



April 2021

Dear AWR Friend,

The naysayers said it couldn't be done, but God said, "Wait and see!"

Today I woke up at 3 a.m. thinking about Adventist World Radio and what God has done through this ministry over the past 50 years. It's unbelievable!

When H. M. S. Richards, Sr., began broadcasting, he was told, "It can't be done. It won't work here. It has never been done before!" But it worked! He then had a dream to broadcast on shortwave radio around the world, but naysayers said, "It can't be done!"

Soon after that, Andrea and Allen Steele were told the same thing when they packed their belongings and headed to Portugal to broadcast into the Communist bloc—but despite naysayers, it worked!

That was in 1971, and from Portugal they went to Guam to broadcast to one-third of the world. It worked! It's still working, and we're still expanding 50 years later. Today our broadcasts can be heard not only in the 10/40 window, but in almost every country of the world.

Kathy and I have been in the Lord's work for 50 years, and that's one of the reasons AWR's 50th anniversary this year holds such significance for us. I can't tell you how many times throughout our ministry we were told, "It can't be done!" "It won't work here!" or "There are only so many Adventist dollars." But God has always come through—because that's what He does!

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

I first saw this in the Kasai, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire). Missionaries had worked and prayed for 20 years, and after all that time, there were just 300 members—one church, one school and one dispensary. They thought, "It doesn't work here!"

Then the government passed a law restricting independent churches and requiring that they join an established church. We were miraculously one of the 33 legally authorized churches. The people came in droves to learn about the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Before long, we had 100,000 baptized members! (For more, see the President's Letter from May 2018 on our website.)

Today, AWR has 1,000 radio stations and more than 100 studios producing programs in over 130 languages, in spite of the fact that all along there were those who said, "There's not enough money, it can't be done, and it won't work!"

AWR
50
YEARS
OF MINISTRY



Andrea and Allen Steele in Guam during the early days of AWR.



Point your phone's camera here for the May 2018 letter.

But that's not all, because just a few years ago, we added a new slogan: **AWR360° Broadcast to Baptism**. This means we're no longer just up in the air hovering around, but boots on the ground, leading people from the listening experience to a decision for Jesus.

AWR continues to push back the tide of naysayers as we broadcast around this "Old Ball of Mud"—and God continues to make it happen! Let me share just a few of the highlights:

- Radio towers and stations are being set up around the world, including Paris, London, Kinshasa, Kigali and Nairobi.
- In Rwanda, two new towers are being erected to cover the whole country, where more than 100,000 people were baptized through Total Member Involvement (TMI). We continue to partner with TMI for major evangelistic events.
- Cell phone evangelism is booming, with more than 200,000 people listening weekly.
- In Zambia we were told, "You can't do evangelism in the winter. People won't come!" But we did it anyway, holding AWR/TMI meetings throughout the country, with 1,000 in Lusaka alone. God blessed us with nearly 18,000 baptisms.
- In Eastern Europe, AWR/TMI events were held in Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova. In these last two countries, just a few months ago, more than 100,000 people watched our AWR evangelistic meetings held by local pastors on YouTube and Zoom.
- We can't forget Mindoro, Philippines, where after four years of broadcasting and "boots on the ground," a 50-year war is coming to an end as rebels from the New People's Army are laying down their AK-47s and being baptized!
- Our *Unlocking Bible Prophecies* evangelistic series with Cami Oetman can be seen on YouTube in dozens of languages. It has received an incredible 7 million views this past year, with 1.5 million in Russia alone! Watch now at awr.org/bible.
- I just finished a major YouTube series titled *Earth's Final Countdown*, which is already nearing 1 million views and can be streamed anytime at awr.org/countdown.

The list goes on, with radio stations, evangelism training centers and studios in Israel, Nepal, Bhutan, South America, Inter-America, the South Pacific and many more. Our goal is to reach as many people as possible, especially in the hard-to-reach places of the world like North Korea and other countries closed to the preaching of the gospel.

If I have learned anything in the last 50 years, it's that we may go forth and share the message, but it is God's Spirit who works the miracles in people's hearts. Let me share an amazing story we just received from Venezuela, an extremely challenging country right now, but a place where God's Spirit is working like never before.



