



Deep Roots

*AGRM celebrates 100 years of serving those in need and hope
with compassion and the gospel of Christ*



ASSOCIATION OF GOSPEL
rescuemissions

The History We Celebrate

“Rich and poor
have this
in common:
The Lord
is the Maker
of them all.”

—Proverbs 22:2

An Association with Deep Roots

One of the best summaries of the founding of the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM)—actually, the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM), as it was originally known—is found in the First Annual Report of the association, published and distributed at the second annual convention in 1915, in Norfolk, Virginia. Here is how they described it back then.

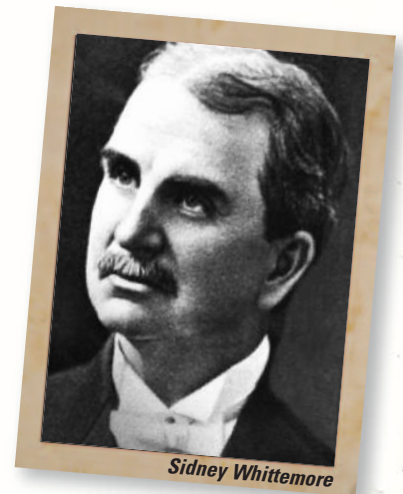
So It Begins

On September 17th, 1913, the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM) was formed for the purpose of furthering the interests and increasing the effectiveness of gospel missions. In this, the first report of the work, it is the desire of the president and officers to acquaint the Christian public with the growth and importance of this organization.

It is a well-established fact that unity means strength, and rescue work has developed to such an extent it seemed imperative for the rescue missions to band together in such a way as to let the world know they are doing something worthwhile for the Master.

A Friend of Sinners

The IUGM was conceived in the mind of one of the most consecrated men of God that New York, or any other city, has ever known, Mr. Sidney Whittemore. It was he who gathered together a number of representative mission workers in September 1913, and unfolded to them his plans and ambition for such a union. His earnestness could not fail to impress those he had gathered around him, and the result was the birth of the above named organization with Mr. Whittemore as the chosen president.*



Great things were looked forward to under this good man's leadership, and it was not only a shock, but something far beyond our understanding, when, almost without warning, God took him unto Himself. It seemed as though we could not spare him—there was so much for him to do, and he was so eminently fitted for the work. But while God removes His workmen, He raises up others to take their places so that His work may continue to

*From the founding of the IUGM until May 2009, *president* was the title given to the volunteer who chaired the executive committee (later called the board), usually in addition to running a mission. This person, who served as the spiritual and philosophical leader, was the face of the association. As the association became more complex (circa the 1980s and 1990s) the executive director began to share, and then eventually take over, some of the major leadership responsibilities.



His glory, and, although broken-hearted at the time, dear Mrs. Whittemore very nobly took up the work which was so dear to her husband's heart, and filled his unexpired term** until the first annual business meeting in May 1914, when she was unanimously elected to fill that office.

A personal reference to the founder of this organization seems a most fitting thing in this report. It is quite an unusual thing for a wealthy, refined gentleman like Mr. Whittemore to give so much time in the interests of rescue missions, and yet this fact is easily explained when we learn that it was in such a mission he was led to renew his covenant with God. It was during the early days of the McAuley Water Street Mission that Mr. and Mrs. Whittemore made their way down to the little old dance hall that had been converted into a mission. They had both been members of a church since childhood, and thought they were all right, and it was with the intention of helping Jerry McAuley that they went down there. They were not in the meeting long, however, before Jerry made it very clear to them that they were what he termed "kid-glove Christians" and that they needed "another dip." Before the meeting closed he had them on their knees at the penitent form, repeating the same prayer the poor drunkard repeated at their side, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," and then Jerry added: "Put in, 'For Jesus' sake.'"

Jerry could not see into the future, nor did Mr. and Mrs. Whittemore realize that night what that step would mean to them, but eternity alone will reveal what great things God hath wrought through these

**Other records show that the IUGM Vice President John Hallimond officially stepped in as president upon Sidney Whittemore's death. Hallimond served until May 1915, and at that year's annual meeting, Emma Whittemore was elected president. She served until 1918.



