

Primeline

Spring 2024

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRIES

PLUS
PAUL & ANGELA
TREMENZOZZI
THE COMEBACK



*“I Bought a
Nursing Home
Today.”*

JACK & ELDORA
VETTER

AGWM

Fresh and Flourishing

Fresh and flourishing is the theme for this year's national Senior Adult Ministries Conference in Branson, Missouri, at the Hilton Hotel Convention Center, September 4-6, 2024.

We based this year's theme on Psalm 92:14, "They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing" (NKJV). God promises that even as our bodies feel the effects of growing older, even though our world is changing rapidly, and even though fear may creep into our hearts, we are still useful in His kingdom. God has a place for senior adults in the harvest field. We are praying for a great outpouring of God's Spirit on the senior adults of the Assemblies of God.

This conference is for seniors from across our nation to come together for spiritual renewal, refreshing times of worship, hearing from God's Word, ministry workshops, and invaluable fellowship. We are excited to have speakers Doug Clay, Elly Marroquin, Malcolm Burleigh, Martha Tennison, and Richard Exley with us. Special musical guests, The Erwins, will open this year's conference on Wednesday night, September 4, with a wonderful evening of southern gospel music. Louie and Kathy Salazar, senior adult leaders from the Illinois AG network, will lead worship each service.

Invite your friends. Bring a carload or busload from your church. Lodging

is \$129/night. There are also RV parks nearby for those travelling by RV. There are several great shows, tours, restaurants, and activities to enjoy before and after the conference. Registration includes two breakfasts and a birthday party reception Thursday night, September 5th.

More information is on page 15 of this issue of *Primeline*. To register for this conference, visit the conference website, samconference.ag.org. To book a room, click on the *Book Online* link on the site. For additional information, email me at bobcook@ag.org, or call 417-862-2781, ext. 4055 or 4004.

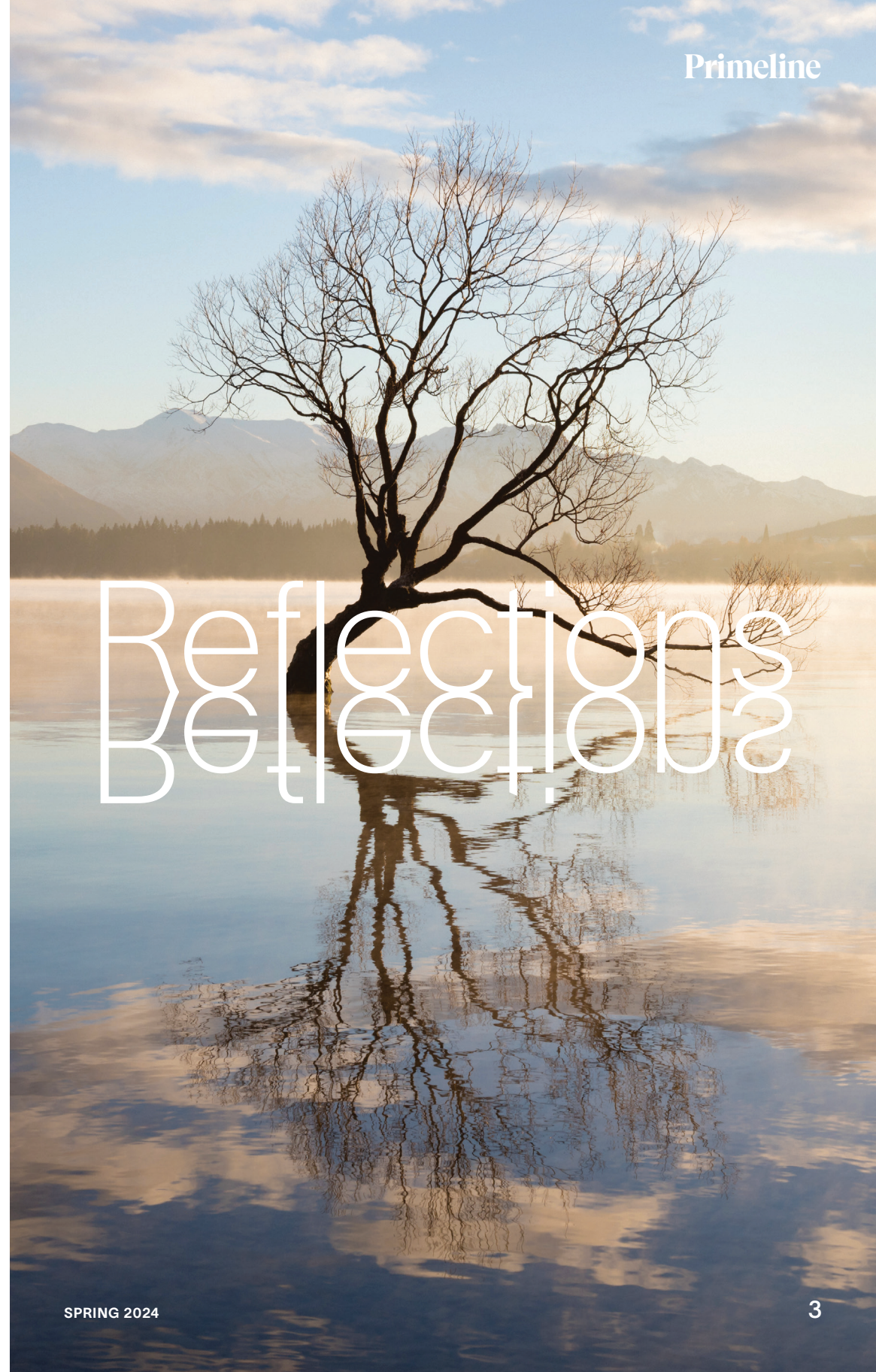
Thank you to the Assemblies of God World Missions Communications team who produces each issue of *Primeline*. Each article in this issue highlights people who are faithfully serving God, using their unique gifts, talents, and experience.

