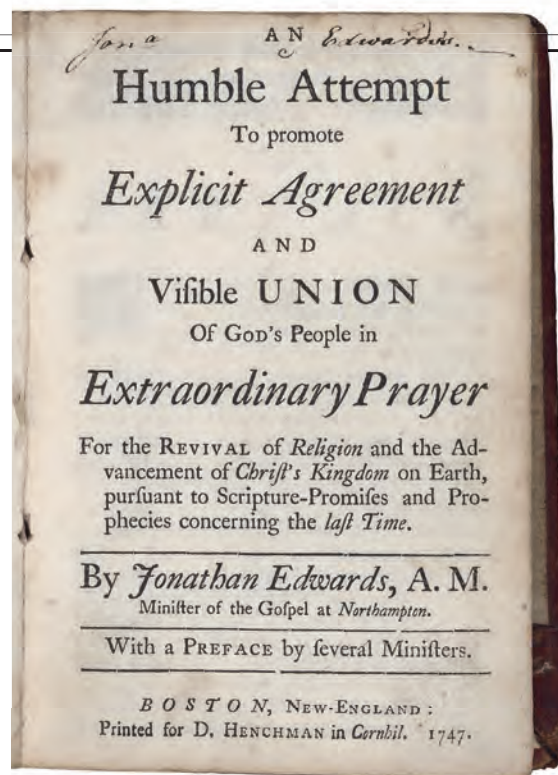


PROPAGATING Robert Morrison works with Chinese Christians translating the Bible (above). Jonathan Edwards calls believers to pray for revival (above right). And a window (right) depicts the seal of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts.

that “ministers have lost their influence,” but in fact, argued Beecher, “by voluntary efforts, societies, missions, and revivals, they exert a deeper influence than ever they could.” The American model of voluntarism ignited powerful religious energies that profoundly reshaped the nature of religion throughout the nineteenth century and beyond.

This shift in American Christianity provided a fertile environment for the Second Great Awakening (see CH #151). We can also trace the emergence of evangelical missionary societies back to the 1700s and the influence of Great Awakening theologian Jonathan Edwards (1703–1758). He raised a new consciousness about the possibility of missions, both in his transatlantic correspondence and in published works such as *Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1737), *Humble Attempt to Promote . . . Union Among God’s People* (1747), *Life of David Brainerd* (1749), and *History of the Work of Redemption* (published posthumously in 1774). His writings repeatedly focused on “the advancement of the kingdom of Christ” or “the propagation of the gospel.”

Of course Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Pietists had already established missions over the previous two centuries. Decades before Edwards’s ministry, three new missionary societies addressed the needs of American colonists: the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (1698), the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (1701), and the Scottish Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (1709). Later efforts by Moravian Brethren Pietists and the Halle-Danish-English Mission in Tranquebar, India, to



extend the gospel “to the uttermost parts of the earth” also provided an impetus for international Protestant missions.

FROM EDWARDS TO CAREY

Yet at every turn, we see lines connecting Edwards to the missionary spirit that emerged later. Edwards’s biography, *Life of David Brainerd*, touched the lives of laity, clergy, revivalists, and missionaries alike. *Life* tells the story of pioneer American missionary David Brainerd (1718–1747), who launched an adventurous ministry among Native Americans. The biography succeeded in raising missionary consciousness not only among Americans, but also among other English-speaking and German evangelicals. It inspired



HAND IN HAND An early parachurch ministry founded in 1817, the American Sunday School Union (above) gathered churches of different denominations in the cause of Christian education.

TURNING 100 (right) A coin marked the centennial of the Baptist Missionary Society, founded at Kettering, England, in 1792.

a veritable hall of fame of renowned evangelists: Melville Horne (c. 1761–1841), English missionary to Africa; Robert Morrison (1782–1834), Scottish missionary to China; Christian Friedrich Schwartz (1726–1798), German missionary to India; Samuel Marsden (1765–1838), English missionary to New Zealand; Adoniram Judson, American missionary to Burma; and the father of modern missions himself, William Carey (1761–1834), for whom the Brainerd biography “became a second Bible.”

Indeed Edwards’s effect on Carey is inestimable. Edwards’s *Humble Attempt*, which proposes a concert of prayer for extending the kingdom of Christ and hastening the millennium, influenced William Carey’s book, *An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (1792), which ignited a passion for foreign missions among the English and led to the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society at Kettering.

Carey’s clarion call to spread the gospel also rippled throughout the United States, where the spiritual fervor and millennial expectations generated by the Second Great Awakening gave believers an energy unparalleled in American history. Worldwide, believers began duplicating Carey’s “society method” of missionary support and direction. The model took flight especially in the hundreds of voluntary societies and benevolent organizations that emerged in the United States in the first half of the nineteenth century.

TRANSFORMING SOCIETY

Amid the religious stir of the Second Great Awakening, the followers of Edwards, the so-called New Divinity men, refined and revised Edwards’s theology to support religious activism. Samuel Hopkins (1721–1803) took Edwards’s emphasis on loving God for who and what he is—without regard for what we receive—and transposed it into an ethic



MISSIONS: AT HOME AND ABROAD

Some of the first societies focused on ministry in America. In 1796 New Divinity stalwart Nathanael Emmons (1745–1840) took the lead in organizing the Massachusetts Missionary Society, and others formed the New York Missionary Society. Two years later New Divinity men sponsored the Missionary Society of Connecticut. All three societies pledged to evangelize the “heathen” (including Native Americans) and the many New Englanders moving to western settlements.

It wasn’t long before the missionary spirit exploded farther outward and into foreign service as well, as simple gatherings like the Haystack Prayer Meeting turned into major societies.

The transformative model of the voluntary religious society or parachurch organization that emerged early in the nineteenth century remains a powerful shaping force even today, especially among American evangelicals. Parachurch ministries have proliferated since World War II, in some cases exceeding parallel ministries in major denominations, dwarfing their budgets, and competing for the loyalties of church members. Though not without their critics, these single-focused ministries continue to inspire and attract those dedicated to the goals of making disciples, alleviating suffering, addressing injustice, and spreading the gospel. **CH**

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A prayer meeting that went viral

The Businessmen's Revival of 1857–1858

Six people showed up to that first noonday prayer meeting on Fulton Street in Lower Manhattan, and they were late. That was fine since the leader had invited people to stop by when they could for five or ten minutes as their schedule allowed. That leader, a former businessman named Jeremiah Lanphier (1809–1898), could not have guessed that the half-dozen praying on September 23, 1857, would be the start of a widespread revival.

INVITING COMMUNITY

The North Dutch Reformed Church faced a problem that had often plagued city churches: parishioners were moving away. The area was becoming an active business center, but most of the workers lived elsewhere. Immigrants moving into the neighborhood had no relationship with this church. Consequently attendance at Sunday services dwindled.

The church hired Lanphier to help. He was not an ordained minister, but he lived in the vicinity, had a business background, and was eager to be of service. A pleasant, energetic man, he visited the apartment buildings in the area, but had difficulty attracting immigrants to the church. Then he set his sights on the business crowd. Would they come to a simple prayer meeting held at noon on a weekday? He reserved a third-floor room at the church and printed handbills that welcomed those of all denominations. It would be just prayer and a few hymns—no preaching.

In the second week of Lanphier's prayer meeting, 20 attended. The next week, more than 30. And then, in modern terms, it went viral.

CATALYZING CRISIS

On October 14, 1857, the United States faced its worst financial panic yet. Events in Europe touched off price fluctuations around the world, which hurt American farmers. Railroad business declined, causing losses for the many who had invested heavily in that sector. A major insurance company in New York went under, leading to other collapses. The boom of the 1850s rapidly went bust, and that drove many businesspeople in New York to prayer.

Suddenly 6, 20, or 30 coming to pray became hundreds. The Fulton Street Prayer Meetings adopted a daily schedule, using multiple rooms to accommodate the crowds. Soon other churches opened for similar daytime gatherings. By spring an estimated 10,000 people were assembling in at least 20 churches and



THE FULTON STREET PRAYER-MEETING.—(Illustration by Brastat Post.)

NEW BUSINESS This midday, midweek meeting on Fulton Street invited those who worked in the area to attend to the business of prayer.

YMCA's across New York, and the idea quickly spread through the United States and Canada.

At some point it became apparent that this was not just a church-growth tactic, but a spiritual movement—a full-blown revival. Church leaders in Philadelphia reported that more than 3,000 people were coming to their prayer times, and they were constructing a massive tent for them. A report from Hamilton, Ontario, indicated that more than 300 were converted in meetings there. When a theater in Chicago welcomed 2,000 for prayer, a local newspaper reported that the effects of this revival are to be seen in every walk of life, to be felt in every phase of society. The merchant, the farmer, the mechanic . . . have been incited to better things; to a more orderly and honest way of life.

The excitement cooled with the start of the Civil War in 1861, which interrupted and often devastated life throughout the United States. Still the Businessmen's Revival left a lasting mark, paving the way for future prayer-fueled movements.—Randy Petersen, author and CH guest managing editor



Crossing barriers

WILLIAM J. SEYMOUR AND THE AZUSA STREET REVIVAL

Gastón E. Espinosa

A humble, devout, and soft-spoken Black man from the Louisiana bayou, William J. Seymour (1870–1922) led a revival in Los Angeles that crossed racial, religious, and social boundaries. He invited people to experience the baptism with the Holy Spirit and spiritual “sign gifts” like speaking in tongues, healing, working miracles, and prophesying. The movement began on Azusa Street, in the former Stevens African Methodist Episcopal Church. After a fire destroyed its steeple, the building had been transformed into a barn with a pat dirt floor and apartments on the second story. What happened here in the fall of 1906 sparked curiosity around the nation and the world, and it changed the fabric of Christianity for the next century and beyond.

William J. Seymour was born to the formerly enslaved Simon and Phyllis Salabar in Centerville, Louisiana, on May 2, 1870. He and his seven brothers and sisters attended a local Catholic church and later a nearby Baptist church. In the 1890s, like thousands of other southern Blacks, he traveled north along the routes of the former Underground Railroad and lived in Memphis, St. Louis, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, and elsewhere. At the all-Black Simpson Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church in Indianapolis, he became a born-again Christian.

During this time Seymour was influenced by Daniel S. Warner’s (1842–1895) Evening Lights Saints, later called the Church of God Reformation Movement. This radical

THE AZUSA CREW A 1907 portrait shows William Seymour (seated, second from right) with the Azusa Street mission team. At that point this world-changing revival was still just getting started.

Holiness group promoted racial equality and reconciliation at the height of Jim Crow segregation and regularly evangelized and served in the Black community. After a bout with smallpox left Seymour blind in one eye and with pockmarks on his face (which he covered with a light beard), he responded to God’s calling on his life and was ordained an evangelist by the Evening Lights Saints.

SAINTS AND SPEAKING IN TONGUES

In 1905 Seymour moved to Houston where he met a preacher named Charles Fox Parham (1873–1929) and attended his Houston Bible School for a short time. There Seymour was asked to respect Texas segregation laws by sitting in the hallway or an adjacent room. After soaking up Parham’s teaching that speaking in tongues is the initial, physical evidence of the baptism with the Holy Spirit mentioned in the Bible (Acts 1:5 and elsewhere), Seymour joined Parham in conducting evangelistic work in the local Black community for a short while.

Seymour arrived in Los Angeles on February 22, 1906, to pastor a mission being led by Julia Hutchins. Considering his



STREET PREACHING Charles Parham's ministry (above) paved the way for the Pentecostal movement in the United States. In 1901, at his Bible school in Topeka, students spoke in tongues. Later he mentored William Seymour.

HOUSE CHURCH The Azusa Street Revival really started on Bonnie Brae Street, in this home (above right), where Seymour led a regular prayer meeting.

preaching about speaking in tongues unbiblical, Hutchins expelled Seymour from the mission on March 4. On April 6 Seymour started a 10-day fast for revival at Richard and Ruth Asberry's home at 214 Bonnie Brae Street. The prayer meeting he started there erupted into a revival that outgrew that home and relocated to the church-turned-barn at 312 Azusa Street, in the Black section of Los Angeles. Soon the meetings were attracting upwards of 1,200 people per night. The services generally ran three times per day for three years straight from 1906 to 1909, with thousands attending, many from far away.

Though the Azusa Street Revival featured unity of spirit for much of its duration, there were setbacks. Betrayal and schism undermined Seymour's spiritual authority and ability to influence the global Pentecostal movement after 1911.

Despite these setbacks the revival attracted a large number of clergy, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and Christian workers seeking spiritual renewal. Many of them returned to their homes or went overseas to spread the message. In addition the fledgling Pentecostal movement spawned daughter missions in many areas, and there were 405,000 copies of its *Apostolic Faith* newspaper circulating around the world. All of this helps to explain how, by 1915, Azusa missionaries had spread the Pentecostal Revival to more than 50 countries around the world and almost every town in the United States with a population over 3,000.

THE TEACHING AT AZUSA

The most distinctive qualities of Seymour's revival were its emphases on having a personal conversion experience with Jesus Christ; being baptized with the Holy Spirit; the practice of the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14; a



“Breaking Loose”

The Azusa Street Revival won hearts amid criticism

Azusa Street was the granddaddy of North American Pentecostal revivals and a major point of dissemination for Pentecostalism abroad. It proved to be one of the most influential localized Christian revivals to take place anywhere in the world during the twentieth century.

The public received news of the happening from a *Los Angeles Times* story on April 18, 1906 (the day of the great San Francisco earthquake). The newspaper headline read, “Weird Babble of Tongues / New Sect of Fanatics is Breaking Loose.” Although derogatory, the coverage gave the revival free publicity. Soon the serious and the curious were making their way to Azusa Street.

Worship services continued seven days a week, from morning until night, for three and half years, in a ramshackle Los Angeles building that had once served as a horse stable. Improvised pews were made from rough planks set on nail kegs, and the pulpit consisted of two empty wooden crates set on end. Proponents and detractors alike acknowledged the revival's astonishing power. The first issue of the *Apostolic Faith* newsletter in September 1906 reported: “Proud, well-dressed preachers come in to ‘investigate.’ Soon their high looks are replaced with wonder, then conviction comes, and very often you will find them in a short time wallowing on the dirty floor, asking God to forgive them and make them as little children.”

Group photos of the original leaders portray Blacks and Whites, men and women, in genuine partnership with each other. Whites acknowledged the leadership of William Seymour, a Black man. Participant Frank Bartleman (1871–1936) wrote that “the color line was washed away in [Jesus's] blood.”

Yet Seymour's teacher, a White man named Charles Fox Parham, arrived in Los Angeles and was horrified to see the informality of Black-White relations there. He reacted with unprintable racial slurs, creating an irreparable breach with Seymour. As it turned out, Parham had little remaining influence in the Pentecostal movement he had helped to establish.

There were further difficulties among Azusa Street leadership when one woman—possibly influenced by romantic disappointment—absconded with the only copies of the mailing lists for the *Apostolic Faith* newsletter, the movement's main media outlet. Despite these setbacks the Azusa Street Revival entered a second peak period in 1911 and went on to change the world.—*Michael J. McClymond, CH 153 advising editor.*



ALL OVER THE WORLD The Azusa Street Revival sparked a worldwide movement, energizing Christians everywhere (above).



MISSION CENTRAL A simple structure on Azusa Street in Los Angeles (left) drew crowds for nearly nonstop meetings from 1906 to 1909.

focus on spiritual renewal, divine healing, spiritual warfare, and exorcisms; powerful, enthusiastic worship; lengthy services; times of prayer and meditation; and commitment to evangelism, missions, and evangelistic social work. In an effort to nurture and disciple followers, Seymour also provided regular spiritual guidance and mentorship through letter writing, personal visits, his newspaper, and preaching tours across the United States.

The revival attracted women, immigrants, the poor, the handicapped, and the working class—but also some from upper-class backgrounds. Seymour created a Christian social space that defied the unbiblical social conventions of the day, such as segregation and racial discrimination, where Christians could cross religious, racial, class, educational, and other boundaries. As one woman who attended those services as a child reminisced later, “It didn’t matter

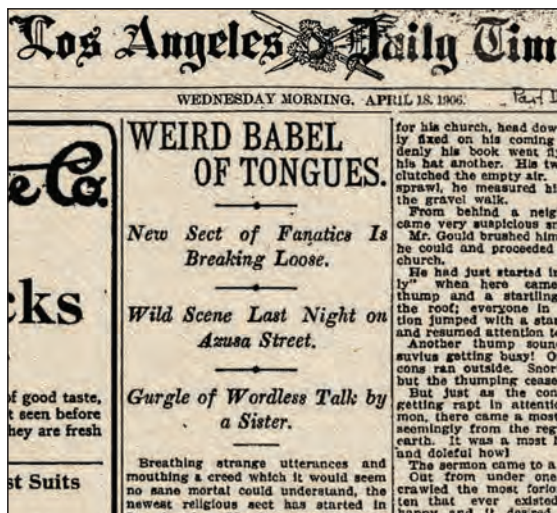
if you were black, white, green or grizzly. There was a wonderful spirit. Germans and Jews, Blacks and Whites, ate together.... Nobody ever thought about color.”

Seymour and his Azusa Street leadership team created a theology of divine healing based on Jesus’s victory over sin, sickness, and death. They taught that all of the spiritual gifts practiced in the New Testament church are available

to all born-again, Spirit-filled believers today—including the spiritual “sign gifts” of speaking in tongues, divine healing, miracles, and prophecy (1 Cor. 12; Mark 16:15–20). Unlike most Protestants of their day, early Pentecostals believed that the spiritual sign gifts did not cease with the death of the apostles, but are fully available today to all who would ask in faith. They based this belief on John 14:12, where Jesus said that whoever believes in him will do even greater works, and on the Great Commission in Mark 16:15–20, where Jesus called on his followers to preach the gospel around the world with signs and wonders, such as placing their hands on and healing the sick.