Emma Whittemore



Gospel Wagon of Union Rescue Mission (Los Angeles), circa 1907

The History We Celebrate *continued*

*"Whoever
oppresses the
poor shows
contempt for
their Maker,
but whoever
is kind to
the needy
honors God."*

—Proverbs 14:31

An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

consecrated people. Mrs. Whittemore has been the instrument in God's hands in establishing eighty homes for fallen women all over this country, which are known as "The Door of Hope."

Mr. Whittemore spent many years in active church work, and was deeply interested in every project for the extension of church work, and whatever tended to broaden its scope of general usefulness. At different periods he was elder in the Madison Avenue Reformed Church, the North Presbyterian Church, and the Harlem Presbyterian Church, all in New York City.

He was a man beloved by all because of his consistent life, his love for the lost, and his wonderfully simple but strong faith in his Savior. At his funeral service, his pastor, Rev. John Henry Jowett, M.A., very beautifully remarked that what was said of our Savior could be said of Mr. Whittemore: "He was a friend of sinners."

Conclusion of First Annual Report

We're of Scottish Descent



IN THE MEMORY OF
DAVID NASMITH,
FOUNDER OF CITY MISSION
BORN AT GLASGOW
DIED AT GUILDFORD NOV. 17TH 1864
IN HIS 41ST YEAR

In 1826, David Nasmyth, a native of Glasgow, Scotland, had a vision for pioneering a method of Christian care that would meet people's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. He started Glasgow City Mission, essentially the world's first rescue mission.

Glasgow City Mission was an interdenominational lay movement. Founded at a time of great poverty and distress in Glasgow, it practiced and proclaimed the gospel among the city's poorest. The mission also devised creative partnerships with churches and civic agencies to provide spiritual and practical care for young people, juvenile and adult offenders, and the sick and needy.

Glasgow City Mission realized that to share the Christian message one had to help the whole person. The ministry responded to high illiteracy rates by being one of the first charities in the world to provide evening literacy classes for adults in the 1830s. They had an equal concern for young people and provided groundbreaking evening "Chimney Sweep Schools" for children who had to work to pay for their education.

As living standards in Glasgow improved, Glasgow City Mission was careful to meet the changing needs of the city. It always focused its work on supporting people who were on the very fringes of society.

Nasmyth went on to start city missions throughout the United Kingdom. From his model, the city mission movement spread around the world.



Children's program at Good Samaritan Mission (Newark), 1916



Waiting for a meal at McAuley Mission (New York City), 1913

The Early Years

One person who was very instrumental in the founding and stabilization of the IUGM was Clemme Ellis White. At the age of 17, she moved from her family's farm, upstate along the Hudson River, and made New York City her home. She went to teach school and study for a medical career.

Clemme Ellis became friends with Sidney and Emma Whittemore and soon started preaching the gospel one night a week at the Door of Hope Mission. While doing this, she heard the voice of God, gave up her plans for a medical career, and took charge of the West Side Gospel Mission in Manhattan's Theater District. She conducted open-air street meetings and preached the gospel in the mission's chapel services, all at a time when most young girls were steered away from that kind of Christian service.

One night, in a street meeting, her speaking attracted the attention of Harry C. White, a salesman who had strayed from God. He followed Clemme back to the mission. He made a commitment to Christ and eventually became the assistant superintendent of the mission. Somewhere along the way, he married Clemme.

Clemme Ellis White was elected secretary of the IUGM in 1919 and served as the only woman on the executive committee for thirty years. Even though there was an elected president of the association, some would argue that Clemme functioned as the first executive director. One early



Clemme Ellis White



The History We Celebrate *continued*

*“Learn to do right;
seek justice.
Defend the
oppressed. Take
up the cause of
the fatherless;
plead the case
of the widow.”*

—Isaiah 1:17

An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

association president commented that her office became the center of information regarding leadership vacancies, volunteer opportunities, new mission start-ups, and mission problems. She served the IUGM longer than any other person, and many believe her tact and wisdom during the early years saved the association from major problems and possibly failure.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Coming in Waves

History has had a way of sending waves of people into rescue missions. Returning World War I veterans started showing up in the 1920s, but the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States eventually slowed the flow of inebriated men through the front doors. One patriarch recalled that it was the only time in history when some missions closed their addiction recovery programs. A few even closed completely.

The Twenty-First Amendment, which repealed prohibition in 1933, started another huge wave. But it was not just the availability of alcohol that caused the influx; it was also the Great Depression that raised unemployment in the United States to 25 percent. No jobs meant no food and missed rent or mortgage payments. Families fell apart. Alcoholism

escalated. Missions filled. After waiting in long unemployment lines in the morning, men waited in long rescue mission lines in the afternoon, just to get something to eat and a place to stay.