Seniors, He can use you as well. Stay involved in your local church, support your pastors, give your tithes and missions offerings, and think of creative ways to intentionally disciple the next generation.

Let's stay fresh and flourishing!

BOB COOK

Director of Senior Adult Ministries



“I Bought a Nursing Home Today.”

BY

Haley Victory Smith

“It’s not my habit to bargain with the Lord, but I’ve done it a few times,” says Eldora Vetter. The first time came in 1975 when her husband, Jack, surprised her one evening as they were falling asleep.

“I bought a nursing home today,” he said.

“You did what?” she replied, shocked.

Unknown to her, after working for several years in the long-term care industry, Jack had decided to purchase a facility of his own. Eldora laughs good-naturedly at the memory as she tells it, but at the time, she was less than confident in her husband’s choice.

Jack told her that he would go to the bank and ask to borrow \$5,000 to cover part of the purchase cost. Eldora prayed that if it was the Lord’s will that they own the facility, the bank would loan them the full amount needed for the purchase: \$20,000.





Jack and Eldora Vetter

When Jack returned from the bank, he told his wife, “You’ll never believe what just happened.”

“Try me,” she said.

“Well, that banker said, ‘If I’m going to lend you this money, I’d rather lend you the full amount.’”

“That was an assurance to me,” Eldora recalls. “Every time we’d get short, I’d say, ‘Lord, if it was your will in 1975, it’s still your will today.’”

Since then, Vetter Senior Living has acquired or built more than 30 facilities. At each facility, excellence is its chief goal. Their aim is to make their properties “as close to a home-like condition” as possible.

“Our first mission is quality of life, which starts with creating a living environment that radiates love, peace, and personal contentment,” Jack states. “Our elderly need to be respected with dignity.” Because of this outstanding living environment, *Fortune* magazine and Great Place to Work have named Vetter Senior Living among the top 25 “Best Workplaces for Aging Services” for six consecutive years.

At 88, Jack has yet to retire, and his son, Todd, says he’s the “Michael Jordan of the company.”

Jack and Eldora met during a baptismal service shared by multiple churches in rural Nebraska. Those

wanting to get baptized would do so in a creek that Eldora says was “very cold.”

“The first time we ever spoke to each other, we were both soaking wet,” she recalls.

The two, both teenagers at the time, were baptized that day.

“He asked me for a date that day,” Eldora remembers.

Jack and Eldora were blessed with three children. From the time the kids were small, the couple emphasized with them the importance of faith and missions.

“One of the things that I felt was extremely necessary, plus it was kind of our passion, is we have always been friends with missionaries,” Eldora states. “We have had missionaries in our home, so our kids sat around the table with missionaries all their lives. I don’t think you can give your kids a greater heritage than that.”

“You can do the same thing by making your children comfortable with their pastor,” she adds. “They are people too, and your kids need to learn that.”

“Going to church three times a week didn’t hurt matters,” Todd, their youngest, says with a chuckle.

One event endeared Jack to Eldora. As teenagers, they were both attending the Nebraska District family camp. At a missionary service on Sunday afternoon, it came time for the offering. Jack pulled out his billfold to find that he had one five and two ones.

“He thumbed through those three bills, and he pulled out the five and gave it in the offering, knowing he needed to buy gasoline to get back

home. When I saw that I said, ‘This is my kind of guy.’”