At Azusa Street, the threefold purpose of divine healing was to bring relief to the person suffering from the illness, to attract the lost and backslidden, and to serve as a concrete sign and symbol to the unbelieving world of God’s

REDEEMED CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF GOD, ANNUAL CONVENTION, LAGOS—PHOTO BY ROBIN HAMMOND
EXTERIOR VIEW OF THE AZUSA STREET MISSION, 1928—FLOWER PENTECOSTAL HERITAGE CENTER



TIMES OF THE SIGNS A local newspaper (*above*) put its own spin on the events on Azusa Street in April 1906, warning of “a new sect of fanatics . . . breaking loose.”

TONGUES OF FIRE Pentecostals consider their experience similar to that of the apostles in Acts 2 (*above right*), filled with the Spirit and “speaking in other tongues.”

miraculous power. Sin and sickness were not limited to physical ailments, but also included emotional, spiritual, and psycho-social ones—including racial prejudice.

BODY, SOUL, AND SOCIETY

The teaching of racial unity was a huge contributor to the movement’s rapid growth across the United States (especially among racial-ethnic minorities) and around the world (especially in countries of the Global South, many of which were dominated by European colonial empires). Divine healing and miracles played a critical role in Pentecostal expansion as well, not only because they brought relief to broken bodies and spirits, but also because Seymour and his followers used them to address unbiblical racial-ethnic divisions. He argued that the outpouring of the Spirit fell on all people around the world—irrespective of their race—and united them into one body of believers whose Holy Spirit baptism gave them a common experience, purpose, mission, and goal, which was to help usher in the Second Coming of Jesus Christ by evangelizing every nation.

These early Pentecostals invoked biblical precedent for racial unity, citing the stories of the Samaritan woman (John 4:4–26), the Roman centurion (Matt. 8:5–13 and Luke 7:1–10), the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24–30), and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26–40), as well as Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles, including his rebuke of Peter’s Jewish ethnocentrism (Gal. 2:11–20). They also interpreted the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:4 as an appropriate image of how Jesus’s followers from around the world had gathered together despite linguistic and national differences. They pointed out that Jesus and his disciples often crossed social boundaries to help people who were sick,



marginalized, demonized, and suffering.

At the height of Jim Crow policies in America, Seymour’s newspaper, *Apostolic Faith*, boldly declared, “God recognizes no man-made creeds, doctrines, or classes of people, but ‘the willing and the obedient.’” The paper also affirmed that “no instrument [of God] is rejected on account of color” and that “one token of the Lord’s coming is that He is melting all races and nations together. . . . He is baptizing by one Spirit into one body

“How and why”

From the third issue of Apostolic Faith, November 1906

The news has spread far and wide that Los Angeles is being visited with a “rushing mighty wind from heaven.” The how and why of it is to be found in the very opposite of those conditions that are usually thought necessary for a big revival. No instruments of music are used, none are needed. No choir—but bands of angels have been heard by some in the Spirit and there is a heavenly singing that is inspired by the Holy Ghost. No collections are taken. No bills have been posted to advertise the meetings. No church or organization is back of it. All who are in touch with God realize as soon as they enter the meetings that the Holy Ghost is the leader. One brother stated that even before his train entered the city, he felt the power of the revival.

Travelers from afar wend their way to the headquarters at Azusa Street. . . . In the vicinity of a tombstone shop, stables and lumber yard (a fortunate vicinity because no one complains of all-night meetings) you find a two-story, white-washed old building. You would hardly expect heavenly visitations there, unless you remember the stable at Bethlehem.

But here you find a mighty Pentecostal revival going on from ten o’clock in the morning till about twelve at night. Yes, Pentecost has come to hundreds of hearts and many homes are made into a sweet paradise below.

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and making up a people that will be ready to meet Him when he comes.”

Despite the fact that racial division did later arise in some sectors of the movement around the world, Seymour’s original vision of a unified, race-defying community has remained a major impetus behind the movement to this day. In this respect the Azusa Street Revival’s message foreshadowed the later message of Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s, which created a similar faith-based intersectional theology that sought to liberate people of all races and classes suffering from unbiblical social divisions.

“More of the power”

From the first issue of Apostolic Faith, September 1906

The meetings begin about ten o’clock in the morning and can hardly stop before ten or twelve at night, and sometimes two or three in the morning, because so many are seeking, and some are slain under the power of God. People are seeking three times a day at the altar and row after row of seats have to be emptied and filled with seekers. We cannot tell how many people have been saved, and sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost, and healed of all manner of sicknesses. Many are speaking in new tongues, and some are on their way to the foreign fields, with the gift of the language. We are going on to get more of the power of God.

Many have laid aside their glasses and had their eyesight perfectly restored. The deaf have had their hearing restored. A man was healed of asthma of twenty years standing. Many have been healed of heart trouble and lung trouble. . . . A brother who had been a spiritualist medium and who was so possessed with demons that he had no rest, and was on the point of committing suicide, was instantly delivered of demon power. He then sought God for the pardon of his sins and sanctification, and is now filled with a different spirit.

BREAKING NEWS The Azusa team put out its own newspaper (*above*) to spread the word about the revival. Those who couldn’t visit could still read about it.

BEYOND BORDERS Worshipers from Papua New Guinea offer praises in a Korean church (*above left*) during the 1994 World Assemblies of God Congress.

The first Pentecostals recognized divine healing and miracles as distinct but interrelated gifts of the Holy Spirit and almost always talked about them together, sometimes even interchangeably. They believed divine healing should be a normal part of the Christian life. Seymour taught that one of the three key duties of a pastor, after preaching and meeting with members of the church for spiritual formation, was to visit the sick, and when the opportunity arose, to pray for healing. He and his followers at first thought Christians should avoid medicine and simply pray for divine healing, although they modified this view very early in the movement and encouraged people to first anoint and pray for the sick and then take medicine if and as needed. Seymour wrote: “The Lord never revoked the commission he gave to his disciples: ‘Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead.’”

A DRIVING FORCE

Today the Azusa Street Revival’s message of divine healing remains a driving force in the growth and development of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement around the world. The movement that Seymour shaped had blossomed to 644 million people; 19,300 denominations; and 1,336,000 congregations around the world by 2020. Some scholars project that by 2050 there will be one billion Pentecostal/Charismatic Christians. **GH**

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“Lord, bend us”

THE 1904 REVIVAL IN WALES

Wolfgang Reinhardt

The Welsh revival of 1904–1905 stands out as one of the most important spiritual awakenings in modern times. Its origins were mainly indigenous, in a long tradition of Welsh revivals, but its influence was international.

Never before in church history had there been such a great revival influence flowing from one country into so many others in such a short time. There were many historical connections between Wales and other movements, such as India 1905–1907, Los Angeles 1906, and Korea 1906–1907, to name only a few.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Welsh society was in a period of great change and turmoil. On one side it nearly exploded with energy and optimism. People were fascinated by technological progress and amazing inventions (like the sewing machine) and benefiting from recent chemical discoveries and the minor products of new industries, like cheap coal and newspapers.

But besides the optimism was great economic, political, and social unrest that could not fail to affect the people's Christian faith. Since 1850 industry had begun to change the face of the country. As aggressive capitalism of heavy industry expanded, coal mining employed more people than any other industry, and Cardiff became the biggest coal export harbor in the world. But the quick and unstructured growth of the industrial cities created many social, spiritual, and moral problems for the church to grapple with.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

On the second Sunday in February 1904, in the town of New Quay, a girl named Florrie Evans (1884–1967) gave a very simple testimony in a meeting of young people: “I am not able to say very much today but I love the Lord Jesus with all my heart—he died for me.” The gathering was said to have become very quiet and then excited in sensing the awful and overwhelming presence of God.

These unpretentious words became a spark igniting a widespread revival as young people fanned the flame in neighboring congregations. At the heart of these events, pastor Seth Joshua (1858–1925) noted in his diary:

The revival is breaking out here in greater power. The spirit of prayer and of testimony is falling in a marvelous manner. The young are receiving the greatest measure of blessing. The revival goes on.... I



CONFESSING CHRIST OPENLY A baptismal service is conducted in c. 1905 in the Gwaun River in western Wales, near Fishguard. The revival inspired many to make a new commitment.

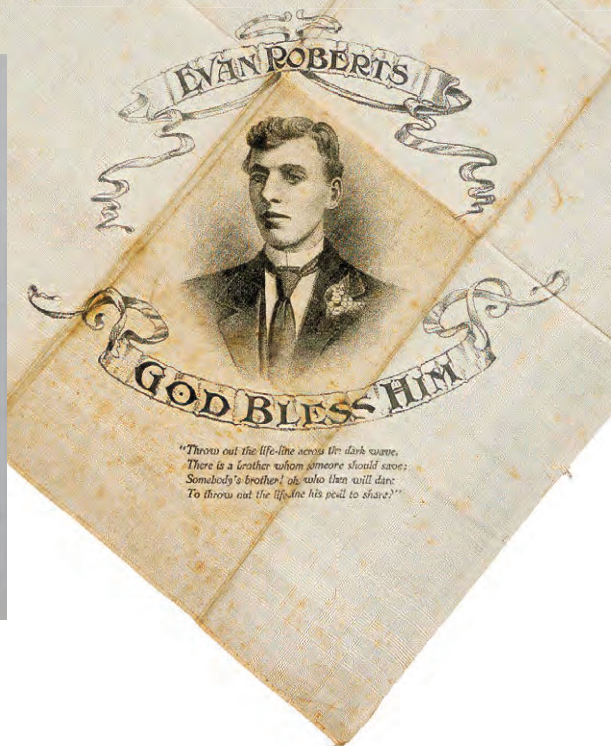
have closed the service several times and yet it would break out again quite beyond the control of human power. . . . Group after group came out to the front seeking the full assurance of faith. What was wonderful to me was the fact that every person engaged in prayer, without one exception.

BENT ON REVIVAL

The best-known figure of the revival, raised in a Welsh Calvinist Methodist family in Loughor in the south, had an intensive spiritual life even as a boy. Evan Roberts (1878–1951) wrote later: “I could sit up all night to read or talk about revivals.” In 1903, after working in a coal mine and as a blacksmith, he entered a preparatory school for the ministry at Newcastle Emlyn at the age of 25.

During this time Roberts attended a meeting in Blaenannerch on the west coast of Wales, where preacher Seth Joshua prayed, “Lord, bend us.” Later Evan Roberts experienced a powerful filling with the Holy Spirit and the decisive call for his future life:

I felt a living power pervading my bosom . . . the tears flowed in streams. . . . I cried out “Bend me! Bend me! Bend us!” . . . I was filled with compassion for those who must bend at the judgment, and I wept. . . . I felt ablaze with a desire to go through the length and breadth of Wales to tell of the Savior.



Soon afterward Roberts formed a team to preach the gospel everywhere in Wales. During the nights Roberts had visions, and one of them showed him preaching to his former classmates. This led him to conduct meetings in his hometown of Loughor.

After discouraging beginnings these meetings increased in numbers and intensity. People felt a mighty outpouring of the Spirit with much weeping, shouting, crying out, joy, and brokenness. News of the events spread like wildfire, as newspapers and Christian journals raised further expectations. A national newspaper, *The Western Mail*, reported:

Shopkeepers are closing earlier in order to get a place in the chapel, and tin and steel workers throng the place in their working clothes. The only theme of conversation among all classes and sects is “Evan Roberts.” Even the taprooms of the public-houses are given over to discussion on the origin of the powers possessed by him.

EVAN ROBERTS AND BEYOND

Roberts’s revival meetings started with his team of young women singing and giving testimony. He sometimes came late and remained hours in prayer, often in tears on his knees or lying prostrate on the floor. He never gave a prepared sermon, but claimed to be guided by the Spirit alone. Roberts announced four conditions for gaining the full blessing of the Holy Spirit: 1) confessing openly and fully to God any sin not confessed to him before; 2) doing away with anything doubtful in ourselves; 3) giving prompt obedience to the influences of the Holy Spirit in the heart; and 4) confessing Christ openly and publicly before the world.

Sometimes he did not preach at all, but the meetings seemed to guide themselves. They began long before he arrived and lasted late into the night, people often losing their sense of time. The numbers increased, with often thousands, even tens of thousands, waiting for him.

COAL PIT (above left) Coal was a major industry in Wales at the time of the revival, which had a profound effect on many coal workers. More than 300 worked in this Mynydd Newydd pit near Swansea. In 1904 they started meeting for prayer every Monday.

THE FACE OF REVIVAL (above) It wasn’t all about Evan Roberts, but he was clearly the popular figure, as shown in this keepsake napkin from the era.

The revival had strong support—even bishops of the Anglican Church declared publicly that it was a genuine work of God.

At the end of March 1905, Roberts started his fourth—and most controversial—campaign in Liverpool, England, which had a large Welsh population. Even more than usual, he interrupted singing and prayers, stating that there were obstacles and that the “place must be cleansed,” for example, because some were refusing to forgive. His announcement of “a direct message from God” that the Welsh Free Church (which sponsored this campaign) “is not founded on the Rock” created great uproar. In the newspaper he was attacked on the grounds that his public work was a “sham.” Even a sympathetic biographer wrote that “in the heat of the moment Evan Roberts was claiming powers for himself that no individual can ever have.”

After this campaign Roberts underwent a medical examination that found him mentally sound but overworked. About a year later, he retired from the public eye, apparently suffering from what we would call burnout.

Church leaders continued to hold campaigns, emphasizing that this was not the “Evan Roberts Revival.” Some of these meetings bore the influence

A new fervor

Throughout Wales, people were talking about the revival. Here are some of their firsthand accounts.

They are talking of little else in the snug little stone cottages that line the ridges like low ramparts; in the tiny shops where the women come to buy the day's supplies; in the railway carriages, and at the street corners. Every church community is stirred to the depths, and out on the edges rough miners are shaking their heads wonderingly, and are being drawn toward it until the power of it seizes them and they leave their work to attend the day meetings as well as those at night. Strong men are in tears of penitence; women are shaken with a new fervor, and in the streets small children at their play are humming revival hymns.

—Arthur Goodrich

With regard to the coal mines in Wales, “The horses are terribly puzzled,” a manager said to me. “The haulers are some of the very lowest. They have driven their horses by obscenity and kicks. Now they can hardly persuade the horses to start working, because there is no obscenity and no kicks.”

—G. Campbell Morgan (1863–1945)

The praying and singing are both wonderful, but more impressive than either are the breaks which occur when utterance can no more, and the sobbing in the silence, momentarily heard, is drowned in a tempest of melody. No need for an organ. The assembly was its own organ as a thousand sorrowing or rejoicing hearts found expression in the sacred psalmody of their native hills. Repentance, open confession, intercessory prayer, and, above all else, this marvelous musical liturgy—a liturgy unwritten but heartfelt, a mighty chorus rising like the thunder of the surge on a rock-bound shore, ever and anon broken by the flutelike note of the Singing Sisters, whose melody was as sweet and as spontaneous as the music of the throstle in the grove or the lark in the sky. And all this vast quivering, throbbing, singing, praying, exultant multitude intensely conscious of the all-pervading influence of some invisible reality—now for the first time moving palpable though not tangible in their midst. They called it the Spirit of God.

—W. T. Stead (1849–1912)



Mr. EVAN ROBERTS AND THE REVIVALISTS FROM LOUGHOR.

THE MINISTRY TEAM As he preached throughout Wales, Evan Roberts (*front and center*) worked with a team of women who sang and testified at the revival meetings.

This is no mere piece of imagination, and it certainly is not a piece of exaggeration. “I will pour forth of My Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,” is the promise now evidently fulfilled in Wales.

—G. Campbell Morgan

There does not seem to have been any organized effort anywhere. . . . If Mr. Evan Roberts is spoken of as the center, it is only because [he] happens to be one of the few conspicuous figures in a movement which he neither organized nor controls.

—W. T. Stead

Wonderful things have happened in Wales in a few weeks, but these are only a beginning. The world will be swept by His Spirit as by a rushing, mighty wind. Many who are now silent Christians, negative Christians, Christians whose belief means little to them and nothing to anyone else, will lead in the movement. Groping, hesitating, half-hearted Christians will see a great Light and will reflect this Light to thousands of those in utter darkness.

—Evan Roberts (1878–1951)

All of those quoted were contributors to the 1905 book The Story of the Welsh Revival (Revell).



HOW IT SPREAD The revival in Wales started in its south and southwest areas but soon affected the whole region—and inspired similar revivals in India, the United States, and Korea.

parents were brought to a better life through the revival.

In the coal pits, miners gathered to pray and praise God before they began their hard work. The revival resulted in lots of debts being repaid and the reconciliation of bitter enemies. Young people in different areas visited the poor and sick, providing Bibles, food, and clothing for the needy. More long-lasting were the institutions formed by the revival, like Rescue Homes for homeless men and for women who had once earned their money by prostitution.

Estimates of the total number of converts vary between 80,000 and 162,000, and the increase of membership in all churches was substantial. As a result of the revival, many men and women felt the call to go out into the world by faith as witnesses, some on their own subjective call, others sent by existing or newly formed missionary societies. On the institutional level, children of the revival founded new independent churches, opened three Bible schools, and started an evangelical magazine, among other social enterprises.

One writer referred to the “huge phalanx of church leaders” that emerged. In a way the revival gave the Welsh church the leadership it needed to face the challenges of the following decades: World War I and the Great Depression. Never before did so many women get involved in the public work of the churches—and this too turned out to be providential in the coming years, as many Welsh congregations had to rely on women more than men.

And we must not underestimate the lasting effects of the revival on individuals, even after the emotional heat dissipated. As W. T. Stead observed,

The fruits of revivals are among the most permanent things in history . . . while some undoubtedly fall away, and very few indeed ever permanently retain the ecstasy and the vision of the moment of their conversion, the majority of converts made in times of revival remain steadfast. **[C]**

Wolfgang Reinhardt is an author, PhD theologian, and retired pastor. This article was adapted from “A Year of Rejoicing: The Welsh Revival 1904–05 and Its International Challenges,” originally published in the April 2007 edition of Evangelical Review of Theology. It is reprinted with permission.

of the Roberts campaigns, but some were completely independent. There were also processions through the streets, often including children, with Christians spreading the gospel. In many places Nonconformists and Anglicans met together, expressing Christian unity.