World War II slowed the flow as much of the male population was fighting abroad or stationed in barracks at home. But following the fighting, despite the prosperity that North America was

realizing, rescue missions again started to see another wave. It didn't appear immediately, but grew steadily as veterans eventually slipped through the system.



1926 convention attendees and President Calvin Coolidge



1946 IUGM Convention attendees



The Evangelist of the Slums

If there was one man who could be considered the father of North America's rescue missions, it would be Jerry McAuley, an Irish immigrant who came of age in abject poverty on New York City's Lower East Side.

A hated and feared ruffian, McAuley's thievery, addictions, and rabble-rousing took him from regular stints in Manhattan jailhouses to a seven-year stretch in Sing Sing penitentiary. But it was there that he had a dramatic conversion, set in motion by a chapel service message from a former partner-in-crime turned preacher, Orville Gardner.

After his release, McAuley strayed from his newfound faith, but during a Spirit-filled prayer meeting, he came rushing back to the Lord. He began earnestly seeking His ways and preaching His Word throughout old haunts, including the infamous Five Points neighborhood. He married his former-prostitute girlfriend, Maria Fahy, whose own faith took root after witnessing Jerry's changed life. She soon joined him in ministry, seeking to convert women and girls in the local saloons and dance halls.

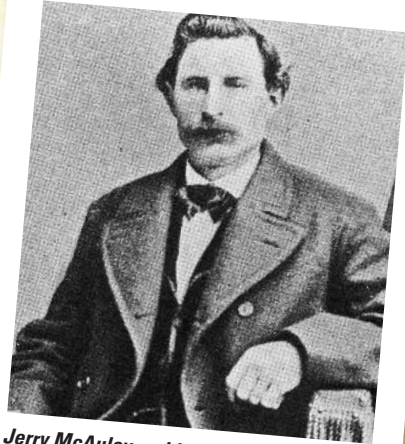
After working short terms at odd jobs, McAuley had a vision of what God wanted him to do: Jerry would find a place to bring derelict men. He would then "clean them up on the outside while Jesus cleaned them up on the inside."

He raised money by soliciting friends in the city and giving his testimony at camp meetings in New York and New Jersey. With the encouragement of a benefactor, Fredrick Hatch, the McAuleys took possession of a former bar and brothel at 316 Water Street on the Lower East Side, and used the money to fix and refurbish the place. In October 1872, they opened Helping Hand for Men, later known as Water Street Mission and McAuley Mission. Today, it is the New York City Rescue Mission.

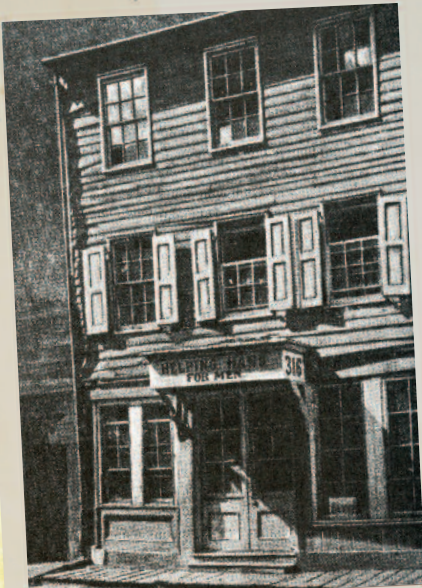
For the next twelve years, the McAuleys' words and actions were instrumental in countless thousands coming to faith in Christ. In all their endeavors, the tender love and acceptance they showed to the down-and-out won over many in the city.

During those years, Jerry and Maria also opened the Cremorne Mission at 104 West 32nd Street, right next to the Cremorne Garden, a saloon and dance hall. In time, using the McAuleys' models, other impassioned Christ-followers started similar missions to minister to destitute people in surrounding neighborhoods and eventually surrounding states. By the turn of the century, rescue mission ministry was spreading across the continent.

On a September afternoon in 1884, Jerry went to be with his Lord. His death was the result of tuberculosis he had contracted while in Sing Sing's deplorable conditions. It seemed that all of New York came to the open-casket funeral to see this unique man. To them, he was the Evangelist of the Slums; to us, he was the pioneer of rescue missions in North America.