“I loved his heart,” she says. “I loved his heart for missions.”

Since then, through the success of their business, this couple has had opportunities to give extravagantly to missions. The Veters have become practically legendary for their support of Africa’s Hope, an AGWM ministry that provides resources to various African Bible colleges and Water for the World, an organization that builds wells in Africa. When he learned of the need for a new building for Addis Ababa Bible College (ABC), in Addis, Ethiopia, he responded to that need. Today, in their new building, ABC trains and sends students to ministry throughout the Horn of Africa.

The couple emphasizes, though, that the size of an individual’s gift is not important. It’s their willingness to be faithful to the Lord’s will that matters.

“We supported missions and missionaries before we hardly had any money at all,” Jack says.

When asked what advice he would give to those who want to support missions and yet are limited in their resources, Jack responds, “Be involved. Just do it. Follow your heart. Listen to needs. There were several years where we didn’t do very much, dollar-wise.”

“My parents have always followed God’s will,” Todd says, getting teary-eyed. “God has blessed them for doing that, and in return, they’ve given and given and given.”

HALEY VICTORY SMITH

Freelance writer

Will they inherit your generosity?



Let's talk about how to inspire your family with the joy of generous giving to your favorite Assemblies of God missionaries and projects. We can also provide a variety of creative giving options to consider in helping you and your family optimize potential tax savings.

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AGWM

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THE COMEBACK:

Paul and Angela Trementozzi Return to Mission Fields as Encouragers and Trainers

BY
Cynthia J. Thomas

Occasionally sporting news reports a “comeback” as a player returns to playing the game following an absence. Paul and Angela Trementozzi have served as Assemblies of God World missionaries since 1992. They later assumed the responsibility as area director for Southern Europe. In 2011 AGWM leadership asked them to become regional director for the Europe Region. This required them to move from Europe to Springfield, Missouri.

Having heard the Holy Spirit say they had fulfilled their regional director mandate, in summer 2023, they made a ‘comeback’ and returned to Spain as fully appointed missionaries. The specifics of their call to return was to establish a training center to develop pastors who will then plant churches throughout Europe.

Paul and Angela grew up in Canton, Massachusetts. Both attended Valley Forge University and Eastern Nazarene College. Paul later earned his master's degree in Negotiation, Conflict Resolution, and International Peace from Cal State, Dominguez Hills campus, Carson, California.

The Tremontozzis, who have been married 43 years, served as associate pastors in Brockton, Massachusetts, with Pastor Robert and Jane Wise Jr, former superintendent of the

“Our leadership team in Europe was healthy, and we had strong missionary retention.”

Southern New England Ministry Network. Pastor Bob and Jane were their mentors, who as their pastors, instilled in Paul and Angela a strong culture in missions. This contributed to their call as global workers and as church planters in Spain.

Following a year of language school in Costa Rica, in 1995 Paul and Angela, with their three sons, departed for Spain where they planted churches and taught at Bible schools.

In 2011, as Greg Mundis accepted the role of AGWM executive director, Paul was asked to serve as regional director for the Europe Region.

Paul describes what led them to resigning this long-term post as regional director. “About three years ago, we started sensing something was about to happen,” says Tremontozzi. “Our leadership team in Europe was healthy, and we had strong missionary retention.” Paul and Angela had a sense that the Spirit was inspiring in them a challenge and change.

Unknown to them, a pivotal point to this change happened in 2016 during Europe Regions’s missionary retreat in Croatia. During the closing session with 500 missionaries, Paul challenged them to write on a card what they felt God was leading them to do in their next season of ministry. Missionaries then bought their cards to the altar for prayer. The Tremontozzis, along with their leadership team, kept these cards and prayed over them.

One of the missionaries in attendance was John Carrano, who along with his wife, Brandi, began as global workers under Paul and Angela’s time as area directors. On their arrival in Spain, the Tremontozzis had mentored this couple. As they developed a closer relationship, Paul and Angela considered John and Brandi their spiritual children. In 2014 the Carranos became lead pastors of the International Church of Barcelona, Spain.

As Paul and Angela wrestled with the stirring of the Spirit knowing



Paul and Angela Tremontozzi

they were to return to Europe as missionaries, they began to seek God’s direction toward their future role and placement.

In October 2022, during a trip to Barcelona as regional director, a divine appointment took place with John and Brandi. As the four met, Paul learned what John had written on his card and left at the altar during the closing prayer six years earlier at the Croatia retreat. John’s card read, “To establish a training center for European church planters through the International Church in Barcelona.” Paul had taken those cards and had been praying over them for 6 years. When John shared this with the Tremontozzis, they immediately recognized the affirmation of the Spirit that they were the answer to John’s prayer.