CHANGING SOCIETY

The immediate social effects of this spiritual movement were obvious to everybody, and some became proverbial. In many places in Wales for some months, magistrates found themselves presented with white gloves as a sign that there were no criminal cases to be treated. The usual hundreds of cases of drunkenness in the populous centers were significantly reduced. In one place the policemen were so underemployed that they had nothing better to do than to form a church choir. The effect on the drinking habits of many was striking. Many public-houses, almost immediately, became practically empty. Workers brought their wages home to their poor families or gave part of them for charitable purposes instead of wasting them. Many homes underwent a complete transformation since the

“Pour water on the thirsty”

Awakening on a Scottish isle

It started with two elderly women praying twice a week. In 1946 on the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, an archipelago off the western coast of Scotland, these two were concerned about their church, especially its lack of young people. They sensed a spiritual drought in their community, so every Tuesday and Friday they spent much of the night in prayer, asking God to “pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground” (Isa. 44:3). They convinced the church elders to pray as well.

For about a month and a half, these prayer meetings continued twice a week, the two women in their home and seven church leaders in a barn. One young deacon challenged the other leaders to make sure they themselves were praying with “clean hands and a pure heart” (Ps. 24:4). It would be pointless, he said, to plead for revival if they were not in right relationship with God.

One of the two women had a vision of someone standing at the church pulpit, a man she didn’t know. She urged the minister to invite a guest preacher to come and shepherd this impending work of God. After several attempts the parish of Barvas on the Isle of Lewis welcomed a missionary pastor from Edinburgh named Duncan Campbell (1898–1972).

GOD CAN’T FAIL

The night he arrived, Campbell preached to about 300 people at the church. “It was a good meeting,” he said. “There was a sense of God and a consciousness of his Spirit moving, but nothing beyond that.” As Campbell was leaving, the young deacon was still praying in the aisle: “God, You can’t fail us! You promised to pour water on the thirsty and floods upon the dry ground. God, You can’t fail us!” Stepping out of the church, Campbell saw a crowd of about 600 there, eager for more of God’s blessing.

“I believe that very night God swept by in Pentecostal power,” Campbell said later. “And what happened in the early days of the Apostles was now happening in the parish of Barvas.”

People flocked to the church—including more than 100 young people who were at a dance nearby. Many in town who had already gone to bed got dressed and came to the church. The crowds waiting outside the church sang songs and, as the doors reopened, they brought the music inside. A building that held 800 was crammed full. The service went on until 4:00 a.m.



GREAT SCOT Revivalist Duncan Campbell (*left*) spent decades preaching the gospel throughout his native Scotland, emphasizing the power of prayer. This included his time shepherding a revival on the Isle of Lewis, centered in the church at Barvas (*below*).



Then, on the way to his lodging, Campbell was interrupted once again, now summoned to the police station. No, he wasn’t being arrested. Four hundred people were standing around the station, praying, calling out, waiting for God to do something in their midst. Campbell and those present saw it as no coincidence that the police station sat beside the home of the two women whose prayers had started it all.

SWEPT BY THE SPIRIT

After that amazing night, the revival continued for five weeks with the same high energy. Then it simmered down a bit, but as Campbell reported,

The churches were still crowded, people were still seeking after God, and prayer meetings were being held all over the parishes. . . . A prayer meeting met every day at noon. At that time all work stopped for two hours; looms were silent. For two hours, work stopped in the fields, and men gathered for prayer. . . . That continued for almost three years, until the whole of the island was swept by the mighty power of God.

—Randy Petersen, CH guest managing editor



When the Spirit moves

A DIVERSE COLLECTION OF REVIVALISTS FROM THE 1800S AND 1900S

Charlie Self

SOJOURNER TRUTH (1797–1883)

Born into slavery in New York in 1797, Isabella Baumfree was bought and sold four times before the age of 20 and often treated brutally. With the help of a nearby abolitionist family, she gained her freedom.

After moving to New York City in 1828, she participated in the religious revivals sweeping the state and became an evangelistic speaker herself. In 1843 she renamed herself Sojourner Truth. Though she never learned to read or write, her oratory was famous for its rhetorical questions, incisive insights, and unsparing prophetic tone. She is best known for supporting abolition, women's suffrage, temperance, and other social movements that worked toward equality for all. The autobiography she dictated, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850), built her fame and economically sustained her.

Truth called her audiences to repentance: Christianity had no place for slavery or oppression of any groups. In an 1863 sermon, she declared,

Children, who made your skin white? Was it not God? Who made mine black? Was it not the same God? Am I to blame, therefore, because my skin is black? . . . Does not God love colored children as well as white children?

PORTRAIT OF A LADY Late in her life, Sojourner Truth (*above left*) sold photographs like this when she spoke, raising funds for the causes she supported.

FAITH AND FREEDOM Florence Spearing Randolph (*above right*) spoke out powerfully about her Christian faith and also equality for women and people of color.

And did not the same Savior die to save the one as well as the other?"

Her preaching and advocacy efforts continued from her home in Battle Creek, Michigan, as she worked for the Union cause during the Civil War and fought for equal rights in its aftermath. She met President Lincoln, worked for the Freedmen's Bureau helping the formerly enslaved, and never stopped preaching the gospel and equal rights.

FLORENCE SPEARING RANDOLPH (1866–1951)

Born into a free Black family in Charleston, South Carolina, Florence Spearing apprenticed as a dressmaker and built her own business, eventually relocating to Jersey City, New Jersey, where she married Hugh Randolph. A passion for public service led to involvement with temperance and women's



suffrage groups, active work in community improvement, and leadership in the local church and global missions.

Within the African Methodist Episcopal Zion (AMEZ) Church, she served as a Sunday school teacher and youth class leader, soon earning a reputation as an engaging speaker and mentor, eventually being appointed deacon, elder, and temporary pastor. With her leadership the church experienced exponential growth.

Randolph was tireless in the promotion of female church leaders and evangelists. In an important 1909 sermon, "Antipathy to Women Preachers," she highlighted heroic women in the Bible, arguing that gender discrimination in Christian pulpits revealed a misreading of Scripture. She was equally fierce concerning racism. Randolph's 1941 sermon, "If I Were White," emphasized that Whites in America who claimed to be defending democracy in wartime had an obligation to all American citizens.

REUBEN "UNCLE BUD" ROBINSON (1860–1942)

One of the most colorful evangelists of the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition was born to a poor Tennessee family that relocated to Texas when Reuben was 16. With no church background and a father known for his drinking and gambling, at age 20 Reuben Robinson gave his life to Christ at a camp meeting and immediately felt a call to preach.

Despite a lack of formal training, he traveled for six decades, preaching a gospel of total surrender and sanctification, calling people to trust God completely and fight the good fight of faith. Everyone enjoyed the folksy wisdom of "Uncle Bud," as he became known, along with his relatable prayers and stories. "O Lord," he once prayed,

Give me a backbone as big as a sawlog and ribs like sleepers under the church floor; put iron shoes on me and galvanized breeches and hang a wagon load of determination in the gable-end of my soul, and help me to sign the contract to fight the devil as long as I



"UNCLE BUD" Preacher Reuben Robinson (above left) traveled the American South with his homespun style of revival preaching. Thousands responded in faith.

STAR POWER Aimee Semple McPherson (above) founded a church in Los Angeles and built a very popular preaching, healing, and media ministry.

have a vision and bite him as long as I have a tooth, and then gum him till I die. Amen.

During his public ministry, he preached about 33,000 sermons and counted 200,000 conversions. A leader in the founding of the Nazarene Church, he also invested his own money in scholarships for aspiring Christian leaders and in Christian publications, especially the *Herald of Holiness*.

AIMEE SEMPLE MCPHERSON (1890–1944)

From her humble Canadian beginnings and surrender to Christ at age 17 at a Robert Semple revival, to her heights of influence and notoriety in Los Angeles during the 1920s to 1940s, Sister Aimee's life embodied the best of healing revivals, church planting, compassion, and creative expression of the gospel. These successes, however, were tarnished by two divorces and social scandal.

A year after her conversion, Aimee married Robert Semple (c. 1852–1910), the man whose preaching had led her to Christ, and they went to China as missionaries. Soon both contracted malaria. Robert died, leaving his young wife pregnant and penniless.

Moving to New York to be near her mother, Aimee Semple later married businessman Harold McPherson (1890–1978). She also began preaching and healing, making a name for herself with a national tour in 1918. In the following years her fame grew, she experimented with new media and ministries, and she made Los Angeles her home. A Pentecostal in the shadow of the Azusa Street Revival, Sister Aimee (controversially) preached to all classes and cultures in her services.



In 1923 Aimee Semple McPherson founded the first Foursquare church, Angelus Temple, in Los Angeles. She held services in five languages in the 5,000-seat auditorium, encouraged 24/7 prayer, and created “illustrated sermons” bringing the gospel to the growing Hollywood culture. Angelus Temple fed more than 1.5 million people during the Great Depression. McPherson became the first woman to preach a sermon over the radio and also appeared in movie theaters, calling people “home to Jesus.”

At the height of her fame in 1926, she went missing for nearly a month in Mexico. Huge prayer meetings were held, plans for succession were discussed, and a memorial service was considered. Then she reappeared, declaring she had been kidnapped. Rumors ran wild, but there was no evidence she had faked this. Still, her reputation took a beating.

Sister Aimee led fruitful evangelistic crusades and ran Angelus Temple until her death in 1944. Her lasting legacy as a female leader integrating Pentecostal proclamation and healing, social concern, and creative communication remains a powerful inspiration in gospel ministry.

KATHRYN KUHLMAN (1907–1976)

Kathryn Kuhlman was one of the leading healing evangelists of the post–WWII era, with others such as Oral Roberts (1918–2009) and T. L. Osborn (1923–2013). In addition to large meetings with dramatic messages and testimonies, Kuhlman skillfully used radio and television to increase her outreach.

Raised in Concordia, Missouri, by an emotionally distant mother and a doting father (which would affect Kuhlman’s theology of the fatherhood of God), at the age of 14, Kuhlman gave her life to Christ at a revival meeting. Later she joined her sister and brother-in-law, traveling throughout the Midwest holding evangelistic services. At age 21 she preached on her own for the first time, with some success, and she continued her own itinerant ministry for several years, eventually settling in Denver. By 1935 Kuhlman’s Denver Revival Tabernacle claimed 2,000 members. She preached a gospel of grace and love, with a call for faith in God’s ability to heal body and spirit.

“I BELIEVE IN MIRACLES” Kathryn Kuhlman (*above left*) combined gospel preaching and faith healing to start a Denver church and launch a successful TV ministry.

INFLUENCER Bernhard Johnson (*above*) did stadium evangelism in Brazil, but he also trained church leaders and mediated between diverse religious groups.

The next dozen years teemed with scandal and difficulty, as Kuhlman went through marriage and divorce with another evangelist. But from the late 1940s through the 1960s, she focused on her preaching, both live and on radio and television, and testimonies of physical healing increased. With Pittsburgh now her headquarters, Kuhlman traveled extensively, speaking of the love of God the Father, the full provision of Jesus Christ, and the immediate and intimate power of the Holy Spirit.

BERNHARD JOHNSON (1931–1995)

Brought up in Brazil as the son of Swedish Pentecostal missionaries, Bernhard Johnson Jr. attended college in the United States, where he met his future wife, Doris, and pastored two small churches in Northern California. In 1957 Bernhard and Doris returned to Brazil as missionaries.

As his ministry gained traction in the late 1960s, Bernhard pioneered and led evangelistic meetings in large stadiums, prompting some to call him the “Billy Graham of Brazil.” He and his team loved people more than numbers. Biblical and understandable, his preaching brought thousands to Christ, often accompanied by expressions of healing and spiritual deliverance. As his global ministry developed, Johnson conducted mass evangelism in 65 nations, welcoming people of all classes and cultures.

The Johnsons were also respected as mediators among diverse Brazilian Pentecostal groups that had been growing since the 1970s. Also, besides their evangelistic focus, Bernhard and Doris launched accessible training centers and sustainable social ministries, including Children of Brazil Outreach, Brazil Extension School of Theology, HealthCare Ministries, and Latin America Childcare.



“The name of Jesus,” Bernhard emphasized throughout his ministry, “is the name above all names because it is the only name that leads men to God.”

REINHARD BONNKE (1940–2019)

German-born Bonnke surrendered his life to Christ at age nine and heard the call to Africa shortly afterward. Attending Bible College in Wales, he was ordained in Germany, where he and his wife, Anni, pastored a small church. Then, in obedience to his childhood call, they embarked on missionary life in Africa, moving to Lesotho.

In 1974 Bonnke sensed the Holy Spirit speaking in his dreams about “a blood-washed Africa.” Afterward he founded Christ for All Nations so that he could “plunder hell to populate heaven.” Jesus came, he declared, to deliver, forgive, heal, and reconcile.

Beginning in the early 1980s with a tent for 800 attendees, Bonnke eventually had tents for tens of thousands. More than 1.5 million people attended his Millennium Crusade

FAR AND WIDE Billy Graham’s 70+ years of ministry traversed the globe and reached millions, as seen below in a 1973 rally in South Korea.



DELIVERED German evangelist Reinhard Bonnke (*left*) spent most of his ministry in Africa, preaching on Christian faith, healing, and spiritual deliverance.

in Zimbabwe. His meetings were marked by dramatic conversions, physical healing, and especially deliverance from demonic oppression, as many converts left behind their local religions and spiritualities in favor of following Jesus.

Bonnke preached all over the world until his death in 2019, but his heart was always in Africa. His compassion, simplicity, engaging speaking, and belief in the power of the Holy Spirit inspired new generations of global evangelists.

BILLY GRAHAM (1918–2018)

More than a billion people have attended or viewed Billy Graham’s evangelistic meetings, with millions responding in faith (see *CH* #111). Graham pioneered many ministry methods that are common today, including these four:

First, he was a staunch advocate for racial equality and civil rights, enduring criticism and losing some friends when he integrated his services in the 1950s.

Second, Graham invested huge resources in equipping local churches and individual Christians for effective evangelism. He understood the importance of preparation in prayer and the follow-up of relational discipleship.

Third, with the partnership of John Stott (1921–2011), Graham founded the Lausanne Movement for global evangelization. The vision was: “the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world.” As a part of this effort, he also funded gatherings of evangelists from around the world.

Fourth, Graham was always on the leading edge of communication technology, from his early forays into radio and TV to satellite and internet use.

“I am convinced,” Graham has said, “that the greatest act of love we can ever perform for people is to tell them about God’s love for them in Christ. **CH**”

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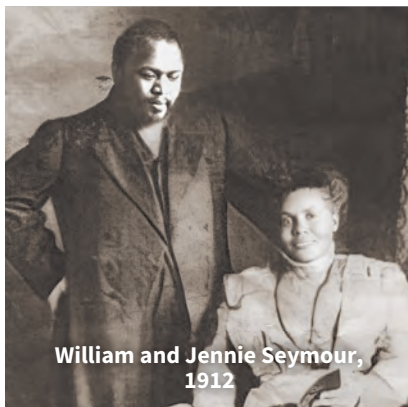
The Spirit, the gospel, and prayer

Revival movements of the modern era



Meeting house at Cane Ridge

- **1801** A week-long camp meeting in Cane Ridge, Kentucky, draws as many as 10,000, marking the start of the Second Great Awakening.
- **1806** The Haystack Prayer Meeting inspires five Massachusetts college students to pursue foreign missions.
- **1812** The newly formed American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions sends out its first missionaries, including Adoniram and Ann Judson.
- **1816** Richard Allen, already pastor of “Mother Bethel” Church in Philadelphia, connects with other Black congregations to form the African Methodist Episcopal denomination.
- **1825** Charles G. Finney begins revival meetings in western New York.
- **1843** Isabella Baumfree takes the name Sojourner Truth and preaches about Jesus and human rights.



William and Jennie Seymour, 1912

- **1857** The Businessmen’s Revival blossoms in New York City, spreading to cities throughout North America.
- **1870** William Seymour is born in Louisiana.
- **1873–1875** Chicago pastor Dwight L. Moody and his music director, Ira Sankey, hold evangelistic meetings throughout Great Britain.
- **1880** Reuben Robinson, age 20, surrenders to Christ at a camp meeting and is called to preach. “Uncle Bud” travels for six decades, bringing thousands to faith with his homespun preaching style.
- **1893** George Pilkington of the Church Missionary Society revamps his approach, seeking spiritual rather than political goals. He leads a revival in Uganda that has lasting effects.
- **1901** Agnes Ozman speaks in tongues at Charles Parham’s Bible school in Topeka, Kansas. Many consider this the start of the modern Pentecostal movement.
- **1904–1905** Revival erupts in Wales.
- **1906** On Azusa Street in Los Angeles, revival services begin. These services continue for several years, expanding the Pentecostal movement throughout the world.
- **1907** Pyongyang, Korea, sees a massive revival based on confession and forgiveness.
- **1909** An outpouring of the Spirit is experienced at a church in Valparaiso, Chile, with all-night prayer meetings, much music, and holy laughter.
- **1910** The Edinburgh Missionary Conference convenes in Scotland, chaired by US Methodist John R. Mott. The international gathering aims



John R. Mott (1865–1955)

- for “the evangelization of the world in this generation.”
- **1913** William Wade Harris, sometimes called “The Prophet,” sets out to evangelize the Ivory Coast in West Africa.
- **1918–1920** The Great Influenza Epidemic infects half a billion people (a third of the world’s population) and kills tens of millions.
- **1920s** Massive conversions occur in the Dornakal region of India among the Dalit caste (then known as “untouchables”). Bishop V. S. Azariah leads this intercultural outreach.
- **1923** Aimee Semple McPherson founds the first Foursquare church, Angelus Temple, in Los Angeles.
- **1927** John Greenfield publishes *Power from on High*, spreading the fame of the Moravian Revival that occurred two centuries earlier.
- **1928** Kathryn Kuhlman begins her own preaching and healing ministry.
- **1929** Simeoni Nsibambi meets Joe Church, and they pray together for revival in East Africa.
- **1929–1939** The Great Depression brings a worldwide economic crisis.
- **1931** John Sung addresses the National Christian Council in Shanghai. He goes on to have an influential preaching ministry, strengthening the Chinese church.
- **1936** Outpouring of the Spirit in Gahini, Rwanda, develops into the East African Revival.

