



February 2022

Dear AWR Friend,

Returning from our 10-year stint in the mission field in Africa, I was called to pastor the church in Pendleton, Oregon. The town was the headquarters of the Harris Pine Mills, and six months after we arrived, the company went bankrupt.

It was a devastating blow for the church. Of our 24 elders, 21 worked at the factory, and as a result of the closure, our congregation was decimated as people struggled or left to find work elsewhere.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Some time passed, and as 1992 rolled around, one Friday morning I was walking in the park near our home when the thought came to me: why not pray for 92 baptisms for '92? The next morning, I mentioned the idea to the church, and they loved it!

But by Sunday morning, I was regretting it. This was a town of just 14,000 people, and such a thing had never been done before. "Duane," I said to myself, "what have you gotten yourself into? This is kinda nuts and it's never gonna happen!"

The thing is, by now I had learned that God loves to exceed our expectations. I had not forgotten the miracle in the Congo when almost overnight, our little Lulengele Mission had grown from 300 members in 20 years to 100,000 in a comparatively short time (see the letter from May 2018). But would God do the same in America?

I started praying about it, and so did the church. The members had taken the challenge to heart, and they trusted that God would reward their efforts. Sure enough, by the end of the year, 93 people had been baptized! We were so excited, and the whole church worked hard to keep them. The next year, of the 93 who had been baptized, 89 were active and attending church on a regular basis. We learned that it's harder to keep them than to baptize them—but we loved the challenge!

That experience taught me something about prayer and faith in God. Not my prayers or my faith—but the prayers and faith of the whole church working together for the salvation of others—that's the best faith of all, and God loves to reward it beyond all expectations!

THE IMPOSSIBLE PRAYER

Turn the clock forward a few more years to 2016, and we were in Rwanda to hold multiple-site evangelistic meetings. The churches throughout this tiny country the size of Maryland united to pray for 100,000 baptisms!

AWR
50
YEARS
OF MINISTRY



Could a church like Pendleton possibly hope for 92 baptisms in a small town like theirs?



During AWR/TMI's 2016 evangelistic efforts in Rwanda, more than 100,000 were baptized.

This had never been done before, and I must confess I entertained some doubts. We would do our part and preach, but to expect so many baptisms from an evangelistic series was unrealistic!

But by the time the month was over and our evangelistic series had concluded, the goal had not only been reached, but surpassed!

People often question big numbers and wonder how many of those baptized really remain in the church. A year later, part of our Rwanda team returned to the country, and they discovered something encouraging. More than 85% of those baptized were still in church! They had been put to work building their own churches and organizing their own choirs, and most of them were thriving!

EXCEEDINGLY ABUNDANTLY!

Now fast-forward to 2021 on the island of Mindoro, Philippines, where we witnessed thousands being baptized. You probably saw the video clips where Elder Wilson, myself and many others baptized the Former Rebels and assassins. It was thrilling to see the change in their lives.

The question many asked was: “Will they stay in the church?” We had a plan to help them begin a new life and earn a living through respectable means. They were no longer assassins, but Former Rebels who are now called Fully Reconciled (FRs). I shared with you the amazing plan of their reintegration into society. But what about their spiritual well-being going forward?

A couple of days after the big baptism in November, their focus became “each one reach one.” They decided amongst themselves that each of them would lead someone to Jesus so that by Christmas, they would have 700 more ready for baptism. They took this to heart, and said, “You come back after Christmas and we pledge by God’s grace that we will have 700 more ready for baptism!”

Well, as impossible as it may seem, last week I received a note from Pastor Robert Dulay, our AWR coordinator on the island. He said, “You won’t believe this, but there are 700 more Former Rebels in the mountains who have given their hearts to Jesus because of the 700 converted assassins who witnessed to them. They used the projectors and materials we left with them and they have been preaching and holding meetings—and they just notified me they’ve reached their goal for 2022!”

He was right—I couldn’t believe it! We had just begun the planning process to build them new church buildings—and they’d already doubled their number! They’re on fire for Jesus. They were once communist rebel assassins, knowing nothing about the grace of God and His love. But once they understood they could find forgiveness at the cross, their gratitude knew no bounds, and their joy could not be silenced.

We are now working with them so that each Former Rebel village will soon have a church building where they can gather and worship together. As I mentioned in a prior letter, the cost per building is \$5,000, and many of you have joined us in providing funding. I can’t wait to share with you the pictures of these precious FRs—Fully Reconciled men and women worshipping together in their new church buildings! Please keep this project in your prayers.



Each of the 700 Former Rebels who were baptized committed to reaching another soul for Jesus.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

I can't wait to see what God will do in the coming months of 2022!

We have some exciting plans for this year and we're moving forward by faith as God opens doors. We'll be targeting some of the most difficult areas to reach, including the Middle East and North Korea, Mindanao, Bangladesh and Pakistan, plus the major cities of the world—including some right here in America!