Training and development are vital to ministry success in the highly secularized European culture. “Because of the politicization of the gospel over the centuries, it is quite

challenging to reach a people who believe they have heard the gospel and have rejected it. What they have heard is not the gospel, but a counterfeit gospel,” says Tremontozzi. Because of the failure of this politicized Christendom, the European Union, in its constitution, describes itself as a secular government.

While there is still freedom to conduct religious activity, it is harder to obtain visas and deal with other regulations for ministry activity. Missions organizations tend to use disaster response, refugee relief, and other humanitarian aid to obtain visas. However, because of Paul’s Italian family heritage, they applied for and received their dual citizenship with Italy allowing easy access for visas. “We are actually a pretty good investment,” Paul says with a smile. “We have the paperwork, we already know the missiology, language, and have the training. We now also have the life experience to help others succeed and we see this as a gift from God.”

In their primary role, Paul and Angela are establishing a training center based out of the International Church of Barcelona, where the Carranos continue to serve as lead pastors. Through this School of Ministry, the Tremontozzis will train new pastors and leaders who will plant churches throughout Europe. Paul has been able to launch this initiative through a partnership with Continental Theological Seminary, where he also serves on the Board of Trustees. They have opened the door to having a satellite campus at the church in Barcelona. CTS already

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has a certificate program developed for pastors, while Paul is developing mentorships for practical preparation.

Paul and Angela also serve the Europe Region as advocates for the missionary family, advisors to leadership, and ambassadors to the national churches.

The Trementozzis' timeline is another indicator that God is at work in the process. In May 2022, at their last regional retreat as directors for the Europe Region, 500 global workers attested to a seamless and Spirit-led transition as Paul passed the regional director leadership baton to Larry and Melinda Henderson. It was also at this gathering that the Europe missionary family shocked and honored Paul and Angela by raising \$113,000 in cash plus giving \$2,600 in personal monthly support to help in their return to Spain in August 2023. They made it back to the field in July of 2023.

The Trementozzis returned to field-based ministry at a time in life when people often start looking toward

Paul reminds senior adults that there are unique opportunities in retirement to serve AGWM.

retirement. Paul reminds senior adults that there are unique opportunities in retirement to serve AGWM and the missionary community in ways they could not do while working fulltime and raising families. For example, seniors can become a Missions Abroad Placement Service (MAPS) volunteer or STMA (Short-Term Ministers Abroad). These assignments are generally for 1–11 months. MAPS volunteers assist missionaries in evangelism outreaches, literature distribution, youth and children's ministries, or special projects. These volunteers sometimes assist at international churches, where services are in English. Seniors with pastoral experience can fill pulpits and serve as interim pastors for International Churches while missionaries are on furlough.

The Trementozzi's story is an encouragement to stay the course in ministry long enough that you might discover future paths in your senior years where the Lord will lead you full circle. It will be extraordinarily fulfilling and possibly lead you on a path in missions to serve whether as global workers overseas or in one's local church. "Seniors can invest in others, including high school and college-age people." Trementozzi urges, "Clarify your own story, so you can share it and guide the next generation. This is how the Lord will complete the circle of our lives for His glory."

CYNTHIA J. THOMAS
Freelance writer

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

2024 Senior Adult Ministries Conference

September 4–6, 2024 | Branson, Missouri
Hilton Hotel Conference Center

Registration cost: \$99* per person

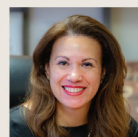
Includes:

- 2 breakfast buffets
- Sessions with worship and inspirational speakers; workshops for ministry focus
- Special music by The Erwins (Wed)
- Dessert reception (Thurs)

Speakers:



DOUG CLAY
General Superintendent



ELLY MARROQUIN
National Director of Education and Discipleship



MALCOLM BURLEIGH
Executive Director of U.S. Missions



MARTHA TENNISON
Evangelist



RICHARD EXLEY
Author/Pastor

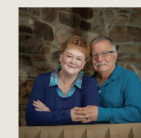
Special Musical Guests:

THE ERWINS



Worship Leaders:

LOUIE & KATHY SALAZAR
Illinois Senior Adult leaders



Conference Hosts:

BOB & SHERILYN COOK
Senior Adult Ministries Director



REGISTRATION for Conference AND for hotel reservation is now open

To register, go to samconference.ag.org.

*Registration cost: \$109 after Aug. 4; \$119 onsite.
Hotel reservation not included in conference fee; Hotel cost at Hilton: \$129/night – double occupancy

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1445 N. Boonville Avenue
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