The Storm

It was a hot, sunny day in the Meghalaya hills Springs of Love school in India. Lois and Bill were just unpacking their belongings after arriving the day before, after a 22 hour train and car trip up from Springs of Life School in Kolkata. Some of the students were working outside planting things in the garden and others were working on the buildings. The 153 grade-school day-students were not attending school on this day because of the Puja holiday. Bill’s attention was drawn to the sound of thunder some distance away...

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!
“The new year is just before us, and plans should be laid for earnest, persevering effort in the Master’s service. There is much to be done to advance the work of God.”

_The Colporteur Evangelist_

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.” — John 1:4
The Storm

It was a hot, sunny and bright day in the Meghalaya hills school Springs of Love in India. Lois and Bill were just unpacking their belongings after arriving the day before, after a 22 hour train and car trip up from Springs of Life School in Kolkata. Some of the students were working outside planting things in the garden and others were working on the buildings. The 153 grade-school day-students were not attending school on this day because of the Puja holiday.

Bill’s attention was drawn to the sound of thunder some distance away, but looking out the window there was only blue sky so he didn’t pay much attention to it, as there are often rain showers at this time of year in the Meghalayan Hills. There was only a slight breeze to lend comfort from the humid hot temperatures.

The sound of the thunder drew closer but still not paying any extra attention to it Bill and Lois continued to put their things away. They had been living in a one room bamboo house with a mud floor for the last one-and-a-half years so they were enjoying planning how their small new room in the newly finished girl’s dorm building should be arranged to accommodate their things.

Suddenly a gust of wind hit the building with such force that the tin, which had been placed temporarily over the eve window until glass could be installed, was ripped off. There was a fierce roar as the wind slammed into the building, the sudden rain, coming down in sheets was carried by the wind across the whole room even though the opening was not very large.

Bill and Lois grabbed their computers and ran into the toilet room and hid behind the door. The storm raged for nearly an hour with extreme winds and what seemed like hundreds of lightning strikes all around the building. As they watched all of their belongings being drenched in rain, they prayed earnestly that God would protect all of the students, staff and buildings on the campus.

The storm stopped as quickly as it had begun and everyone ran outside to see what had happened and to see if all of the others had made it to safety. They met in the yard in front of the girl’s dorm building and praised God; miraculously, everyone had been able to make it to shelter from the storm in the only concrete and steel building. This building was undamaged but as they took survey of the bamboo housing, including the newly built bamboo grade school, their hearts were saddened by the destruction that met their eyes. Thankfully there had been no students attending school that day for it was totally destroyed. Only one other bamboo house was left standing but had also been severely damaged.

The question now is how to move forward so that school for the children can start again soon and the staff have enough living space. The cost of replacing the buildings, although they were only bamboo is quite high and finances are very tight at this time. They are planning on building safer, cement and metal buildings, as soon as the Lord provides the funding for this.

The question may now be how to move on but MOVE ON they will. They know that they are not wrestling against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against (dark) powers,…(Ephesians 6:12). They also know just as assuredly that He that hath made heaven and earth, the seas and all that in them is has said, “All authority has been..."
given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen (Matthew 28:18-20) So they are pressing on, knowing that they are under His protection and direction, praising God through all things.
Rising Above

A Report from OCI/ASI Ministries in Ukraine, by Naomi Jackson

Adversity brings out the best and worst in people. Since November 2013, a crisis has been brewing in Eastern Europe. Ukraine in particular has been ripped apart by conflict.

ASI member, Outpost Centers International (OCI), is headquartered a world away in Tennessee. From there it assists its family of supporting ministries around the world. And though it is far from the current unrest, four OCI/ASI member organizations are located in war-torn Ukraine.

Our Home Lifestyle Center and School, Ukraine’s flagship institution for supporting ministry, is located in the west, some distance from the combat zone. Though it continues to function, the lifestyle center has taken a strong financial blow.

Zuevka, a smaller health ministry located in the heart of the eastern war zone has suffered extensive structural damage to their facilities. Its director lost a family member in the violence. The turmoil so close at hand has forced them to close the center and relocate to Russia, where the team hopes to continue their mission work.

Rising Above
But in the midst of a dangerous situation, hope flourishes. Two other ministries located in the east and south are rising above these hardships with God’s intervention.

New Life Health Center was the first Adventist wellness center established after the fall of the former Soviet Union. It acquired a diverse clientele from Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Germany, and Israel, as well as Ukraine. But as political instability rocked the country, their lifestyle guest attendance drastically decreased. Not to be discouraged, the team saw this as an opportunity to work with a different demographic—refugees.

New Life began welcoming refugees headed south, fleeing the eastern region of Ukraine. In August a family of four from Donetsk participated in the New Life rehabilitation program, also taking time to attend the campus church. The family continues to worship with Adventists on Sabbath. The next month a group of 15 refugees took part in an 11-day lifestyle program at New Life. Church members and aid workers from Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) reached out to the refugees after they completed the program, and many are currently receiving Bible studies. Eventually, a refugee family from Lugansk joined the New Life staff.

As New Life’s team presses together in these difficult times, they have found a new sense of unity. They have not only become a home for displaced people, they have grown into a tight knit family of faith as they minister through health evangelism.

Change of Plans
Aidar Lifestyle Center has been under construction in the Lugansk region since 2008. Beginning with two outpatient clinics and a health club, they also conducted health camps and offered medical missionary training throughout the year. In addition, the team provided health education in local churches.

Through all their activities, the team at Aidar had a bigger goal: to open a lifestyle center. Finally a date was set and excitement rose as June 1, 2014, approached. But the anticipated moment never came. Opening day was replaced...
by war.