It's been more than a year since we first aired our AWR series *Unlocking Bible Prophecies* with Cami Oetman, and already more than 15 million people have viewed the series—and the testimonies continue to pour in!

The good news is, Cami is working on releasing a second series later this year, and I can't wait to share it with you! Please pray for her and for the team as they prepare to record this exciting new series.

Cami Oetman, AWR's vice president for advancement, is busy preparing a follow-up series to be released later this year.

MIRACLE IN MALIBU

We have so much to share from around the world, and such limited space, that I never manage to cover everything. But let me share a story from one of our volunteer AWR Ambassadors. They have one of the best jobs in the world: to share with others the miracles God is working through AWR. That's it—just share the stories! You may have met one of them at your local church, because we feel that if God is working through AWR, we have to share the miracles!

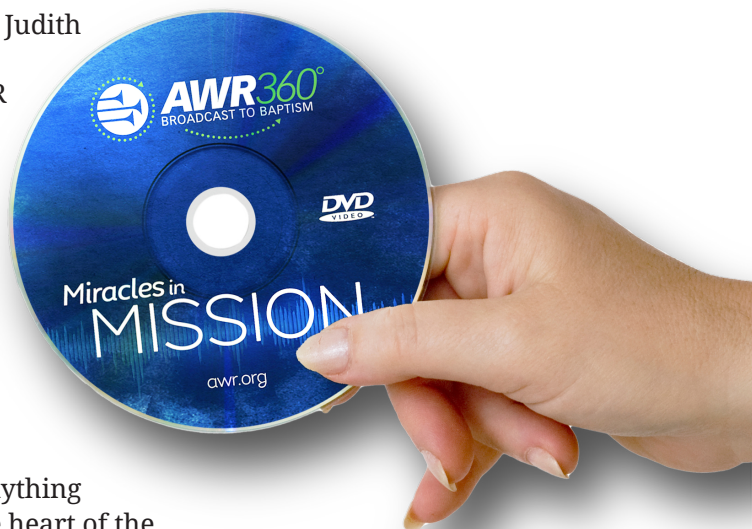
Often, we may think that miracles only happen in the mission field—in the remote corners of the world—so let me share one Ambassador's story right here in America:

It was a beautiful morning in Malibu, California, when Judith went with some members from the Malibu Adventist Church to canvass the neighborhood and pass out AWR DVDs with some of our miracle stories.

They were in a Malibu shopping center when Judith and her friends noticed two ladies sitting on a bench. One of the church members approached one of them and said, "Good morning. I just felt impressed to come up and say that God loves you so much and He's coming soon! Oh, and by the way, not sure if you know this, but the true day of worship is Saturday, according to the Bible."

How is that for an opener? But you know, God takes anything we do with a sincere heart, and His Spirit works on the heart of the receiver. What happened next surprised everyone.

The lady's eyes grew wide, and she brought her hand up to her chest as she exclaimed, "Are you Seventh-day Adventists?"



“Yes,” Judith and her friends replied. Then the lady told them the following story:

“I’m from San Diego, and I drove all the way up here for the weekend to get away and have some peace. Oh, I just wanted a little peace, I’ve been searching for peace—I want to find it so badly!”

Judith and her friends were astounded. Then the lady asked, “Where is your church?” And after the ladies gave her the address, she said, “I’ve been a backslider for more than 20 years and God found me here in Malibu. I want to come back to God and join the Malibu Adventist Church!”

Wow! When I heard this story, I knew I had to share it with you, because it proves once again that when we venture out and do something for Jesus, God’s Spirit is there! It doesn’t matter whether it’s in Rwanda, Mindoro or America! But nothing will happen if we do nothing. We have to give God a chance, and when we do, He will exceed our expectations!



THE GREATEST JOY

It has been said that the ground at the foot of the cross is level. We’re all equally sinners—all of us are Former Rebels needing forgiveness that can only be found at the feet of Jesus. And He has promised that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us, whether it’s the rebels in Mindoro, or a searching soul in Malibu, God will work a miracle when we come to the cross.

Nothing compares to the joy of leading others to Jesus and seeing a soul saved for God’s kingdom. When we do this—when we show others the way—we are cooperating not only with the angels, but with all of heaven itself. What a privilege!

Thank you for partnering with us in this adventure of faith. We appreciate so much the outpouring of support for the church buildings in Mindoro. It’s making a real difference. It proves once again that when we pray and work together, amazing miracles happen!

Yours in the Blessed Hope,

Duane McKey
President



P.S. God’s Spirit is at work everywhere, not only in the far-away places of the world, but right here in America! His grace and mercy can reach the rebels in Mindoro and a searching soul in Malibu, as well as work with all who want to do something for Jesus. Thank you for being a part of these stories—for your prayers and support that encourage and bless so many people around the world. Jesus is coming soon—and that’s the story that tops them all!