A small group of AWR listeners studies the Bible together in a remote village in Afghanistan.

THE FORTUNE TELLER'S STORY

Carmen was a highly prized fortune teller—a medium who channeled spirits and was very good at predicting people's futures. Her appointment slots filled up daily as people sought her counsel on all matters of the heart, family and finances.

One day, someone began sending her cell phone messages through WhatsApp, and these programs talked about things she'd never heard before. This was none other than AWR's *Unlocking Bible Prophecies* series with Cami Oetman. Carmen watched the presentations with interest, but her job kept her so busy that she didn't dwell on them long.

Then something odd began to happen. Carmen found that she had difficulty channeling the spirits. Then another scary symptom appeared—she couldn't predict people's futures anymore! This rattled her and she found herself having to fake her predictions and the supposed messages from the spirits. She couldn't understand it! This went on for a few days until it struck her that the change must be due to those messages she was receiving!

In a fit of anger, she threw down her cell phone and it skidded to a corner of the room. "I'm done with this!" she cried. "These messages are interfering with my channeling!"

But she had a problem: people texted her to request appointments, so she needed her cell phone. Reluctantly, she picked up her phone, and just then, a message popped up from the cell phone evangelist who was sending her the presentations. It was a message of encouragement.

Carmen was so annoyed at this that she tried to swipe the message off her screen, but it wouldn't budge. No matter how hard she tried, it stayed on her screen until she was finally forced to read it before she could delete it!

Every time she received text messages from her clients, she would pick up the phone, but if a sermon came on her screen, she couldn't get to her messages until she'd watched the whole presentation!

Carmen continued to schedule appointments and fake the channeling, but she was terrified of getting caught. Finally, she decided to set aside some time, sit down, and listen to all of the presentations together, from beginning to end. She needed to find out what power they held that was more powerful than that of the spirits.

As she listened to the presentations, her heart was stirred by new feelings she'd never experienced before. She was drawn to Jesus by forces more powerful than those of the spirits she knew so well. By the time she finished watching the presentations, she knew what she had to do. The words of Jesus uttered more than 2,000 years ago were fulfilled in Carmen when He said, "When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all people to myself." (John 12:32)

Carmen called her clients one by one and told them she would no longer work with them. She could no longer practice divination or palm reading—no longer read tea leaves or use Tarot cards.



As a medium, Carmen used the powers of darkness to predict people's futures and tell their fortunes.



She had not yet received full Bible instruction on these subjects, but she understood there were two very different spirits at work: the Spirit of God and the spirit of darkness, and they were incompatible.

Carmen contacted the cell phone evangelist who had been sending her the messages, and he invited her to an in-depth Bible study. She accepted Jesus as her Savior and gave her life to Him. Just a few weeks ago, Carmen was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. "I feel a joy in my heart I have never felt before," she said. "Jesus is now my Friend, and His Spirit is the only one I channel now."

ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE!

This past year has been one of challenges, but also of incredible opportunities as people search for answers to satisfy the needs of their souls. They want to hear the clear Word of God and understand the whys of suffering and pain—and we have the answer!

But if there were ever a year when the world said, "It can't be done!" it was this past year. And they were right—if we'd gone it alone. Jesus said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." (Matthew 19:26)

That's exactly what has been happening. Amid the lockdown, God's Spirit continues to work as radio waves, the internet and phone signals beam God's Word uninterrupted around the world. For several weeks now, we've been receiving thrilling reports from places in Africa, South America, Russia, Bhutan, Europe—and even the Middle East! People are listening to God's Word and making life-changing decisions for eternity like never before. I can't wait to see what God will do this year!

But we also know that we couldn't do what we do without your support. You're a part of God's plan to help make a difference in the world. That's why I want to say thank you for your prayers and financial support of Adventist World Radio. It's what makes the miracles possible. Only in eternity will we fully understand the impact of a life dedicated to the service of God.

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Duane McKey".

Duane McKey
President



P.S. The story of Carmen the fortune teller is just a sample of what God is doing even under the most adverse conditions. Naysayers may doubt, but with God's Spirit, all things are possible! Thank you for making such a significant difference in so many lives around the world.