Jerry McAuley on his wedding day in 1872



Helping Hands for Men at 316 Water Street

The History We Celebrate *continued*

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'"

—Matthew 25:40

An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

Bolstering the Association

After World War II, the IUGM executive committee tried to strengthen the effectiveness of the association through the appointment of a part-time field secretary. Peter Quartel of Dayton, Ohio, was the first. Quartel's efforts bore fruit, but for varying reasons, he was forced to discontinue his services. Others who undertook the responsibility were I. L. Eldridge, J. Arthur Schlichter, E. R. MacKinney, and Harry H. Hadley. In 1948, Rev. Chauncey Beeman was hired as a full-time field secretary and served one year. All of the field secretaries raised their own support to do the job.

In the mid 1950s, the executive committee was empowered to select a person to serve with the elevated title of executive secretary. This person would be asked to maintain an office, help with communications, promote rescue missions, and generally serve the president. Rev. Ernest Tippet, who had served as treasurer of the IUGM, became the first executive

The Need for an Association

The missions that were spreading across North America in the late 1800s, just like churches, differed considerably in form and doctrine. Churches recognized this and endorsed the missions they felt had the "correct" methodology and theology.

Then there was the problem of the numerous extremist-run and fad-driven missions—self-appointed varieties that no church would embrace because of their strange dogma, underhanded operations, or attempts to swindle the poor and the honest people who gathered around to help them. Such operations did great damage to the reputation of gospel missions and the cause of Christ.

Many church and mission leaders alike felt that a union of gospel missions was needed to bring accountability to this growing genus of ministry. So in 1906, the National Federation of Gospel Missions was founded in the offices of the *Christian Herald* in New York City. (The *Christian Herald* operated The Bowery Mission.) Its purpose was to provide oversight and foster fellowship and cooperation between gospel mission leaders.

The National Federation of Gospel Missions included the Salvation Army, which had spread to the United States from

England in the late 1870s. (Interestingly, the Salvation Army limited itself to gospel preaching and conversion early on. It did not open any food and lodging "depots" in the United States until 1891, after studying the operations of several gospel missions.) But this association did not function well since it represented what by this time had become two strong, well-organized movements.



District gathering of the National Federation of Gospel Missions, 1909

In 1913 the inevitable occurred: The National Federation of Gospel Missions was transmuted into the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM), sans the Salvation Army. Some saw this as largely a name change since the officers remained the same. Its president was Sidney Whittemore. Emma Whittemore was vice president. Other officers were Sarah Wray, the director of New York's Eighth Avenue Mission, and George H. Sandison, an editor of the *Christian Herald*.

Around this same time, another quasi-association called the Western Brotherhood was formed in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Mel Trotter, then superintendent of the City Mission in Grand Rapids (now Mel Trotter Ministries), was its president. It included about forty missions and a group of ministers. The Western Brotherhood was folded into the IUGM in 1923.



1963 IUGM convention attendees—50th Anniversary

secretary in 1957. Ernie served five years, maintaining the office in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Winona Lake, Indiana. His wife served as his office manager. Upon his resignation in 1962, Rev. Clifton E. Gregory, a former IUGM president, served on an interim basis while continuing to direct The City Mission in Cleveland, Ohio.

Rev. James B. Moellendick became executive secretary in the mid-1960s. He established a temporary office in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Mrs. Moellendick became the office manager. In 1966, James directed the move of the IUGM headquarters to Kansas City, Missouri, where City Union Mission provided office space. He resigned after five years of faithful service and great progress.

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

A Different Clientele with Different Needs

In the 1960s, there began a movement to do away with mental asylums in favor of more humane and less expensive community-based treatment programs. Aided by the introduction of new and improved psychotropic drugs, the plan was touted to be the modern solution for treating those with mental disorders and developmental disabilities. While bringing an end to asylum mayhem was a decent thing to do, this alternative plan didn't work as well as predicted; far too many people fell through the cracks and ended up on the streets. As a result, rescue missions had to expand their services to include the teaching of basic life skills.



In line at Bakersfield Rescue Mission (Bakersfield), circa 1969

The History We Celebrate *continued*

*"What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?
Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!"*

—Romans 7:24-25



An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

By the late 1960s, a pop culture of sex, drugs, and rock and roll increased the addiction possibilities. It also increased the number of women in need of services. The decade that followed saw the end of the Vietnam War with a plethora of homeless veterans coming to missions, many of which openly rejected traditional values and a Christian gospel.