Aidar was faced with an unexpected change of plans. Lack of finances, limitations in transportation, and artillery fire forced them to rethink their strategy. Both clinics had to close, while the health club and health expos became impossible to conduct. Traveling was a challenge and organizing any kind of public meeting posed a potential threat to hosts and participants. But the team didn’t skip a beat as God led them in a different direction.

Aidar’s staff put their energy to good use by teaming up with ADRA to serve the needs of the poor and destitute in their war-torn area. Despite rugged terrain and thick forests, they have distributed more than 2,000 boxes of food, clothing, and Christian literature. Not even gunfire overhead deters these intrepid missionaries. As they faithfully go about their work, the Holy Spirit weaves His way into the hearts of their neighbors.

**Wrestle On**

Despite the war God’s work in Ukraine carries on. These OCI ministries have learned that they “do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12).

Human beings may not have control over regional politics, but God has equipped His missionaries in Ukraine with His armor to fight the spiritual adversity around them. Funds are scarce, and workers are facing a frigid winter without their usual resources of coal or natural gas. Yet daily they are being given divine strength to keep up the fight.
Speaking in Tongues: Connecting with the Online Mission Field

By Ed Wagner

I am amazed by how rapidly our methods of communicating are changing—especially in the internet marketplace.

Twenty-five years ago few of us were acquainted with the Internet. Today, communicating online has become incredibly popular. Most of us take it for granted. If you use email or Facebook, you know what I mean.

In fact the Internet has become, arguably, the world’s largest mission field. It’s staggering to realize that billions of people across the globe, even in undeveloped countries, are searching online for information about everything—including answers to their spiritual questions. It’s a larger, more easily reached mission field than the world has ever known; it’s literally at our fingertips! Could it be that Christ is calling many of us to become “online missionaries” for Him?

These thoughts most often come to my attention while traveling and using the internet to locate Adventist churches. I found something that disturbed me: Adventist churches do not show in Google search results unless the words “Adventist” or “SDA” are entered. For a non-Adventist seeking a local “church” online, Seventh-day Adventist churches were practically invisible.

This discovery led me to ask, Who was working on this?

I made a lot of phone calls, thinking that surely someone must be paying attention. Surprisingly, no one seemed to know what I was talking about. People were building Adventist websites—many of them exceptional sites—but they did not understand how to make them visible so others could find them. No one was promoting Adventist churches or websites to make them easily accessible to people who are seeking the very things our churches and schools offer.

When I presented my findings at an Adventist conference about the need for improved visibility, I sensed plenty of interest. I asked who could take this on and got two responses: First, there was no budget for it. Second, there was no staff with the right expertise.

That’s when I began to realize that a new organization of online missionaries might be needed to help our churches and schools connect more effectively with seekers online. At that time, it was not my goal to start such an
organization, but I continued to discuss this need with other people and organizations.

When I finally decided this could wait no longer, Good News Advocates was born in 2012. Our biggest start-up challenge was getting the word out about our free services that can transform any website into a life-changing mission outpost.

Today we work closely with Adventist Church Connect. As word has spread, we have so many projects, it's difficult to do everything churches and schools would like us to do. So we're recruiting more online missionaries and seeking additional funding to support our online mission projects.

Growing recognition of the value of our work is good news. Millions are asking spiritual questions via the internet. As they "Google" for answers, more and more they'll be able to find the three-angels' message of salvation and a soon-coming Savior.

There is indeed a powerful new way to communicate, a new way to "tell it to the world" in every language. Good News Advocates is here to help.
Project Report: Out of Weakness - Strength!

It has been an ASI story from the beginning—a story of God’s grace, God’s leading, God’s miracle working power! Around the year 2000, the ASI Southern Union Chapter promoted the concept of low power radio at its convention in Cohutta Springs, Georgia. Under that inspiration, WJNU-LP (With Jesus N’ You), 96.9 FM, was born in Algood, Tennessee.

While the station was a blessing, the weakness of the signal strength was a bit disheartening. Oh, if only we could have a strong, reliable signal to take the Good News of God’s love and Jesus’ soon return to the searching people of our rural Tennessee communities! But out of weakness, God brought strength. This low power station became a springboard to launch us deeper into our faith journey.

An opportunity came to apply for a license for a full power station located near Livingston, Tennessee. What important lessons in faith God began to teach us! Our application was denied by the FCC, and our board voted to cut our losses and kill the project. But God rebuked our lack of faith, brought us through a reversal of the board vote, moved us through a series of legal maneuvers, and finally allowed the FCC to grant us a license to construct a 6000-watt FM station.

FCC approval was granted on September 1, 2011, with the stipulation that our station must be on the air by September 1, 2014. Thus began another lap in the journey of faith. With very little cash on hand to proceed with an $80-90,000 project or with extremely difficult negotiations for a tower site, God made dry paths through the sea for us again and again.

By God’s grace and miracle working power alone, a new, full power FM station was born on September 1, 2014. With the generous support (a $25,000 grant) and encouragement of the Southern Union ASI, we, His feeble human instruments, currently broadcast the truth of God’s Word 24/7 to the Cumberland Plateau in upper East Tennessee!

So if you happen to be travelling on I-40 or State Highway 111 in the neighborhood of Cookeville, Tennessee, turn your radio dial to 89.1 FM and enjoy the strong, clear voice of truth from WOCG—Worshipping Our Creator God! And while you’re listening, send up one more praise to Him for the miracle of His grace! Better yet, stop in and see us. We’d love to fill you in on all the glorious details of God’s miracles for His people here in Tennessee. Because in the telling, our faith and love for our Creator God – the One Who will come soon in glory—is kindled and rekindled again! Maranatha!