THEODORE WEBB; PHOTOGRAPH OF CANE RIDGE MEETING HOUSE, LITTLE ROCK ROAD, BOURBON COUNTY, KENTUCKY, 1934—PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA; WILLIAM AND JENNIE MOORE SEYMOUR; PORTRAIT, 1912; FLOWER PENTECOSTAL HERITAGE CENTER; MARY GRIFFIN WEBB AND EDNA LENORE WEBB; PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT OF JOHN R. MOTT, 1914—PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA



Open-air service in Uganda

The open-air service in Uganda.

1938 Mahatma Gandhi argues with Indian bishop V. S. Azariah about the Christian conversion of the Dalit caste.

1941 Florence Sparring Randolph's sermon, "If I Were White," challenges patriotic Americans about their racial attitudes.

1945 Billy Graham, age 26, speaks at a Youth for Christ rally in Chicago's Soldier Field.

1946 Duncan Campbell leads revival meetings on the Isle of Lewis in Scotland's Outer Hebrides.

1946 Faith healer William Branham launches a worldwide ministry with a campaign in St. Louis.

1948 The World Council of Churches is established in Amsterdam.

1950 Students at Wheaton College of Illinois experience a campuswide revival, which spreads to other Christian colleges.

1951 Martha Jeremiah and Josiah Kibira get married in Tanganyika (now Tanzania), breaking social traditions. Josiah later becomes a church bishop.

1954 A three-month crusade in Buenos Aires, Argentina, led by Pentecostal preacher Tommy Hicks, is wildly popular but generally opposed by local churches.

1957 Bernhard Johnson, after receiving education and some pastoral experience in the United States, returns to his homeland of Brazil and becomes an effective evangelist.

1960 Dennis Bennett tells his Episcopal congregation he has spoken in tongues, launching the modern Charismatic movement.

1962 Pope John XXIII opens the Second Vatican Council, praying for a "New Pentecost" to come upon the entire church.

1963 TV preacher and faith healer Oral Roberts founds Oral Roberts University in Tulsa, Oklahoma.



Prayer Tower at Oral Roberts University

1965–1969 Revival transforms the Indonesian island of Timor.

1967 Students at Duquesne University experience an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which quickly spreads to other Catholic college campuses.

1967–1970 Nigeria experiences a spiritual revival among its youth.

1967 Pastor Chuck Smith of Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California, welcomes "hippies" to the church, an early event in the Jesus Movement.

1970 Revival breaks out at Asbury College in Kentucky. Students share their experiences at other schools.

1971 Bishop Festo Kivengere establishes African Evangelistic Enterprise to spread revival across the continent.

1974 The Lausanne Conference for World Evangelization brings 2,700 people together from 150 countries to discuss missional principles, plans, and problems.

1974 Reinhard Bonnke senses God's calling to serve in Africa, where he focuses his ministry of preaching, healing, and spiritual deliverance for more than three decades.

1979 Entrepreneur Carlos Annacondia becomes a Christian and senses a call to share the power of Christ throughout Argentine society.

1982 John Wimber teaches his "Signs and Wonders" class at Fuller Seminary, an early influence in the Third Wave of Pentecostalism.

1994 The Toronto Blessing begins at the local Airport Vineyard Church.

1995 The Brownsville Revival begins at an Assemblies of God church in Pensacola, Florida.

1995 Revival starts in Cali, Colombia, as 25,000 gather for prayer at the city's civic auditorium.

1998 Leaders of four major house-church networks in China agree on a United Appeal, asking the government for better treatment. They release it through Western media.

1998 Pope John Paul II gives an important speech, saying that the charismatic dimension and the institutional dimension are both fundamental to the constitution of the Catholic Church.



Prayers at Lausanne II in Manila, 1989



Foto tomada durante la campaña

God in the *villa miseria*

ARGENTINE TURMOIL TURNED MANY TO CHRIST

Mark Shaw

The Vélez Sarsfield soccer stadium in Buenos Aires, Argentina, has a long and storied history. Home of a beloved football team, the stadium hosted the FIFA World Cup in 1978. Rock bands have often packed the place with screaming fans. But in 1996, the stadium hosted a more important event. An unknown 28-year-old evangelist, Dante Gebel (b. 1968), filled the stadium with over 50,000 young people. By night's end thousands were on their knees, confessing sin and crying out for a fresh start with God. And this was not an isolated event. For nearly 20 years, from the early 1980s to the late 1990s, mass conversions, dramatic expressions of deliverance, and fresh forms of worship and unity swept over the nation in a movement known as the Argentine Revival.

A TROUBLED PAST

The roots of this movement lay deep in Argentina's past. After World War II, Argentines saw their nation embark on one of the most volatile political journeys of the century. Juan Peron (1895–1974) accounted for much of the turbulence. A popular ex-military officer, Peron became president in 1946, only to be ousted by the military in 1955. He was reelected

CROWD OF WITNESSES Carlos Annacondia, an entrepreneur-turned-evangelist, leads a packed revival service in Argentina in 1998.

in 1973 but died the next year, triggering another military takeover. From 1976 to 1983, military generals ruled Argentina. Seeking to eradicate left-leaning elements from the country, the junta was responsible for the disappearance of 30,000 citizens, victims of the ruthless "Dirty War" against social and political opposition. The culture of fear created by the military paralyzed the economy. Inflation spiraled out of control (by one estimate, between 1976 and 1991, prices increased 20 billion times).

The 1982 Falklands (or Malvinas) War, a territorial dispute with Great Britain, ended in a humiliating defeat, leading to the end of the military government. For many Argentines this was the last straw. The state had failed. The search for alternative sources of hope and security intensified.

THE UNLIKELY EVANGELICALS

Surprisingly, many Argentines turned to the *Evangélicos* in this time of personal and political crisis. Evangelicalism,



made up of all Protestants including Pentecostals, was originally seen as a foreign faith led by North American missionaries. Missionary Christianity in the nation was characterized by disunity and foreign control, and thus evangelical churches seemed ill-suited to the role of liberation.

Coming to Argentina in the 1940s, many denominational churches had been reluctant to empower local converts. Those who brought the gospel also brought a long list of doctrinal distinctions and moral rules. Even Pentecostal missionaries expressed skepticism about healing and deliverance ministries. “Denominationalism” was a barrier to the unity and witness of the broadly evangelical movement, as illustrated by the reaction to the Hicks crusade of 1954.

THE PRACTICE OF CHARLATANS?

A group of Assemblies of God churches sponsored American healing evangelist Tommy Hicks (1908–1973) for a three-month crusade in Buenos Aires. Thousands came for salvation and healing. The final event, held in one of Argentina’s largest stadiums, turned away over 300,000 because of a lack of seating. Even with this public response, most mission churches were critical of the crusade, regarding “faith healing” as the practice of charlatans.

As Argentine pastor/scholar Pablo Deiros sums up the situation during those decades,

This generation of missionaries arrived in force beginning in the 1940s and generally did not relinquish church control to local leaders until the 1960s. . . . Missionary founders brought with them social, cultural, and political prejudices, and, crucially, denominational antagonisms peculiar to marginalized conservative Protestants in the mid-twentieth-century United States.

With that baggage it’s no surprise that evangelicals numbered only about 2 percent of the nation’s population in 1980, an almost invisible group compared to the Catholic Church.

CONTROVERSIAL Evangelist and faith healer Tommy Hicks (*above left*) drew criticism from church and mission leaders with three months of heavily attended revival meetings in Buenos Aires in 1954.

STRAINED RELATIONS Juan Peron (*above*), Argentina’s president 1946–1955, had a contentious relationship with the Catholic Church, as both struggled for power.

Yet despite conservative resistance, new leaders emerged who challenged the prevailing missionary paradigm. Carlos Annacondia (b. 1944) was the unlikely forerunner of a new revival of Christianity that would sweep over Argentina in the next two decades. In 1979 Annacondia, a 39-year-old entrepreneur, underwent a personal conversion and immediately felt called to share his faith with a larger audience. His call came through a series of visions. He saw himself standing before thousands in the impoverished areas of Buenos Aires (*villa miseria*). In 1981 the vision came true. Annacondia held his first crusade in Bernal, a poor community in Greater Buenos Aires. He described his experience of the call:

God showed me that *villa miseria* for an entire year, but I didn’t want to go. Finally, I said, “I give up,” and I went. I went into mud up to my knees but I didn’t feel a thing. . . . I felt love for those people that had so many problems. God protected me; He gave me authority over that place—I cast the demons out of those people and out of that place and then one day God took me out of there and put me in a residential neighborhood. And I used the same message to convert the rich as I had used to convert the poor.

By 1983 Annacondia claimed some 6,000 conversions. Refusing to align with any denomination, he extended invitations to all churches. This strategic policy gradually eroded the rigid lines of denominationalism and brought a new sense of unity to the evangelical movement in Argentina. The La Plata crusade of 1984 was a turning point. About



CHRISTUS VICTOR (left) A medieval rendering of the Harrowing of Hell, where the risen and victorious Christ defeats the devil.



LISTEN UP (left) The cover of a book by innovative evangelist Annacondia expresses the “Christus Victor” message that energized a new generation, challenging the devil to “listen well.”

10 percent of all the Protestants in the city took part. Over the eight months of the campaign, some 50,000 people made decisions for Christ.

Annacondia’s message and methods became the template for a host of revivalists who would follow his lead. The unity of believers was an underlying principle that grounded all of his ministry. His meetings began with new and more expressive music than most nominal Christians had heard in church. The gospel he preached focused on Christ as the victor over the devil. Many attendees gave public testimonies, and then Annacondia would invite seekers to come forward for personal salvation and deliverance from specific diseases and manifestations of the power of evil, including demonic possession. The method for receiving these gifts of grace was the prayer of faith and the laying on of hands. Every aspect of his presentation was a direct challenge to missionary Christianity.

LIBERATION AND REFORMATION

For the average Argentine, evil spirits dominated every aspect of life. Annacondia presented Christ as the solution. Through the blood of Christ, the power of God was unleashed to overcome demons and liberate humanity from the grip of evil. This message was consistent with the popular Catholicism that had shaped much of Argentinian spirituality and worldview, but it added an evangelical emphasis on personal faith—and not the church’s rituals—as the way to receive the power of Christ for salvation and deliverance.

Annacondia inspired a host of younger revivalists who brought a “Christus Victor” message to every part of the nation in the 1990s. Prominent evangelists included Oscar Cabrera (who anticipated some aspects of Annacondia’s evangelism in the 1970s), Héctor Giménez, Claudio Freidzon, Eduardo Lorenzo, Omar Olier, Victor Lorenzo, and Marfa

Cabrera. Cindy Jacobs and Marcos Witt added new forms of prayer and worship to the mix.

The ripples of the revival in Argentina have spread far and wide. Megachurches have multiplied throughout the country. The anointing movement (spiritual power and joy through the laying on of hands) spread to North America, most notably to Toronto in the 1990s. Argentine Christians report widespread healings, especially among the poor, reforms in the prisons, and hundreds of thousands professing faith. The culture of fear that gripped Argentina during the “Dirty War” has subsided. Evangelicals now make up 25 percent of the population. A significant milestone occurred in 2023 when the Argentine parliament approved the official recognition of “Reformation Day” annually on October 31, a surprising development in what had once been one of the most Catholic nations in Latin America.

Assessments of the Argentine Revival vary. Persistent questions remain about the quality of this revival. Many excesses have been reported. The scandal of moral failure by certain prominent revival leaders has brought criticism from within and without. Theological issues abound. Proponents, however, emphasize the miracles, conversions, and unity as signs of the Spirit.

In 1741 Jonathan Edwards published his Yale commencement address, *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God*, to answer criticisms of the Great Awakening in New England. He noted the excesses of the Awakening, including an over-reliance on visions, bodily expressions (even barking), and the scandalous behavior of leaders. For Edwards these were unreliable signs that neither proved nor disproved a genuine work of the Spirit. The reliable signs of a genuine work of the Spirit of God consisted largely of a focus on Jesus as Savior, opposition to Satan’s kingdom, a greater regard for the Scriptures, and a spirit of love for God and man. The revival in Argentina would seem to fall somewhere within Edwards’s parameters. Ultimately for Edwards and for observers today, the final judgment in these matters belongs to God and God alone. **CH**

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“Indescribable sweetness”

Willis Collins Hoover (1858–1936), the founding pastor of the Church of Chile, recorded his stirring account of the 1909 revival in Chile.

That night, February 20, 1909, an all-night meeting was held in a small room of the church. About 30 people waited for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And what happened? Perhaps the most that happened was to discover how empty and needy we were. By daybreak we had moved to the altar of the church, and having ended the meeting, we just sat there, in no hurry to leave.

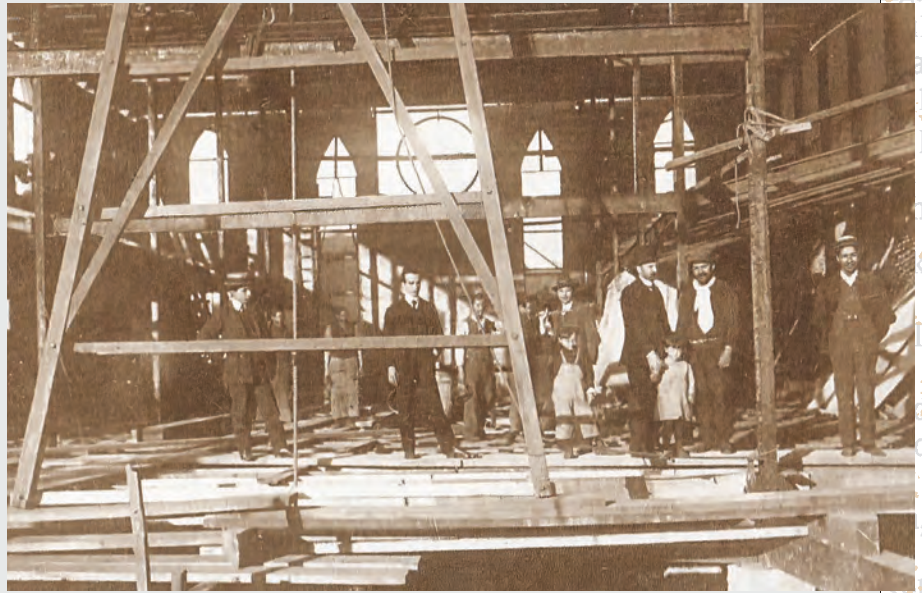
The pastor began to pace in front of the altar, wondering whether anything had been gained. He began to sing a hymn in a low tone. His voice soon broke and, unable to continue, he began weeping and shaking. At the same time, he felt himself filling up to the tip of his toes with an indescribable sweetness. In the midst of his weeping these words came out: “My Savior! My Savior!” The weeping lasted a long while, and when it ceased the pastor continued walking. . . . Another interruption was not long in coming. This time, a laughter so strong and uncontrollable that he had to sit and give free rein to it, unable to suppress it. After some minutes the laughter subsided and we separated.

“TO LOSE MYSELF IN GOD”

These all-night meetings continued every Saturday for about seven weeks, until Easter, when, instead of an all-night meeting, we had an all-Sunday service beginning at 7:30 a.m. In the all-night services, one or another drew nearer to God, and He uncovered things in their hearts that had impeded their progress in their Christian life. One brother left one of the meetings to return some garments to the owner, who had placed them in his care during the 1906 earthquake. His dormant conscience had been awakened that night! The following week that brother found the sweetness that accompanied obedience. During prayer he was taken with a sweet laughter, like that of easy communion with a friend. It lasted a long time. . . .

One participant wrote later, “In all my life, I have never heard prayers like so many pray now. Neither have I prayed as I do now. I want to lose myself in God, hide myself in Him, consumed by Him, so that all my breath can glorify Him.”

We don’t have a choir anymore. The frivolous girls who were in it before are now a marvel of prayer. I break down weeping just to hear them talk. What would others



UNDER CONSTRUCTION The church building in Valparaiso, Chile, was still being built in early 1909 when the revival began. Some all-night prayer meetings took place in unfinished rooms.

think of a revival without a great choir and music director? Yet, we have the greatest director of all—the Lord God Omnipotent, who has sent the Holy Spirit to direct everything. The world looks on and says, “Scandalous! What disorder!” But we have such joy in our director and such confidence that He knows more than the world, that we have stopped asking the world what pleases it.

HUMBLE PIE

We have no structure, no committee for advertisement. Nothing but prayer. We have had to eat humble pie, each one of us. There is no affectation. The pastor is nothing but the most humble. We seek humility, submission, obedience, completely from the Lord, asking that whatever is hidden be revealed to us so that we can give it up too. No opinions, no criticism, no opposition to what the Spirit is doing. . . .

I believe that the real secret of all this is that now we really and truly believe in the Holy Spirit—we truly trust Him—we truly recognize Him—we truly obey Him—we truly give Him liberty. We believe truly that the promise in Acts 1:4–5 and Joel 2:28–29 is for us. We have ceased merely to believe and speak of the doctrine while continuing on without hope, in our usual routine. Thus, now we believe, wait, and pray, and he has done these things before our eyes. Blessed be his name.—*Willis Collins Hoover, History of the Pentecostal Revival in Chile (1930). English translation by Mario G. Hoover (2000).*



“Your clan is Salvation”

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY EAST AFRICAN REVIVAL

Emma Wild-Wood

Dora Sabiti returned home from school in western Uganda rather puzzled. Her teacher had asked the class to name their tribe, clan, and clan taboo. She had no idea what this meant. Her parents told her, “Your tribe is Born Again (*Oweishemwe*), your clan is Salvation (*Okujunwa*), your clan taboo is Sin (*Ekibi*).”