Nevertheless, rescue missions pressed on, ministering to the physical needs—and now mental and emotional needs—of people, and introducing them to the message of the cross with its radical conversion power.

New Leaders, New Offices, New Perspective

A man with fifteen years of experience in rescue mission ministries, Rev. Emile Leger became executive secretary of the IUGM in May 1970. Following in the pattern of his predecessors, his wife served as office manager. Under his leadership, in 1971, the association purchased and moved into its own headquarters—a split-level house in Kansas City North, Missouri. The house was also to serve as a “parsonage” for the executive secretary. Emile, whose main contributions were to bring dignity and stature to the office and unify the members to substantially support the IUGM, resigned in 1974.

At the 1974 convention in Los Angeles, California, the delegates appointed Rev. William L. Wooley as executive secretary. Bill, as he was affectionately known, had served as superintendent of The Anchorage, a rescue mission in Albany, Georgia, and as both a president and later secretary-treasurer of the IUGM.

At the 1984 convention in Huntsville, Alabama, Lloyd Olson of Campus Crusade for Christ (now Cru) was commissioned to



1971 IUGM convention attendees

A Splendid Time Was Had by All

Here is a report to the membership about the very first annual convention of the International Union of Gospel Missions (IUGM).

It is the purpose of this organization to hold an annual convention in the month of May in a city to be agreed upon by a majority of the members present at the annual business meeting. The first of these was held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in May 1914, and it proved to be a rousing success.

As this is not to be a lengthy report we cannot go into detail about this first convention, but will just state that there were three sessions daily except Saturday, all of which were well-attended. Many men and women prominent in mission work all over the United States and Canada were heard from in these meetings.

We hear a great deal of talk about the old time fire and the old time religion, but there is no lack of the old time fire in a gathering of rescue mission workers, nor is there any need to pine for the old time religion—it is very evident that these people have not lost the faith of their fathers. Having been forgiven much, they love much, and they are not the least bit backward about giving vent to their feelings. They believe fully in the actual presence of Jesus Christ in the world today, and the assembling together of His coworkers always means a time of rejoicing. After listening to the inspiring testimonies of these men and women who have been so wonderfully saved, there isn't the slightest room for skepticism, for they know whereof they speak.

The welcome afforded the delegates by the citizens of Cedar Rapids was simply remarkable. They were all entertained in private homes and were a unit in their appreciation of the Christian spirit manifested by their hosts and hostesses.

A luncheon was given to the lady delegates in the First Christian Church by the ladies of the First Presbyterian Church, St. Paul's M. E. Church, Westminster Presbyterian Church, and the First Christian Church.

A tea was given to the lady delegates by the ladies of the First Baptist Church and the Central Park Presbyterian Church at the former. A banquet was given to the male delegates by the Cedar Rapids Commercial Club in the club rooms,

and a general reception given to all the delegates at the Sunshine Mission.

Saturday was sightseeing day. In the morning the delegates were taken on a trip to Iowa City, the home of the State University of Iowa, as the guests of the Iowa Railway & Light Company. In the afternoon a sufficient number of automobiles were placed at their disposal for a trip around the Cedar Rapids, to the parks and places of interest.

Almost every pastor in Cedar Rapids aided in some way to help make this convention a success, and special mention might be made of the mayor, Hon. Louis Roth; Rev. J. A. Marquis, D.D., president of Coe College; Mr. J. Wunderlich, secretary of the Commercial Club; Mr. R. S. Sinclair, president of the Sunshine



DELEGATES AT CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA, MAY, 1914

Mission; and last but not least, Rev. F. K. Ward, superintendent of Sunshine Mission, the man responsible for the convention being held in that city. While we congratulate him upon the success of it, we also congratulate him upon the splendid helpers he had.

At the business meeting, invitations were received from the following cities for the 1915 convention: New York City, through the Merchants Association; Buffalo, New York, through Major B. A. Arnold; Norfolk, Virginia, through Mr. H. H. Kratzig; Toledo, Ohio, through Mr. G. F. Spreng; and Portland, Oregon, through Rev. F. W. Davis. After considerable discussion it was agreed upon to accept the cordial invitation of Mr. H. H. Kratzig, superintendent of the Union Rescue Mission, Norfolk, Virginia, and hold the second annual convention in that city, May 16th to 21st, 1915.