Dora’s parents were East African revivalists, and her father, Erica Sabiti (c. 1903–1988), would become the Anglican archbishop of Uganda in 1966. For them a focus on ethnic or racial identity was antithetical to the gospel. The Sabitis wanted their children to accept a new identity in Christ crucified, connecting them with saved people around the world.

The East African Revival is best understood within a history of African renewal movements and global evangelicalism. Revivalists focused on rigorous examination of self and had a strong sense of affiliation with the worldwide church. They also responded to regional challenges, such as displays of racial superiority by White missionaries and colonialists. These, the revivalists said, were sins that distracted from preaching the gospel. Similar challenges were being faced elsewhere in Africa by prophet movements, like those led by William Wade Harris (1860–1929) in West Africa and Simon Kimbangu (1887–1951) in Congo.

THE RISE OF THE SAVED PEOPLE

Early signs of renewal appeared in the Anglican Church of Uganda in the 1920s. Revival exploded in Rwanda in 1933 and moved into Kenya in 1937, Tanzania in 1939, and then

“SAVED PEOPLE” A popular movement emphasizing confession, forgiveness, and fellowship, the East African Revival energized believers from Uganda to Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania, and throughout the region.

to South Sudan, Burundi, and Congo, energizing a number of Protestant denominations. Leaders adapted tools of international evangelicalism, such as itinerant preaching and Christian conventions. In 1947 preachers William Nagenda (1912–1973) and Yosiya Kinuka (1905–1981) visited Switzerland and Britain, the first of many international evangelistic tours taken by revivalists. Some Western missionaries working in East Africa joined the revival movement and took its teaching back to the United States, Australia, and Europe.

Revivalists became known as the *Balokole* or *Wokovu*, Luganda and Swahili words respectively, meaning “Saved People.” Unlike the movements started by Harris and Kimbangu, the Balokole largely remained within mission churches. Laypeople led the movement, but by the 1960s, a number of revivalists had become senior church leaders. They influenced the adoption of revival values into the church and wider society.

These leaders, some praised in Western evangelical circles, were committed to global ecumenical discussions at a time when Western evangelicals and ecumenical Protestants often viewed each other with suspicion. In 1971 Bishop Festo Kivengere (1919–1988), who shared platforms with Billy Graham, established African Evangelistic Enterprise to spread revival across the continent. In 1974 church leader



SPREADING REVIVAL Joe Church, William Nagenda, and Festo Kvingere join Swiss missionary Berthe Ryf (above) on a campaign in Europe. Simeoni Nsibambi (above right) sparked revival in the 1920s.



WHERE IT BEGAN Nsibambi and Church began praying for revival in 1929 on Namirembe Hill, near St. Paul's Cathedral in Kampala, Uganda (right).



John Gatu (1925–2017) called for a moratorium on Western missions so African churches could become independent vehicles for evangelism.

ZUKULA! AWAKE!

Many would trace the beginnings of the East African Revival to Simeoni Nsibambi (1897–1978), a prominent layman in the 1920s who organized groups to preach across Uganda, criticizing the complacency and “nominalism” of second- and third-generation Christians. Nsibambi was inspired by an earlier revival in 1893 led by George Pilkington (1865–1897) of the Church Missionary Society (CMS). Influenced by the Keswick Holiness movement (see CH #148 and #151) and the writings of the Indian evangelist Tamil David (1853–1923), Pilkington’s preaching on the inner self and the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit had prompted a sudden rise in the number of evangelists preaching throughout East Africa.

In 1929 Nsibambi met John Edward “Joe” Church (1899–1989) of the Ruanda [sic] Mission. Making an instant connection, they prayed together for revival. Nsibambi encouraged recently trained evangelists and hospital orderlies to go to Rwanda as a mission field. Many went to Gahini, where Joe Church was stationed. At a Christmastime convention in 1933 came a sudden outpouring of confessions of wrongdoing and joyful expressions of forgiveness. Afterward the region saw a rise in church attendance, fellowship groups, and itinerant preaching. As in other revivals across the globe, these communal events created points of emotional intensity focused on the immediate need to accept Jesus Christ.

In 1936 Blasio Kigozi (1909–1936), a young Muganda deacon working in Gahini, returned to Kampala to deliver a message to the synod of the Anglican Church: *Zukula!*

Awake! His sudden death before the start of the synod made his call for the reform of the church’s spiritual life more poignant, although plenty of clergy remained cautious about the revivalist approach. Bishop Simon Stuart (1892–1982) of the CMS had to walk a tightrope between different factions. Though appreciative of the evangelistic zeal of both revivalists and the Ruanda Mission, Stuart strove to remain faithful to Anglican tradition.

ACTION AND REACTION

Fellowship groups served as antidotes to the formality of the church. Meeting several times a week, the revivalists would pray together and organize evangelistic activity, then preach in public places.

Revivalists often challenged the priorities and traditions of their society. They sang,

You who trust the things of the world,
Why are you never satisfied with them?
For even your ancestors
Were not satisfied with them.

The revivalists were determined to reject the past. In doing so they rejected many cultural practices that other Africans wanted to maintain. Leaders of some ethnic groups accused revivalists of causing division among people by condemning drinking, polygamy, and the veneration of ancestors.

JOE CHURCH, WILLIAM NAGENDA, FESTO KIVINGERE, BERTHE RYF, MID-20TH CENTURY—WESLEY L. HANDY / MISSIONSFORUM; NSIBAMBI AND LEADERS OF THE KABALE MISSION (DETAIL), 1935—ROBERT SEBUNYA MPAGI; NAMIREMBE CATHEDRAL, C. M. S. KAMPALA, UGANDA, LATE-19TH TO EARLY 20TH CENTURY. POSTCARD—ALFRED LOBO / OLD EAST AFRICA POSTCARDS



CONVENING Joe Church snapped this picture of a 1945 convention in Kabale, Uganda. Large gatherings like this helped train leaders and win new believers.

They were scandalized by revivalists' public and frank confessions of sexual sins. Colonial administrators were also worried about the tensions that could be stirred up by marketplace preachers accusing their neighbors of specific sinful behavior.

Revivalists also challenged class identities. For instance, two of the Balokole, Martha Yeremiah (dates unknown) and Josiah Kibira (1925–1988), shocked their community by getting married. Yeremiah was from a royal family and Kibira was a fisherman. As they saw it, their marriage witnessed to a new kind of clan formed through confession of sin and salvation. Later, as a bishop, Kibira would write about this clan in his book, *Church, Clan and the World* (1974).

Beyond that, the revival encouraged Christian women to be active at a time when mission churches did not ordain women. Women led fellowship meetings and preached alongside Christian husbands. When some women left polygamous marriages, fellowship groups supported them. In 1983 Kivengere ordained three women as priests, despite opposition within the Anglican Communion.

In addition revivalists demanded a recognition that Christian equality overcame racial difference. Colonialists and missionaries had created notions of race and ethnicity that bolstered their sense of European superiority and reduced the possibility of African autonomy. Revivalists, however, confronted White missionaries with the need to confess their superior attitude toward Black Africans, their “brothers and sisters in Christ.” This attitude, they said, put missionaries in conflict with their spiritual kin, with whom they would live eternally. Race, ethnicity, and gender were not to be understood as markers of difference, but as insignificant distinctions among family members. In response some White missionaries confessed and even called upon others to combat the “color bar.” Others considered the revivalists impudent or ungrateful for calling them to account.

PROPER BEHAVIOR?

In addition to race questions, some Western missionaries worried about revivalist behavior. Frank public confessions and vibrant forms of worship seemed closer to the practices of regional healing cults or prophet movements than to the more subdued or earnest piety with which missionaries were familiar. They wondered whether a true articulation of the gospel could come in such a loud, robust, and bodily form. The Balokole shared some of these concerns about what

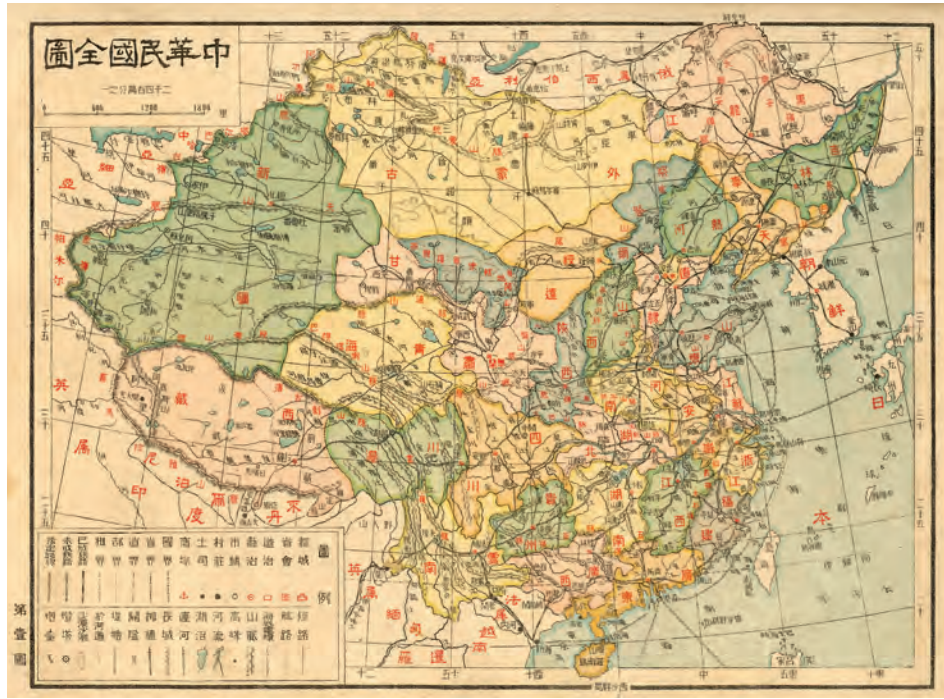
constitutes proper evangelical behavior and how behavior reflects proper belief.

Revivalists challenged one another. Sometimes they disagreed and divided. They competed in zeal and asceticism. Occasionally fellowships rejected those who deviated from revivalist beliefs or failed to practice rigorous self-discipline. When women's ecstatic forms of worship seemed to exceed the control of church leaders, their self-expression was censored. It appeared that women only had an equal right to preach the gospel when they conformed to mainstream revivalist ways of doing so. And, although they preached and sang in local languages, many of the revivalists felt that cultural differences that appeared in forms of worship were erosions of evangelical orthodoxy.

The East African Revival is arguably the best-known revival movement in Africa because it most resembles the nineteenth-century revivals in Europe and America. It resonates with other renewal movements in Africa in its focus on Jesus Christ, an expectation of changed patterns of life, and in its commitment to a worldwide Christian community as a response to immediate challenges in African society. Other renewal movements, like those of Harris and Kimbangu, left a legacy of new churches by blending African cultural practices into Christianity—such as using material objects in worship or by condoning polygamy. The Balokole shunned these approaches openly and adamantly. However, the Balokole and followers of Harris and Kimbangu applied biblical texts to their immediate contexts and considered missionaries lackluster in their commitment to biblical injunctions.

However, just like other revivalists around the world, African revivalists expected a rapid change of behavior among those who responded to their message, seeing themselves as part of the worldwide Christian church. Indeed for many foreign missionaries who witnessed this African transformation, it was clear that they all belonged to the tribe and clan of Christ. **CH**

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A durable spirituality

JOHN SUNG'S REVIVAL MINISTRY IN CHINA

Daryl R. Ireland

The most famous revivalist in Chinese history traveled farther, preached more often, and brought more people to Christ than any other. In his 12-year career, John Sung (Song Shangjie, 1901–1944) logged more than 100,000 miles, usually preaching at least three times a day. Through his revival meetings, more than 100,000 people prayed for new life. By one accounting at least 10 percent of all Chinese Protestants in the world had been born again through his ministry. In the forge of his “hot and noisy” revivals, where singing mixed with confession, laughter with groans and tears, Sung hammered out a Christian spirituality for Chinese people that proved durable through social upheaval, war, and revolution.

Few people could have been a more unlikely tool in the hands of God. Sung grew up in a Christian home in the Chinese coastal province of Fujian where, as the son of a Methodist pastor, he zealously joined his father in ministry. But while studying at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Sung had a mental collapse. He spent 193 days in an insane asylum, imagining secret messages sent to him in *New York Times* crossword puzzles, using a special dictionary that Jesus supposedly gave him to translate the Gospel of Mark into a design for a radio to pick up heavenly broadcasts, and marrying Mary, the mother of Jesus,

UNLIKELY REVIVALIST After a difficult time in a US seminary, John Sung (*above left*) became China's premier evangelist. This map (*above*) shows how Sung might have visualized China in 1926.

in his hospital room. The doctors finally released him, not because he recovered, but because Union could no longer afford his care. Forced to return to China, Sung still struggled with delusions.

A NEW CONVICTION

Confused, Sung sought a new direction for his life. Could he teach science? Perhaps, but it would require that he convince the schoolmaster of his sanity. In conversations with W. B. Cole, who oversaw Methodist education in Fujian, Sung found something better than a job. Despite all the chaos of his New York experience, Jesus Christ was still there. When the Lord, rather than arcane messages or heavenly weddings, became his central focus, everything else became secondary—even disposable. Sung was no longer under the power of mental illness, but healed by Jesus who became the integrating presence and force of his life.

Having found Christian language to convey the drama of his transformation, Sung received invitations to preach. None was bigger than the request to address



the 1931 National Christian Council's second meeting on revival held in Shanghai. Sung used his less prominent timeslot to convey the mysteries of Genesis 1: the seven days of creation held the secrets to the first seven chapters of the Gospel of John, the seven stages of church history, and the seven steps of his own spiritual journey from darkness to rest. Such sermons were still not typical revival fare, dabbling in curiosities rather than pushing for confessions, but the cofounders of the Bethel Mission, Jennie Hughes (1873–1951) and Shi Meiyu, also known as Mary Stone (1873–1954), saw potential and invited Sung to travel with their newly formed Bethel Worldwide Evangelistic Band (BWEB), a team of five men who led revivals throughout China.

SERMON ON THE SPOT

Sung took to Bethel's revivalism immediately. Within a couple of hours, people could discover they were lost, encounter the life-giving presence of Jesus Christ, and leave reborn. No one was better at moving people through that three-step process than John Sung. In fact he became so proficient that he could invite the audience to shout out a Bible chapter for him to preach from, and he would concoct a sermon on the spot.

Sung was especially ruthless in his conviction of sin, trampling social taboos by asking if anyone had fornicated—and then making everyone squirm by getting specific: “Did you almost? Mentally? Who has committed this sin?” He paused, waiting, until finally someone indicated that he or she had been sexually impure. Then another and yet another raised their hands in confession. On and on it went, men and women weeping with remorse until Sung was satisfied that sexual impropriety had been fully disgorged. Then he would ask another question: “Who has hated?” Sung could grind through the ins and outs of 30 or 40 sins in one sermon, insisting people acknowledge the grip sin had on them.

It was the necessary prelude for what came next. At the end of the sermon, Sung would invite all those

TEAMING UP Cofounder of a traveling mission group, Mary Stone (*above*) gave Sung a platform, inviting him to join her evangelistic team. Sung encouraged women to join ministry teams, an innovation also seen in the 1927–1937 Shantung Revival (*above left*).

ensnared by sin to come to the front to meet Jesus. They now had a role to play in a drama that had eternal consequences. People could choose to stay seated, evidence that they were paralyzed by sin and resistant to God's mercy, or they could get up, separate themselves from their old life, and go to their Savior.

At the altar familiar social categories were erased. Clergy mixed with laity; men, women, and children intermingled as equals. They articulated their failures out loud, usually with tears. Something new was born in that socially porous moment, something very different from the hierarchical life that characterized the Chinese church, home, and work. The effect was profound.

Many churches in China ached for such a freeing experience. In two years Sung and the BWEB covered more than 15,000 miles; held 1,199 revival services; and spoke to 425,980 people as churches begged for their services. In 1933 the BWEB broke up, and Sung went solo.

CITY LIGHT

His revivals were almost always in cities. People who worked in department stores or banks or went to school had something not available in the countryside: free time. Depending on their schedules, urbanites could at least attend a morning, afternoon, or evening service. Plus Sung's presentation of the gospel gave new meaning to their leisure. Instead of squandering it on movies and picnics, he told them to organize into evangelism teams. Each person was to contribute something, so the group could buy tracts or provide bus fare to take the gospel to others. Their obedience was not just necessary for their salvation, it also gave them a meaningful role in



BOOK OF LIFE This Chinese Bible (*above*) dates to the time of China's Cultural Revolution (1966–1976), which sought to stamp out Christianity as a Western influence. Mao's "Little Red Book" (*right*) was the approved text. Yet, despite official opposition, the Chinese church outlasted both Mao and the Cultural Revolution.



God's plan. Their preaching would usher in the victorious return of Christ.

NEW WOMEN

The women of China were the most enthusiastic about this opportunity. For millennia they could only be daughters, wives, and mothers. No other roles were open to them. In teams, though, Sung required a leader, a secretary, a treasurer—and everyone was an evangelist. "The Lord saves men, and also saves women," Sung preached. "This is true gender equality." For many Christian women, Sung's revivals provided a pathway to modernity and allowed them to assume the title of "New Women"—a popular term for those who dared to break with tradition to lead China into a better future.

Deliverance from sin also meant freedom from sickness, so Sung held healing services, sometimes praying individually over 1,700 people a day. Miracles multiplied wherever he went. Some worried that his healing overshadowed his spiritual work, but Sung never saw them as distinct. Jesus, he insisted, saves the whole person.

As his fame spread, and the Second Sino-Japanese War (1937–1945) made it difficult for him to work in mainland China, Sung took his revivals to Southeast Asia. He began to speak publicly about spreading revival fires from India to Africa, and then in the West. However, his aspirations were cut short by his disintegrating health. In December 1939 Sung preached his last sermon from a cot in Indonesia. He never recovered, dying five years later in a cottage outside Beijing.

A few years later, the one million Protestants in China began to face persecution. By 1970 Jiang Qing, an instigator of the Cultural Revolution, pronounced religion in China dead. It was one of the greatest exaggerations in

history. Christianity was not dead, but spreading. China has 100 million Protestants today.

ONGOING MIRACLE

It's apparent that the Chinese church absorbed key features of Sung's revivalism. For example ordination was irrelevant for Sung and his evangelistic teams. What mattered was the power given by the Holy Spirit to preach with boldness. Thus the government's efforts to limit ordination did virtually nothing to slow the spread of Christianity. Likewise healing was now an integral part of Chinese Christianity. In some places up to 90 percent of converts testified to the role of a miraculous cure in their conversion.

Finally, the emphasis on evangelism remained strong. Christianity has grown 50 times faster than the general population over the last 75 years. Women have been especially effective in evangelizing their social networks, but almost all Chinese believers understand that to be a Christian is to be a witness. Sung's insistence that sharing the gospel with others is a necessary part of salvation has produced a kinetic Chinese Christianity that pulsates with revivalistic fervor today. **GI**

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“Prayer like the falling of many waters”



WE GATHER TOGETHER In the years following the 1907 revival, Korean Christians of all ages met regularly for prayer, as seen in this weekly gathering in Pyongyang.

Sometimes after a confession, the whole audience would break out in audible prayer, and the effect of that audience of hundreds of men praying together in audible prayer was something indescribable. Again, after another confession, they would break out in uncontrollable weeping, and we would all weep, we could not help it.

Contrition over sin and praying out loud were among the distinguishing signs of this revival, which resulted in many new conversions and church members in the following months and years.

The Pyongyang Revival of 1907

Modern-day North Korea has one of the most aggressively anti-Christian governments in the world. This makes it easy to forget that northern Korea used to be a stronghold of Protestant Christianity in Asia. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the city of Pyongyang was known as the “Jerusalem of the East,” with a number of influential Christian institutions, including Union Christian Hospital, Union Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and Union Christian College, the first four-year college anywhere in Korea.

REPENTANCE AND OUTPOURING

In 1907 Pyongyang saw the outbreak of a massive revival, the peak of Protestant faith in northern Korean history. For several years before this, Korean Christians and Western missionaries had been praying for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It finally came one night that January as Presbyterian missionary William Blair (1876–1970) preached to thousands of Korean men, focusing on their need to stop hating Japanese people, with whom Koreans had a long history of conflict. Many at the meeting began praying out loud. As one missionary described it, the sound of many praying at once brought

not confusion, but a vast harmony of sound and spirit, a mingling together of souls moved by an irresistible impulse of prayer. The prayer sounded to me like the falling of many waters, an ocean of prayer beating against God’s throne. It was not many, but one, born of one Spirit, lifted to one Father above....

SPIRIT-LED OR SYNCRETISTIC?

Some observers later criticized the Korean revival for its exotic Pentecostal characteristics, and some suggested the revival had syncretistic overtones that drew from local folk religion, especially Korean shamanism and its interaction with the spirit world. There were surely some excesses, but what revival does not run to some extremes? The focus on grief and confession of sin—the sin of ethnic hatred, in particular—suggests that this was a revival in which the Holy Spirit was indeed moving.

Although seminaries and colleges raised up a strong contingent of native Korean leaders, storm clouds were on the political horizon. As World War II loomed, the Western powers began to withdraw all missionaries. After that war the Allies agreed to split the peninsula into spheres of Western influence (South Korea) and Soviet communist influence (North Korea). The communist north became officially atheist and has ruthlessly persecuted its remaining Christian community ever since.

So much news out of North Korea today focuses on the nation’s repressive regime. But the 1907 revival reminds us of a different North Korean past. Let’s pray that God would bring both revival and freedom once again to the North Korean people.—*Thomas S. Kidd is Yeats Chair of Baptist Studies at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. A version of this article originally appeared on The Gospel Coalition’s blog and is reprinted with permission.*

Death to life, water to wine

REVIVAL IN TIMOR, INDONESIA

Gani Wiyono

It's easy to miss a crucial event when a bigger one grabs our attention. For instance, few know that Harriet Quimby (1875–1912) made history on April 16, 1912, as the first female pilot to fly across the English Channel. Unfortunately, due to the sinking of the *Titanic* the day before, no one was paying much attention.

In a similar way, one of the greatest revivals ever to take place in Indonesia was overshadowed by an attempted coup that started a few days later, causing a heart-breaking loss of life and major upheaval in the nation's government over the following years. The vast social and political changes of this period blurred the memory of the 1965 Timor Revival for many Indonesians, even many Christians there, yet over the last half-century some have made efforts to commemorate this significant spiritual event both within the nation and abroad.



SPRINGS OF LIVING WATER

In the two decades before the 1965 Timor Revival, there had been at least three isolated spiritual movements in the region. In 1945 events in Niki-Niki resulted in the conversion of a local ruler and his subjects. Then in 1948 people in the Baumata area witnessed several miraculous events following the preaching of a Reverend Sine in the local vernacular. The most remarkable of these was the sudden appearance of a spring discharging a considerable amount of water, which ultimately transformed the previously arid and unproductive region of Baumata into a fertile and productive one.

Subsequently, in 1963–1964, another Spirit movement occurred, this time led by a group under the guidance of Johannes Ratuwalu. They undertook extensive missionary work, performing numerous miracles and healing the sick. Unfortunately this movement did not last long, as the leader succumbed to the temptations of pride, lust, and greed. But a year after that movement faded, another began—what we now call the Timor Revival.

On September 26, 1965, about 200 people gathered for a prayer service in the Maranatha Church in the town of Soé. They experienced an extraordinary visitation of the Spirit, similar to what happened in Jerusalem

OUTPOURING In a time of national unrest, the verdant island of Timor, part of Indonesia, experienced a powerful spiritual awakening that renewed the faith of many.

on the first Pentecost. In the book *Like a Mighty Wind*, first published in 1971, Mel Tari, one of the participants, gave a riveting testimony:

And that night, as I was sitting next to my sister, I heard this mighty rushing sound. It sounded like a small tornado in the church. I looked around and saw nothing. . . . Then I heard the fire bell ringing loud and fast. Across the street from the church was the police station and the fire bell. The man in the police station saw that our church was on fire, so he rang the bell to tell people. . . . When they got to the church, they saw the flames, but the church was not burning. Instead of natural fire, it was the fire of God. . . . After that, people started to stand all over the church, worshipping the Lord in different languages. Heaven came down that night, and it was wonderful.

The incredible event triggered mass repentance within the congregation. They were sorry for their sins



ORDINARY PEOPLE Like many awakenings throughout history, the Timor Revival relied on the prayers and the service of laypeople, such as this ministry team (above).



and dedicated their lives to God. Many young people, compelled to preach the gospel, formed lay evangelism teams, ready to go from region to region. In the first three months after the phenomenal events in Soe, at least 70 evangelism teams went forth, made up of laypeople willing to go wherever the Spirit would lead them. Most teams had three or four people, but some had twenty. Wherever they went they sensed the Lord going before them, performing signs and wonders and leading people to repentance as they preached the message of God's Word. And so began the momentous Timor Revival.

DYING TO SIN

Just like spiritual awakenings in other parts of the world, the Timor Revival led to a large-scale transformation of congregational life. While the Timorese people had been familiar with Christianity long before the revival,

NO OTHER GODS The animistic folk religions of the local culture involved fetishes and amulets, charms and totems. Revival leaders called for people to surrender these items, abandon those practices, and worship God alone.



HEAVEN CAME DOWN The Timor Revival began in 1965 at Maranatha Church in Soé (left). As one eyewitness wrote: "They saw the flames, but the church was not burning ... it was the fire of God."

the majority were nominal Christians. Many were still living with elements of their previous animistic beliefs. The Timor Revival brought repentance and new birth to those nominal Christians.

Three key indicators marked this spiritual transformation: 1) the widespread confession of sins and surrender of amulets and fetishes; 2) a noticeable shift in the atmosphere of communal worship from formal and "dead" to passionate and vibrant; and 3) a strong desire to carry out family worship in homes. Churches also grew. Between 1965 and 1967, church membership in Timor increased from 450,000 to 650,000.

The Timor Revival also brought about significant social transformation. Police on the island of Rote, a small island not far from Timor, were literally out of work because people had stopped drinking, according to Petrus Octavianus (1928–2014), one of Indonesia's most prominent evangelical leaders. Elsewhere, in a region known for cattle thieves, prison doors were open because they stopped stealing cows.

SPREADING FERVOR

In addition to its impact on congregational and social life, the Timor Revival prompted a significant influx of laypeople into the ministry of evangelism. The driving force behind the Timor Revival was not clergy but laity. Many young men and women left their jobs to

EVANGELISTIC TEAM IN SOÉ. FROM DON CRAWFORD, *MIRACLES IN INDONESIA, 1972*—PHOTOGRAPHER: DAVID MITCHELL. MUALANG WAR AMULET IN THE FORM OF A NECKLACE BEFORE 1970. KALIMANTAN BARAT, INDONESIA. COTTON, LEATHER, PLANT FIBER, TOOTH (ANIMAL)—(CC BY-SA 4.0) WERELD MUSEUM. WOODEN POLE. ANCESTOR FIGURE REPRESENTING A MAN BEFORE 1995—(CC BY-SA 4.0) WERELD MUSEUM. SOÉ MARRANATHA CHURCH BUILDING—PUBLIC DOMAIN, BEAUTIFUL FEET.



disseminate the revival's fervor throughout Timor and other islands, and some went overseas. Most of these individuals were uneducated and lacked formal seminary training. However, imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit, they had confidence that they could serve as witnesses in a manner analogous to the disciples of Jesus as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

Signs and wonders were also an essential feature of the Timor Revival. Most of the spiritual gifts listed in the Bible were reportedly manifested, but the most prominent of these gifts were those of knowledge and discernment of spirits. People with these gifts could discern the presence of hidden sins, idols, and amulets in those who had heard their message and were called to repentance.

WATER TO WINE

Numerous accounts of miracles came out of this revival. Some are considered more remarkable than others, such as the transformation of water into wine. The first case occurred in Kampung, Aman, Soé, on October 5, 1967. A group of people at the prayer meeting, led by a woman named Liufeto-Mooy, required wine to celebrate the Eucharist, but there was a shortage of wine at that time. After much prayer they received divine guidance to extract water from the local spring at midnight and offer a prayer over the water. By the next day, the water had undergone a miraculous transformation into wine—which was then used to celebrate the Eucharist.

On multiple occasions since then, the Timorese people have observed the same phenomenon—water turned to wine. Other miracles were also reported in the Timor Revival, including the multiplication of food, the ability to move from one place to another, the power to control dangerous animals such as snakes and crocodiles, survival despite eating poisoned food, and even raising the dead.

The topic of miracles is arguably one of the most controversial and attention-grabbing issues of revival, particularly for those in Western societies. Some

THE POWERFUL WORD Petrus Octavianus (*above left*), a leading Indonesian evangelist, pastor, and author, addresses a crowd. He noted the social effects of the Timor Revival on his home island of Rote.

GO YE THEREFORE A ministry team steps out to share the good news of Jesus throughout their verdant island (*above right*). Christians of all ages and backgrounds felt the call to spread the message of the Timor Revival.

commentators challenge the veracity of miracle stories. While there might be exaggerations in some of these accounts, considerable evidence exists to support the reports of genuine miracles occurring throughout Timor during this time.

THE FADING REVIVAL

After four glorious years, the Timor Revival came to an end. Many have wondered why. Some blame the attitude of church leaders, who were not thoroughly opposed to the revival, but perhaps felt their comfort zone disturbed by its young leaders. In the *Southeast Asia Journal of Theology* (1973), Frank L. Cooley observed that the spiritual work of revival teams in congregations is often seen as a criticism or challenge to church leaders. This dynamic may have brought about the fading of the Timor Revival.

Still, though it occurred more than half a century ago, this spiritual event continues to resonate deeply in the hearts and minds of Indonesians. The Timor Revival inspired Christians in Indonesia to believe that the sovereign God can still do mighty works in the world through the ministry of ordinary people. **GI**

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Century of the Holy Spirit

PENTECOSTAL, CHARISMATIC, AND THIRD WAVE REVIVALS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Connie Dawson

In 1897 a little-known Italian nun named Sister Elena Guerra (1835–1914) had the audacity to write a letter to Pope Leo XIII (1810–1903) asking him to pray a novena (a nine-day prayer) to the Holy Spirit between the feasts of Ascension and Pentecost. Pope Leo not only responded to her letter, he issued an encyclical—*On the Holy Spirit*—summoning the Catholic Church to permanently and universally pray a novena in preparation for the feast of Pentecost. On January 1, 1901, Pope Leo opened the windows of the Vatican and sang “Veni Creator Spiritus,” invoking the Holy Spirit’s presence upon the new century.

On the same day, on the other side of the globe, a small Protestant Bible school in Topeka, Kansas, prayed for and experienced an outpouring of the Spirit like that which the apostles received in the book of Acts. What happened in that Bible school would profoundly affect the entire church. Pope Leo’s invocation was coming true. The 1900s would be remembered by many as the Century of the Holy Spirit.

Three main revival streams emerged during the twentieth century, along with a few related streams we might call tributaries. The first was the traditional Pentecostal movement birthed from the Azusa Street Revival (see pp. 18–22), which was followed by the rise of healing evangelists. The second was the midcentury Charismatic movement, which had two expressions: one in traditional evangelical churches and the second in the Roman Catholic Church. The third stream, or “Third Wave,” as it is often called, flowed through John Wimber (1934–1997) and exploded via the Toronto

ACTS 29 The emergence of new groups in the 1900s exploring miraculous gifts of the Spirit seemed to many like a continuation of the book of Acts (depicted in this sketch for a church mural).

outpouring beginning in 1994 and the Brownsville Revival of 1995 in Pensacola, Florida.

THE FIRST STREAM: PENTECOSTALISM

Traditional Pentecostalism flowed out of the Wesleyan Holiness movement of the 1800s. Charles Parham, a Methodist Holiness preacher in Topeka, became known as the theological father of Pentecostalism when students in his Bible school, who were studying the Holy Spirit, had an experience similar to what they were reading about in Acts 2. They were baptized with the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues. From this experience Parham formulated a doctrine that tongues-speaking was the initial physical “evidence” of Holy Spirit baptism, which became the defining theological feature of traditional Pentecostalism (and it still separates this movement from later groups with broader understandings of Spirit baptism).

William Seymour, leader of the Azusa Street Revival, had studied under Parham and wholeheartedly embraced this new doctrine. Starting in a modest building in Los Angeles, the revival Seymour led spread across the nation and around the world, reaching multitudes across the socio-economic and racial spectrums, including missionaries and pastors.



WORD TO THE WISE William Seymour (*above*) was 35 years old when he moved to Los Angeles and launched the Azusa Street Revival.

HEALING EVANGELISTS: A PENTECOSTAL TRIBUTARY

By midcentury the nation had been through two world wars and the Great Depression. The heart of the country needed healing and a fresh touch from God. Into this spiritually dry milieu came the post-WWII healing evangelists. William Branham (1909–1965) was the forerunner, attracting crowds of thousands as reports of miraculous healings spread. Oral Roberts was the second on the scene. With his big tent seating several thousand people, he spread the good news across the nation that “God is a good God” and “Healing can be received now.” Roberts was the first to take healing crusades into people’s living rooms through television, where they could see, in the privacy of their homes, the miracle-working, healing power of God. Other healing evangelists followed Branham and Roberts, including Jack Coe (1918–1956), A. A. Allen (1911–1970), Tommy Lee “T. L.” Osborn and Daisy Washburn Osborn (1924–1995), Kathryn Kuhlman, and many more (see pp. 28–31).

THE SECOND STREAM: THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT

In April 1960 at a 9:00 a.m. Sunday service, Dennis Bennett (1917–1991), an Episcopal priest in Van Nuys, California, shocked his parish by telling them he had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit and had spoken in tongues. The congregation was outraged at this news, and by the third service that Sunday morning, the church board demanded his resignation. Bennett relocated to a small parish in Seattle, where revival soon broke out. *Time* magazine released an article about the happenings, saying the Holy Spirit was not just moving among the uninhibited Pentecostals but among the



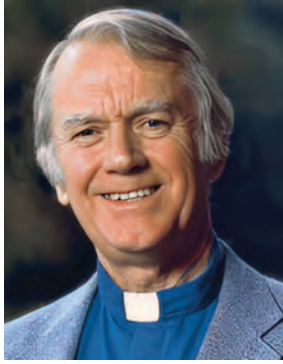
HEALING POWER Oral Roberts (*top*) became one of the most renowned faith-healing evangelists in the United States with his big-tent services and soul-affirming messages. Another early faith healer, William Branham (*above*), also attracted thousands to his services. Notice the sickbeds on the platform with people awaiting the preacher’s restorative touch.

Episcopalians, “God’s frozen people.” This marked the start of a new stream of the Spirit’s activity, with a new breed of empowered believers choosing to stay within their denominations and seek renewal among their people rather than join the Pentecostals. Because of their belief in the charisms (gifts) of the Spirit seen in 1 Corinthians 12:8–10, they soon were identified as Charismatics.

CATHOLIC CHARISMATICS: A PARALLEL STREAM

Pope John XXIII (1881–1963) opened the Second Vatican Council in 1962, praying for a “New Pentecost” to come upon the entire church. The Catholic stream of the Charismatic revival originated with a weekend retreat of 4 faculty members and 30 Catholic students from Duquesne University on February 18, 1967. Fueled with hunger after reading David Wilkerson’s (1931–2011) book *The Cross and the Switchblade*, the all-Catholic group met to seek the Lord. On that Saturday night, they had planned to have a birthday party but instead were drawn upstairs to the chapel where the tangible presence of the Holy Spirit encountered them. Those present began to speak in tongues; some laughed, some cried, and they were all filled with joy and an indescribable love of

WILLIAM SEYMOUR, LOOKING AT A BIBLE. © 1910, HALFTONE—FAITH-PENTECOSTAL HERITAGE CENTER; FRANCIS MILLER, ORAL ROBERTS. 1982—LIFE MAGAZINE. © TIME INC./GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE; CAMPAIGN MEETING, 1948. FROM GORDON LINDSEY, A MAN SENT BY GOD, 1950—PUBLIC DOMAIN, WIKIMEDIA



SHOCKING Episcopal priest Dennis Bennett (above) surprised his church one Sunday by announcing he had spoken in tongues.