The History We Celebrate *continued*

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!"

—2 Corinthians 5:17

An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

do a study of the rescue mission movement and to make recommendations for the future of rescue ministry and the IUGM. Titled "New Perspective," the report outlined a number of historic changes, including restructuring the office of executive secretary, plus creating a new track concept, a new membership system, and new constitution and bylaws. The concepts were adopted in Seattle in 1985, and the constitution and bylaw changes became reality in Houston in 1986. Two of the changes saw the title of executive secretary turn into executive director and the term *executive committee* turn into *board of trustees*.

The outcome was an organization that was better able to serve local ministries—one that was committed to creating new missions, education and training, and public awareness. Eight tracks—Urban Children and Youth Ministry, Development, Christian Addiction Rehabilitation Association, Employment and Education, Women and Family Ministry, Association of Christian Thrift Stores, Chaplains, and Volunteers—served those in specialized ministries.

During Wooley's fifteen years of outstanding service, the IUGM office staff increased from three to seven, including his wife Madeline. The headquarters were relocated from the split-level house in Kansas City North to an office building in Gladstone, Missouri. During this time, many of the new concepts initiated by the Lloyd Olson study became a reality.

Expanded Services and a Different Name

On August 1, 1989, Rev. Stephen E. Burger became the executive director. Wooley was given the title of executive director emeritus. Steve previously headed Seattle's Union Gospel Mission in Washington, and was the immediate past president of the IUGM.

Under Burger's leadership, the organization continued to grow. The IUGM purchased a new headquarters building in North Kansas City, Missouri, on August 31, 1990. It had 4,000 square feet of office space, expanding the association's ability to serve the membership. The staff moved in on April 1, 1991.

In 1992, the IUGM linked arms with city mission leaders around the world to form the City Mission World Association (CMWA), which was headquartered in Sydney, Australia. The IUGM was host of the Triennial Conference in Washington, D.C., in November of 1994. Attending were delegates



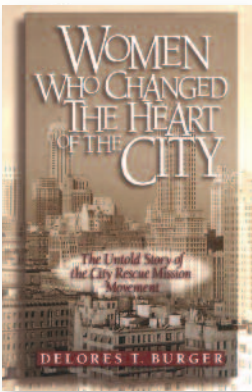
from rescue ministries in thirty-four nations. Members of its executive committee were: Chairman Charles Chambers, Australia; Vice Chairman Rev. Stephen Burger, United States; Edwin Orton, England; Rev. Bruce Duncan, South Africa; Rev. Raimo Sinkkonen, Finland; Samuel Thangarpulavar, India; Rev. Dr. Paul Toaspern, Germany.

On May 31, 2000, the delegates at the 87th Annual Convention changed the name of the International Union of Gospel Missions to the Association of Gospel Rescue Missions (AGRM). The new name emphasized the association concept and de-emphasized the term *union*, which many thought to be misleading. It also underscored the term *rescue*, something that most missions had identified with for decades. *Rescue* became the new mantra.

During Burger's tenure, he continued to emphasize mission expansion and oversaw the start of a dozen new missions in major cities. He also sought

to build up the frontline mission worker through a distance-learning program called Rescue College (now City Vision College). By 2006, it became fully accredited as a degree-conferring institution. Under Burger, AGRM also provided oversight to an already established ministry, Alcoholics Victorious.

Steve faithfully served as executive director of the IUGM/AGRM through June 30, 2007. His wife, Delores, served by his side throughout his tenure. Most notably, she was the association's historian and wrote the book, *Women Who Changed the Heart of the City*.



EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Another Paradigm Shift

Cultural changes teamed with population movements in the 1980s and 1990s found rescue missions having to add continuing education and job training to their lists of services. A new emphasis was put on social enterprises to better prepare those who found new life in Christ to adapt to a demanding world and live in society.

As the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" in North America continued to widen, it was an economic meltdown at the end of 2008 and the beginning of 2009 that caused rescue missions to seriously re-evaluate their programs and services.

Homelessness, always a significant issue, shot to the top of the list of North America's social concerns. Homeless families—most often women with children—became the fastest-growing segment of the population in search of rescue mission assistance. Women and children's centers began to grow in number. Missions started to expand their services beyond their properties, going deeper into their communities. A new emphasis on helping people get housing and secure employment began to take hold in missions from coast to coast.