God. News of the outpouring quickly spread to Notre Dame University, where the Catholic Charismatic movement was launched and began spreading around the world (see p. 52). By the end of the twentieth century, the Charismatic movement among Catholics had penetrated 233 nations and impacted over 10 percent of the Catholic body, representing more than 100 million people.

THE THIRD WAVE

In 1982 another revival stream erupted, eventually identified as the Third Wave movement. It started with John Wimber, the founder of the Vineyard movement, and his famous class at Fuller Theological Seminary: “Signs, Wonders, and Church Growth.” As a church growth consultant, Wimber had realized that the fastest-growing churches in America and around the world were those experiencing healing, deliverance, and other spiritual gifts that resembled the ministry of Jesus. In the class Wimber taught the ministry of Jesus from the Gospels, how the Holy Spirit had moved throughout Christian history, and the impact of the charisms (spiritual gifts) on the church today. At the close of the class, in an optional, hands-on training period, Wimber taught the students how to pray effectively for the sick. The class caused such a stir that *Christian Life Magazine* dedicated an entire issue to it. By the third year the course was offered, it broke all of Fuller’s enrollment records.

TORONTO AND BROWNSVILLE

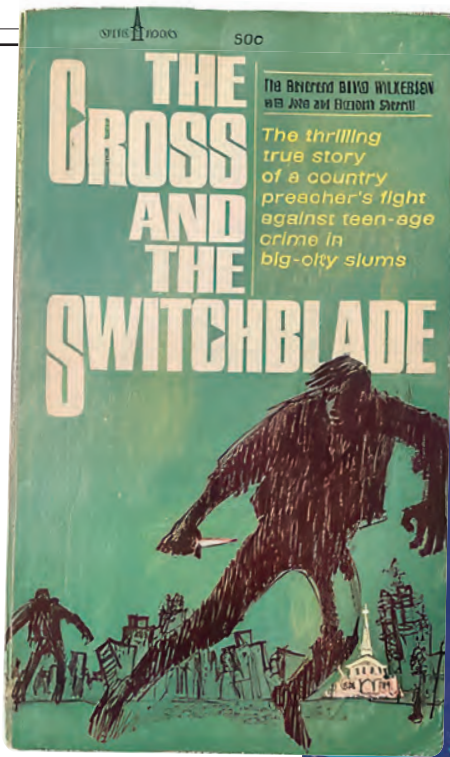
During the latter part of the twentieth century, two revivals emerged within one year: the Toronto Blessing in Canada and the Brownsville Revival in Pensacola, Florida. Both of these events were woven from strands of God’s leading that stretched around the world.

Randy Clark (b. 1952), a St. Louis pastor on a spiritual quest, heard about a move of the Spirit in the ministry of Rodney Howard-Browne (b. 1961), so he attended a service

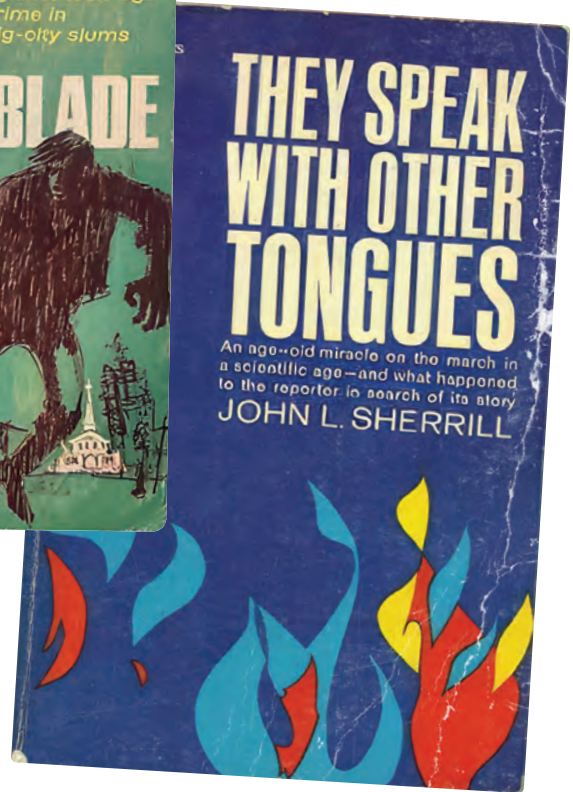
in Tulsa, Oklahoma, led by that revivalist. There the Holy Spirit powerfully affected Clark, who shared his testimony with his congregation back in St. Louis and saw the Spirit affecting them in the same way. Then John and Carol Arnott, Vineyard pastors in Toronto, heard Clark’s testimony and invited him to share his story at their church. Clark was hesitant but he remembered Howard-Browne saying: “if you want to see revival, go north in the winter.” So he spoke to the small Vineyard congregation in Toronto, at the end of an airport runway, and the revival later known as the “Father’s Blessing” began. The meetings that started on January 20, 1994, were supposed to last only a few days but kept going for years.

Four months after that revival started, Eleanor Mumford, a Vineyard leader from England, attended the meeting in Toronto and carried the revival fire back home. Mumford later prayed for Nicky Gumbel, curate of the Holy Trinity Brompton Anglican Church, who prayed for that church’s vicar, Sandy Millar, and revival broke out in the Anglican Church in the United Kingdom. The *London Times* magazine reported that while other Anglican churches had “pathetically tiny flocks of Londoners” attending their Sunday night services, Holy Trinity Brompton had people lining up 90 minutes before services to get into the standing-room-only, 1,500-seat sanctuary.

Steve Hill and his wife, Jerri, had served as missionaries in Argentina and were desperate for a fresh touch from God.



BY THE BOOKS (left and below) The Charismatic movement of the 1960s was aided by several popular books in the Christian market.



DENNIS BENNETT, EMOTIONALLYFREE.ORG
DAVID WILKERSON, THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE, SPIRE BOOKS, 1973
JOHN L. SHERRILL, THEY SPEAK WITH OTHER TONGUES, SPIRE BOOKS, 1964



SIGNS AND WONDERS John Wimber (*above*) taught an influential class on miracles at Fuller Seminary, providing an academic underpinning for the Third Wave.



BROWNSVILLE Pastor John Kilpatrick (*above left*) leads a prayer at the Brownsville Assembly of God in Pensacola, Florida, where revival broke out on Father's Day in 1995.

TORONTO A crowd of worshippers (*left*) seek God in the multiyear revival known as the "Father's Blessing," which began at the Airport Vineyard in Toronto in 1994.

salvations reported. A vast army of Spirit-empowered believers took their experience back to their home churches in America and around the world.

All genuine revivals create controversy. This was especially true of the Toronto Blessing, as observers objected to some of the behaviors elicited, such as barking, shaking, and uncontrollable laughing or weeping. Still this revival had a long-lasting impact, launching many effective ministries, including Randy Clark's work in Brazil. He also founded Global Awakening Theological Seminary to preserve the revival's fruit and to train and equip a new generation of Spirit-empowered believers for a global harvest. Heidi and Roland Baker, missionaries in Mozambique, saw tremendous fruit after being overwhelmed by the power of God at the Toronto revival. Leif Hetland, also touched by this revival stream, has led over a million Muslims to the Christian faith.

The combined revival streams of Pentecostalism, the Charismatics, and the Third Wave involved over a half billion people at the close of the twentieth century. This Spirit-empowered force in Christendom is second in size only to the Roman Catholic Church. The movement transcends denominational lines, has diverse theological convictions, and finds expression around the globe.

Sister Elena's prayers were answered. The twentieth century went down in history as the Century of the Holy Spirit. **GH**

Connie Dawson is a professor of church and renewal history at Global Awakening Theological Seminary and author of the book John Wimber: His Life and Ministry.

Hearing about the Anglican revival, Steve Hill visited Holy Trinity Brompton and asked for prayer. Millar prayed a simple prayer: "Touch him, Jesus. Bless him, Lord." The strength drained from Hill's body, and he fell to the floor. Millar knelt beside Hill and whispered, "You don't have to do anything. He loves you. Rest in his love."

On Father's Day, June 1995, Hill recounted this story at the Brownsville Assemblies of God Church in Pensacola, Florida. Pastor John Kilpatrick and his congregation had been praying for two years for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Because it was Father's Day, Kilpatrick did not expect anything to happen when Hill spoke, but at the altar call, a thousand hungry people, half the congregation, came forward. Many were baptized in the Holy Spirit, spoke in tongues, were filled with joy, and fell to the floor overcome by the Spirit. Kilpatrick himself felt pressed to the floor and could not get up until 4:00 p.m. The revival, now known as the Brownsville Revival, was born, and nightly services began.

GLOBAL HARVEST

These streams of revival from Toronto and Brownsville touched people around the world. Planes and busloads of people converged on these two revival centers. People stood in long lines for hours, hoping to get into the nightly meetings and to receive a touch from God. The revival at Brownsville ran from 1995 to 2000, with over three million people visiting and more than 200,000

Perpetuating Pentecost



STARTING POINT At the Ark and Dove Retreat Center in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania (left), a group from Duquesne University studied the book of Acts. Pope Paul VI (above) greets Ralph C. Martin at a 1975 conference on Charismatic renewal at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

Charismatic renewal in the Catholic Church

Do in us today what we are reading about in the early Church.” This was the prayer of a group from Duquesne University on a spiritual retreat in 1967. It sparked a revival that spread through the Catholic Church.

Just a few years earlier, the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965)—an international meeting of leaders of the Catholic Church—had opened the door to various currents of renewal, including one current that can only be described as worldwide revival.

So it was in the wake of Vatican II that a number of Duquesne professors and students gathered for a retreat to focus on the way “Pentecost is perpetuated” in the lives of the baptized (as the Catholic Catechism puts it). They used the book of Acts to inspire their discussions.

As they prayed and talked, they began to question why the experience of the early Christians was so different from their own. Some of the students then made their sincere plea to the Lord: “Do in us today. . . .”

Then, one by one, students felt led to enter the chapel. There they fell on their faces before a strong experience of the presence and holiness of God. Some began to speak in tongues. (The best firsthand account of these events is Patti Mansfield’s 1992 book *As By a New Pentecost*.)

Word began to spread, first to the University of Notre Dame and then to Michigan State University. Soon hundreds and then thousands were touched by this encounter with God, experienced conversion to the Lord Jesus, and spontaneously began to evangelize. Articles

appeared in the press over the next few years, and soon the same thing was happening all over the world.

A significant affirmation occurred as 10,000 Catholics from 40 countries gathered for the 1975 International Conference on Charismatic Renewal. In the closing session at St. Peter’s Basilica, Pope Paul VI (1897–1978) gave a short speech welcoming the renewal as “an opportunity for the church and for the world.”

The door was now wide open. In the years since, an estimated 120 million Catholics have experienced renewal through this outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Pope John Paul II (1920–2005) further encouraged the development of this renewal. In an important 1998 speech, he indicated that the charismatic dimension and the institutional dimension are both fundamental to the constitution of the church. He also made an impassioned plea for members of the church to welcome the *charisms* (gifts of the Spirit) and use them.

Perhaps for the first 10 years, this renewal could be described as a “revival.” Those in the movement reported many spontaneous supernatural events, including miracles like those described in the book of Acts, as the revival spread like wildfire. In recent years, however, the renewal has been more organized, with Vatican-recognized status and headquarters in Rome, and it generally proceeds more peacefully—although the church is still seeing explosive, fervent growth in some countries in Africa and South America.—*Ralph C. Martin, president of Renewal Ministries and a long-time leader in the Catholic Charismatic movement*

SITE OF THE DUQUESNE WEEKEND, GIBSONIA, PENNSYLVANIA, 1967. IN PATTI GALLAGHER MANSFIELD, 1992. IN PATTI GALLAGHER MANSFIELD, *AS BY A NEW PENTECOST*, AMOR DEUS PUBLISHING, 2016—COURTESY AMOR DEUS PUBLISHING
POPE PAUL VI AND RALPH MARTIN, 1975—USED BY PERMISSION OF RALPH MARTIN



The moving cloud of God's presence

How do Christians align with God in the work of revival? CH spoke with George Otis Jr., author, producer, and founder and president of the Sentinel Group, a Seattle-based Christian organization dedicated to helping revival-hungry communities to that end.

CHRISTIAN HISTORY: *You've devoted yourself in this last quarter-century to the study of revival, investigating and documenting spiritual movements around the world. What drives you in this work?*

GEORGE OTIS: I desire to understand why the moving cloud of God's presence hovers where it does. Why are certain communities experiencing what I would call transforming revival—some of them quite extensively, while other areas, including areas that are well churched—are not? We began to document some of these things on film starting in 1998 and have been monitoring over 800 communities globally. We have actually filmed a number of them and released multiple documentaries.

CH: *Is there any revival in recent times that was particularly memorable?*

GO: They're all utterly magnificent. They're all the

SPREADING THE LIGHT Many Westerners think of the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific only as a resort destination, but filmmaker George Otis documented a powerful revival there that transformed the Fijians' hearts, environment, and economy.

handiwork of God, and they're precious, powerful, and impactful. There are at least a half a dozen that I'd really like to talk about, but I think one of the interesting places has been the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific.

People from Australia began to take some of our early revival documentaries over to Fiji, which fell on receptive soil. Fiji at that time was struggling in many respects, economically, ecologically, and socially, but the people began to humble themselves and follow the script of 2 Chronicles 7:14, humbling themselves and confessing their sin.

When I talk about confession of sin, I mean these communities would spend a good three months preparing themselves for this time of individual and corporate repentance. It was very thorough, authentic, and heartfelt. Often when we're talking about revival and needing awakening, we're looking outwardly at things that are dysfunctional or broken in the community at large, and we'd like to see those things repaired



or remedied. But God doesn't tend to work that way. He wants to focus us inwardly on our own personal need for revival and transformation. When you are transformed, as an individual in your broken community, then the corporate expression has begun. You've established a beachhead for God's work in that community. So that was happening in Fiji, in many different communities in multiple island groups, and it was happening at the highest levels of government as well.

Fiji right now has quite a record. They formed what they called the "healing the land" team, made up of young people who left their villages as first fruit offerings to the Lord for what he had done for them. These young people from different communities would live together, do Bible study and pray together, and then move out to other communities that hadn't been visited by revival yet but wanted to be. They would live with the people in those communities until a breakthrough happened there as well. And then they began to head overseas. I've run into these people all the way up in the Canadian Arctic. They've gone to Brazil, to Malaysia, to Malawi—all over—giving away the overflow of what God has given to them. If you visit these communities today, you'll find monuments saying, "On this particular day, we the people of this community humbled ourselves before Almighty God. We repented of our sin. And on this day, he visited us." It's like Joshua's memory stones on the other side of the Jordan. You can find many of these in Fijian communities today.

CH: Are there any phases that you generally see in revivals?

GO: I see three phases. *Invitation*, which leads to *visitation* in some form. That then leads to *transformation*, where the systems of human culture and community are changed.

The invitation phase is about the humbling of individuals in the community, the confession of sin, repentance,



EYE ON REVIVAL George Otis Jr. (*above left*) is president of the Sentinel Group, which he founded in 1990. A missions researcher and documentary filmmaker, he has recorded and studied revivals around the world.

WORLD RECORDS The Spirit moves people to carry their re-energized faith around the world. Otis has reported on the effects of Fiji's awakening in the Canadian Arctic (*top*), within the Sao Paulo, Brazil, police force (*middle*), and in the African country of Malawi (*bottom*).

and moving into individual and corporate prayer. This lasts varying lengths of time, depending on what needs to be dealt with. Obviously a big part of this is aligning the focus of our prayers with the purposes of God, inviting him into our lives. Of course we have to humbly spend time in his presence waiting upon him, hearing and feeling what's there, and then beginning to pray accordingly.

The visitation phase is the most unpredictable. It doesn't last very long, and historically this has been the case as well. Usually it's two to three years and sometimes less than that. God knows these communities better than anybody. He knows their history; he knows the specific nuances about what's going on in the hearts and spirits of those who are

HEADSHOT—COURTESY OF GEORGE OTIS; STEEPLE AND ICEBERG IN CANADIAN ARCTIC FROM TRANSFORMATIONS II, DOCUMENTARY FILM, 2000—© SENTINEL GROUP; OFFICERS PRAYING IN SAO PAULO FROM A FORCE FOR CHANGE, DOCUMENTARY FILM, 2007—© SENTINEL GROUP; PANORAMA VIEW OF ZOMBA PLATEAU FROM NDANGOPUMA HILL IN ZOMBA—JUTTKJ / CC BY-SA 3.0 / WIKIMEDIA

FISH WONDER German artist/monk Hans Oberstaller (1911–1990) created *Fischwunder*, depicting one of the early miracles of Jesus and the calling of disciples (right).

NATURE DECLARES Marine life, as seen in this coral reef at Namena Island (middle), is crucial to Fiji's well-being. These fisherwomen (bottom) struggled to bring in the miraculous catch that accompanied the Fiji Revival, mirroring the miracle of Jesus.



petitioning him. So he prepares the perfect entrance that's tailor-made for that particular group of people. When his transforming power is manifest and released and things start changing in many arenas of human life, then that period of God's visitation begins to subside.

In the third phase, transformation, God says to his people, "It's important for you to extend this blessed condition that I have brought about by my will and power and compassion. You need to keep your eyes focused on me. And I will mentor you. I will show you how you can do this through new business practices, new educational curricula, and new legal statutes and laws. I will show you how to do that so that the Kingdom values that are now manifest in the community have legs, so they can last longer."

In our research we have found that this phase is open-ended. It can continue presumably indefinitely if people keep their eyes focused on the Lord and are walking in obedience. But in far too many cases, these moves of God end prematurely. So it's really important not just to ask "How did these things start?," but also "Why did they end so soon?"

CH: You often report on how revival has an effect on the environment. What have you seen?

GO: The people of Fiji have a concept. There's actually a word in the Fijian language that means "the people in the land." It refers to a deep, meaningful relationship between the well-being of the stewards of the land and the health of the land itself. When the stewards of the land are not healthy, the land will not be healthy.

Many of these communities and their lands had many problems before the repentance took place. But when the presence of the Lord came down, they saw quite dramatic changes to the ecosystem in these locations. Some of them were inland communities up in the mountains. Some of them were coastal communities where the reefs had died, along with the fish they had depended on for some time. The stories were abundant about how instantly—I mean overnight—these things were restored on islands where



nothing was growing. All of a sudden these trees that were not bearing became heavily laden with citrus, mangos, and other fruits.

On one island where we filmed, the people had lived off of big crabs, but the reef had died and the crabs had disappeared. But the people were going through a season of repentance, and one day, while most of the community was in church, they heard yelling outside. Some of them went out and saw women who had been out on the reef with nets trying to catch even some little fingerlings so they could provide a meal to their family, and they were clearly in distress and struggling. So the men went out in boats, and found these women—sort of like the disciples struggling to pull in nets that were teeming with fish. They



had to call for other boats from shore, and they filled them up. And then all of these crabs, hundreds of them, big fully mature crabs, started walking out of the sea up onto the beach, and the people were simply collecting them and putting them in baskets.

As a researcher I know I can't report these things on the basis of a single testimony. I need to corroborate them in different ways. But in these cases, the whole community was telling the story, and one would fill in certain details and then another, and they would be weeping and sometimes in spontaneous worship and singing, even as they were trying to get out the report. So the credibility level was very, very high. We are now tracking about 250 separate stories like this in the Fiji Islands alone.

One community was just about ready to go out of existence. The food was gone. Feral pigs were eating their yams. The fish were gone. The reef was dead. Nothing they planted would grow.

There had also been a lot of idolatry going on there. And they were losing their youth to many untimely deaths. It was dark. People were walking around in fear. But the church had just finished a time of repentance, and the Lord had said to some of the elders that he would speak to them "through fire." Of course they're thinking, you know, metaphorically. But one morning people suddenly saw a light in the sky. It was daytime, and not cloudy, so the hot tropical sun was in the sky. But this light they saw was so bright it made the sun seem like a spark.

It was moving too, descending toward the community. "We not only saw it," they said, "we felt it." All over the community, people were falling to their knees and putting their faces on the ground. Little children were hiding



CITY TRANSFORMED Cali, Colombia, was known for its violent crime, especially around the drug trade. But a movement of the Spirit, beginning in 1995, transformed the city and its environs (top). "God is moving in really amazing ways," says Otis.

GLORY TO GOD A worship service takes place in Cali (above). As Otis comments, "We can't make a revival happen, but we can prepare the way of the Lord."

behind their mothers. All of a sudden the sea caught on fire. Over the reef a wall of flames rose about 90 feet high, and it went for half a mile down the coast. People were fearful about this. Finally after some time had passed and the fire left, they got up on very unsteady legs and moved very slowly down to the beach. The water was boiling.

So they thought, *Don't touch it, it's too hot*. But as they looked closer, they realized it had nothing to do with temperature. It was thousands and thousands of fish they had not seen for decades—so plentiful that everyone in the village, from old men to mothers to children, were gathering



OPEN-AIR WORSHIP In some rural areas of the American South in the 1800s, revival meetings occurred in “brush arbors,” open-sided shelters assembled with poles and branches.

cardboard boxes or plastic buckets, fishing lines and nets, and bringing them in, way more than they could use. This started happening day after day, and they started to take the excess to neighboring villages. In this way, the move of God spread to eight different communities. The feral pigs were never seen again. The people planted crops that were turning over in as little as 15 days. Churches of different denominations experienced renewal and healing, with people working together like never before. I’ve actually been on a boat there with a marine biologist who said, “We’ve seen things happening here in these waters that we haven’t seen anywhere else in the world.”

CH: *Your first Transformation video focused on the movement of God in Cali, Colombia, beginning in 1995. Do you have any follow-up on Cali?*

GO: We went back down to Colombia and filmed an update. The move of God had spread widely. In one area many of the communities had become 100 percent Christian. There was another area—the central mountain range, where villagers were growing coca (cocaine) for either the paramilitaries or the cartels—but God began to move. It was a spillover from what he had done in Cali. They became convicted that what they were doing was wrong, and so they humbled themselves, they confessed their sin, they repented. Then they went and told the people they were working for that they weren’t going to grow coca anymore, which was an incredibly dangerous thing to do. They knew this and they did it anyway. But the people they were growing for recognized the hand of God, and they allowed these people to completely walk away, to begin to grow other crops. So they started growing coffee, mangos, cotton—and everything that they grew just prospered. The favor of God was upon

them. All of these communities renamed themselves after biblical places, so from village to village you feel like you’re walking through the New Testament.

A third area, in the Colombian Amazon, was very dangerous and known for its trafficking. But God began to move there too. Many of those villages in the jungle were swept by the power of God.

God is moving in really amazing ways. I’ve said often that I believe our role as Christian emissaries is not simply to change minds. It’s to blow minds.

CH: *As you talked about invitation, visitation, and transformation, you mentioned that the visitation might not always lead to a lasting transformation. Why?*

GO: This is complex. We have actually been distilling what we have learned over time. I would say the single most important factor that we found is humility. We started to wonder, What kind of people does God work with as catalysts in these awakenings? We started to look at the different kinds of people God had used and it’s all over the map. It didn’t seem to matter what the level of education was; some had virtually none, others were very erudite. Age didn’t seem to play a role, or what they did.

As we looked at this for a long time, I was really on the verge of giving up. And then, hidden in plain sight, flashing neon, was humility. All of these people, regardless of their age, gender, education, or profession, exhibited a pronounced degree of humility. It’s not a matter of figuring things out. It is a matter of abandoning ourselves.

We can’t make a revival happen, but we can prepare the way of the Lord. I believe we’re instructed to do so. It is very gratifying and convicting to see people making an effort to do so—and they don’t do it in the bright lights, they often don’t do it in the media.

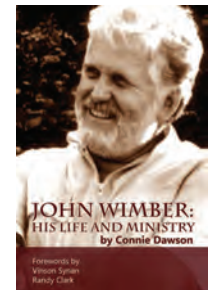
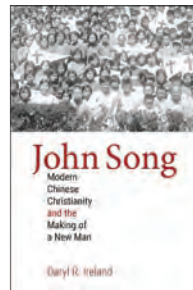
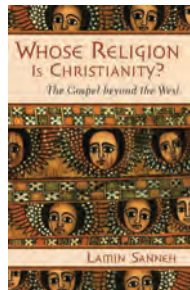
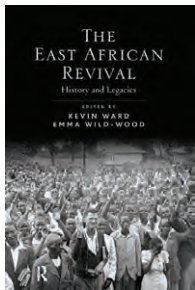
Many Christians want revival. But they just want to do it part time so it doesn’t really interfere with the natural rhythm and routines of their life. I’ve never seen that work. A lot of leaders want to program their way to the transformation of their city. I’ve never seen that work either.

But we have seen God move in big cities and village contexts. We’ve seen him move on campuses. We’ve seen him move in prisons. So wherever there is a community, wherever there is desperation, wherever people will abandon themselves to the process, those people tend to get what they are seeking.

And the stories are amazing. **CH**

Recommended resources

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE REVIVALS AND SPIRITUAL AWAKENINGS OF THE LAST CENTURY OR TWO IN THESE RESOURCES RECOMMENDED BY THE CH TEAM.



BOOKS

The **Welsh Revival** inspired a flurry of publishing by eyewitnesses and participants. Our article includes quotes from Arthur Goodrich et al., *The Story of the Welsh Revival As Told by Eyewitnesses Together with a Sketch of Evan Roberts and His Message to the World* (1905). But also see William T. Stead, *The Welsh Revival: A Narrative of Facts* (1905); and G. Campbell Morgan, *Lessons of the Welsh Revival* (1905).

Read about the revival that raged through **East Africa** in J. E. Church, *Quest for the Highest: An Autobiographical Account of the East African Revival* (1981). See also John Karanja, *Founding an African Faith: Kikuyu African Christianity* (1999); Kevin Ward and Emma Wild-Wood, eds., *The East African Revival: History and Legacies* (2012); James Katarikawe, *The East African Revival* (2015); and Jason Bruner, *Living Salvation in the East African Revival in Uganda* (2017).

As for other **international awakenings** covered here, you may check out George Heber Jones and W. Arthur Noble, *The Korean Revival: An Account of the Revival in the Korean Churches in 1907* (1910). See also Peter Wagner and Pablo Deiros, eds., *Rising Revival: Firsthand Accounts of the Incredible Argentine Revival* (1998); Willis Collins Hoover (trans., Mario G. Hoover), *History of Pentecostalism in Chile (1930/2000)*. Duncan Campbell has written several pieces on his experiences on the Isle of Lewis. Some are collected in *Revival in the Hebrides* (2015). Finally, find more on Chinese revival in Daryl Ireland, *John Song: Modern Chinese Christianity and the Making of a New Man (Studies in World Christianity)* (2020).

Surveys and studies of international revival include J. Edwin Orr, *The Flaming Tongue: The Impact of Twentieth*

Century Revivals (1973); Edith Blumhofer and Randall Balmer, eds., *Modern Christian Revivals* (1993); Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (2002); Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West* (2003); Donald Lewis, ed., *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* (2004); Mark Shaw, *Global Awakening: How 20th-Century Revivals Triggered a Christian Revolution* (2010); Candy Gunther Brown, ed., *Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Healing* (2011); and Gina Zurlo, *Global Christianity* (2022).

Focusing on **twentieth-century revivals in North America**, especially Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, we refer you to John Sherrill's *They Speak with Other Tongues* (1964), which stands as an early classic of the modern Charismatic movement; Richard Quebedeaux, *The New Charismatics* (1976); Richard Riss, *A Survey of 20th-Century Revival Movements in North America* (1988); and Edith Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture* (1993). See also Eduard van der Maas and Stanley Burgess, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (2002); Michael McClymond, ed., *Embodying the Spirit: New Perspectives on North American Revivalism* (2004) and the encyclopedia he edited, *Encyclopedia of Religious Revivals in America* (2007); and finally, Vinson Synan, *The Century of the Holy Spirit: 100 Years of Pentecostal and Charismatic Renewal, 1901–2001* (2012).

If you're specifically interested in **Catholic charismatics**, look for Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, *Catholic Pentecostals* (1969) or Edward D. O'Connor, *The Pentecostal Movement in the Catholic Church* (1971), which focuses on the movement's early growth at Notre Dame.

Biographical works on some major figures in these awakenings include Vinson Synan and Charles Fox, *William J. Seymour: Pioneer of the Azusa Street Revival* (2012) and Connie Dawson, *John Wimber: His Life and Ministry* (2020).

For thoughts from two different eras about what **spiritual revival** means in a person's life, take a look at William Buell Sprague, *Lectures on the Revival of Religion* (1832) and Richard Lovelace, *Dynamics of Spiritual Life* (1979).

Finally, we turn to **those influential in the awakenings described**. Jonathan Edwards's *A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God* (1737), *The Life of David Brainerd* (1749), and *The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* (1744) are especially important in this context. See also the chapters on revival in Michael McClymond and Gerald McDermott, *The Theology of Jonathan Edwards* (2011); and Thomas S. Kidd's excellent survey *The Great Awakening: The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (2009). You may also read William Carey on missions in *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* (1792); and John Greenfield on the Moravian story in *Power from on High* (1927).

You may read about Sojourner Truth in her own words in *Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850) and in Nancy Koester, *We Will Be Free: The Life and Faith of Sojourner Truth* (2023). Aimee Semple McPherson writes her story in *This Is That* (1919); a biography can be found in Edith Blumhofer, *Aimee Semple McPherson: Everybody's Sister* (1993). Controversy also surrounded Dennis J. Bennett, who sparked the Charismatic revival among mainline Protestants and told about it in *Nine O'Clock in the Morning* (1970).

PAST CH ISSUES



Related past issues of *Christian History* can be read online; some hard copies are still available for purchase.

You're currently reading the third part of a trilogy on spiritual awakenings and revivals throughout the centuries. If you've missed the first two parts, look for:

- 149: *Revival: The First Thousand Years*
- 151: *Awakenings*

Other pertinent issues include:

- 1: *Zinzendorf and the Moravians*
- 20: *Charles Grandison Finney*
- 23: *Spiritual Awakenings in North America*
- 25: *Dwight L. Moody*
- 36: *William Carey and the Great Missions Century*
- 58: *The Rise of Pentecostalism*
- 79: *African Apostles*
- 92: *A New Evangelical Awakening*
- 98: *How the Church in China Survived*
- 111: *Billy Graham*
- 130: *Latin American Christianity*
- 142: *Divine Healing*

VIDEOS FROM VISION VIDEO



Relevant videos include *The Welsh Revivals of 1859 and 1904*; *Asbury Revival: Desperate for More*; *Outpouring of the Holy Spirit*; *The Azusa Street Project*; and *The Cross and the Switchblade*.

Biographical videos include *Candle in the Dark* (William Carey); *Billy Graham: An Extraordinary Journey*; *Samuel Morris: African Missionary to North America*; *David Brainerd: Missionary to the American Indians*; *Count Zinzendorf: The Rich Young Ruler Who Said "Yes"*; and *Servant of Christ: Robert Jermain Thomas and the Korean Revivals*.

WEBSITES



On international churches and missions, see the *International Bulletin of Mission Research* or the *Lausanne Movement*.

To access some out-of-print resources, try the *Internet Archive*. **CH**

Questions for reflection

Revivals and awakenings in the modern era



Use these questions to guide discussion on modern revival movements.

1. In the many revivals and awakenings covered in this issue, what are the various manifestations of the Spirit? In other words, when the Spirit revives a church or community, what happens?
2. If you have read *CH* #149 (revivals in the first thousand years of the church) and #151 (revivals through the First and Second Great Awakenings), consider this: What differences do you see in how people responded to the Spirit in those two eras and in the last century or so? How did Francis of Assisi differ from George Whitefield or Evan Roberts or Aimee Semple McPherson? How were they similar?
3. On page 8, Michael McClymond asks, “Does the vitality of a religious revival come directly from God, apart from human efforts, or is revival fervor channeled through the human efforts of preachers or seekers?” How would you answer?
4. In what ways is prayer important in revival? Does it truly pave the way for the Spirit’s activities? How?
5. We often think of revivals erupting in praise and worship. But, based on the Moravian experience (pp. 10–12) and the creation of mission societies in the early 1800s (pp. 14–16), should we expand our idea of revival to include evangelism, missions, and people-helping ministries? Why or why not?
6. The Businessmen’s Revival (p. 17) started with an innovative idea: a non-Sunday, nonpreaching prayer gathering for people who worked in the area but didn’t live there. What innovative ways could your local church use to reach a new group of people?

LOCALLY LED Revivals often energize and equip local leaders while challenging colonial missions methods. Here the father of revivalist John Sung (see p. 41) leads a small group of Chinese believers.

7. Some revivals in this era have fallen into personality worship, or come close to it. Is this an inevitable danger? How can Christians guard against it? How can leaders prevent it?
8. Keeping the danger of personality worship in mind, were there any personalities in this issue that you found especially interesting? Why?
9. In various times and places, revivals have sparked a seemingly uncontrollable “holy laughter” (p. 37; pp. 48–51). How do you feel about this? Is it an appropriate way to respond to the Spirit’s activity? Why or why not?
10. Revival often breaks out in times of national crisis. How does economic or political uncertainty prepare people for a new interaction with God?
11. In Africa, Argentina, Korea, and China, spiritual awakenings helped churches develop indigenous leadership, not just relying on Western missionaries to set their course. How does revival spark independence from old systems?
12. To a remarkable degree, the Azusa Street Revival (pp. 18–22) demonstrated racial equality. How much did that help or hurt the movement? How important might it be for churches today to commit to racial equality?
13. Did you learn anything new while reading about the different streams of Pentecostalism (pp. 48–51)? How did that enhance your understanding of these movements?
14. George Otis Jr. talked about how the spiritual awakening on Fiji extended to the environment—God “healed the land” in various ways (pp. 53–57). What do you think about this? Why would God do this? How would it affect the people in that area?
15. In most, if not all, of the movements described in this issue, there was conflict. People objected. Churches split. Both sides assumed they were speaking on God’s behalf. What do you think the Spirit of God would tell us today about dealing with other Christians we disagree with? **GH**

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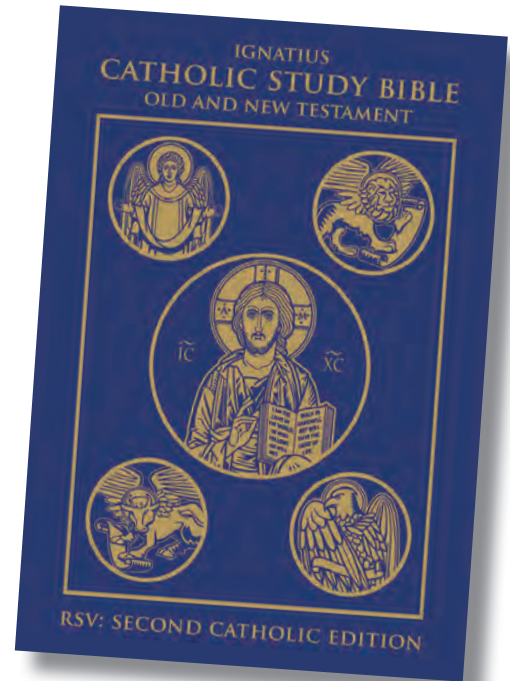
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