INTERNATIONAL
UNION
OF
GOSPEL MISSIONS
INCORPORATED



ASSOCIATION
OF GOSPEL
RESCUE
MISSIONS



The History We Celebrate *continued*

“Come now, let us settle the matter,’ says the Lord. ‘Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.’”

—Isaiah 1:18

An Association with Deep Roots *continued*

Bold Steps and Rebranding

In 2005, when Steve Burger first alluded to an impending retirement, the board hired the consulting firm CHORUS of Indianapolis, Indiana, to do a major survey of members, staff, and other stakeholders. The purpose was to bear down on the deepest felt needs within the association.

The results of the survey were made public in May of 2006. It trumpeted the association’s strengths, which foremost included a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ. It also detailed twenty-five significant challenges the association faced and possible action steps to be taken.

Partly because of the report from CHORUS, the board called John Ashmen of Colorado Springs, Colorado, to succeed Burger. Ashmen, who started on July 1, 2007, was the first person in the heavily tradition-laden association to take the helm without ever having rescue mission leadership experience—which took an audacious move on the part of the board. But what Ashmen brought to AGRM was extensive association experience. For nearly fifteen years he had served in the COO role at Christian Camp and Conference Association.

Ashmen set in motion a total rebranding, which required difficult but necessary bylaw changes in both 2008 and 2009. Then, working in tandem with the board, new corporate values, a different mission, and a long-term

vision were introduced. Also put in place was a new strategic business plan. In the process, John’s title was switched from executive director to president, and the board of trustees became the board of directors.

On May 26, 2009, the board voted to move the headquarters to Colorado Springs, Colorado. A month later, the AGRM staff began moving into temporary space in a downtown Colorado Springs high-rise. In April 2010, they occupied new facilities further north, not far from the U.S. Air Force Academy.

Under Ashmen’s leadership, member services were increased to more than fifty.

Conventions have always been a big part of the association. Just as they do today, members back then loved to travel throughout the country and see the amazing work that God was doing in other cities. Railroads provided the primary mode of transportation to those important events in the early years. Here are the locations through 1930.

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1914 – Cedar Rapids, Iowa | 1923 – Minneapolis, Minn. |
| 1915 – Norfolk, Va. | 1924 – New York, N.Y. |
| 1916 – Toledo, Ohio | 1925 – Washington, D.C. |
| 1917 – Syracuse, N.Y. | 1926 – Buffalo, N.Y. |
| 1918 – Charleston, W.V. | 1927 – Indianapolis, Ind. |
| 1919 – Philadelphia, Pa. | 1928 – Vancouver, B.C. |
| 1920 – Evansville, Ind. | 1929 – Lancaster, Pa. |
| 1921 – Akron, Ohio | 1930 – Fort Worth, Tex. |
| 1922 – Charleston, S.C. | |

All Over the Map

Publications were upgraded, with most being produced and circulated electronically. Government relations and public relations were greatly expanded, and eleven new tracks of education were introduced. Most notably, annual conventions became celebratory events, designed to inspire and equip everyone serving in rescue mission ministry.

Recognition of a rapidly changing culture stressed the importance of next-generation leadership in AGRM, which gave birth to an emerging leaders network and an Emerging Leaders Institute. Cultural changes also led to an emphasis on "radical hospitality," which has slowly begun to change how many member missions now view their work and offer their services.

In 2011, John's book, *Invisible Neighbors*, opened a new channel for rescue missions to communicate ministry to "the least of these" to the church. In 2012, Best Practices for rescue missions were launched. In 2013, the City Mission World Association essentially became the Global City Mission Network—a worldwide collaborative effort with different praxes and desired outcomes.

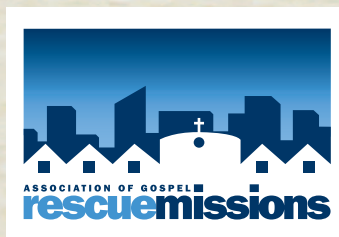
After 100 years, with all the external and internal changes, one thing—and one thing only—has remained primary: helping rescue missions keep foremost in their ministries the gospel of Jesus Christ, with its power to redeem the lost and miraculously transform broken lives.

And so it shall continue to be.



Information in this section was compiled from the writings of Clemmie Ellis White, W.W. Paul, Arthur Bonner, Delores Burger, Jim Harriger, John Ashmen, and the Glasgow City Mission.





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