



Transforming Lives Winter 2020

Our Mission – A Life-Transforming Fellowship with Christ

From the Executive Director: *Take Heart!*



“A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home... I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:32-33, NIV)

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!” – the words came to me as clearly as if Jesus was in my study, speaking directly to me.

All around the world there is trouble – from COVID-19, from wars and repressive systems, from drought and hurricanes, from poverty, and endless woes. We wonder: “How will we get through this? Is there a word of hope in the midst of all this disruption?”

YES! There is a living Word and a “Divine Yes!” The Living Lord spoke clearly and directly, **“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!”** Rather than being downhearted or broken hearted or fearful or depressed – the Christian Ashrams looked to Jesus and “took heart.” We received His heart through the power of prayer and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

So while we could not gather in person this year, together we used technology to transcend the barriers that kept us apart. We were able to purchase the necessary equipment, licenses, and permissions to gather together online.

This year we are celebrating two remarkable milestones: 90 years of Christian Ashrams in Sat Tal, India and 80 years in North America. We held over 10 online events along with two in-person events held before the pandemic. In each event, Jesus was lifted up as Lord and people’s lives were

transformed. Physical, spiritual, and emotional healing took place. True to His promise, Jesus was present in our virtual and in-person events. I was blessed to pray with one 15-year old young man who surrendered his life to Christ for the first time as tears of joy and release flowed from his eyes. We felt His presence with people from Canada, England, India, Ireland, Scotland, Malaysia, and Thailand and all over the United States. In all, nearly 700 people were reached and many new people were introduced to the unique aspects of a Christian Ashram through this innovative format.



I pray you hear the voice of Jesus speaking directly to you as you read about the ways God is working through the Christian Ashram ministries. We have approved and implemented a three-year transition plan for Brother Matt Henson to become our new Executive Director. We are fervently following God’s lead in opening ministry opportunities in Africa, Latin America, and places all over the world. We will share about that in future mailings!

I pray you will do all you can to invest in this Christian Ashram movement that is growing and expanding around the world. I pray you will take heart – the powerful and compassionate heart of Christ – so you can overcome these present troubles in the world through Him.

Together we are doing our small part to offer the whole gospel to the whole world, helping new people in new places experience “Jesus is Lord!”

Tom Albin

UCAI Executive Director

Take Heart, the 80th Anniversary Continues!

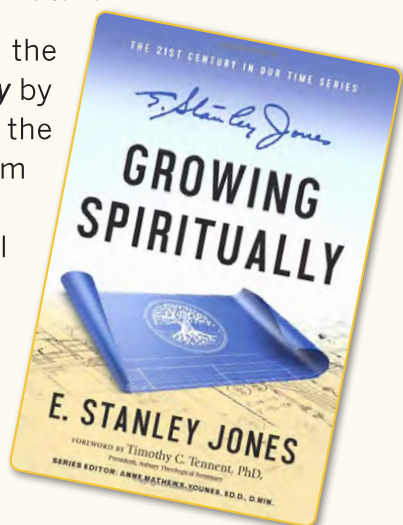
We're celebrating 80 years of the Christian Ashram in North America from 2020 through 2021. Here are 8 ways you can take part!

1. The UCAI Global Prayer Ministry was launched in November. It will take place at 10 a.m. CST on the second Saturday of every month. Our next three global prayer meetings will be December 12, January 9, and February 13. To join this prayer community, register on the website christianashram.org.

If you can't come in person, send your prayer requests or praise reports to Lisa Chandler at uca@christianashram.org. You can also leave a message at (318) 232-0004.

2. Join the weekly **Word of Encouragement** email list. Once a week you will receive an email from members of the Christian Ashram family. Register on the website with your email address or mobile phone number.
3. Send us a story about your Ashram experience. Tell us what God has done for you, your family, or your local church through the spiritual experiences of the Christian Ashram.
4. Invite people to join you in the next Christian Ashram, be it online or in person. The Christian Ashram is for people of all faiths and no faith. Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Agnostics, and Atheists are all welcome to "come and see" a community who tries to live according to the teachings of Jesus and to be part of the Kingdom of God in miniature.

5. Buy the 2021 Book of the Year **Growing Spiritually** by E. Stanley Jones. Join the entire Christian Ashram family around the world in daily spiritual reading and prayer. These will make great Christmas gifts.



6. Watch for the 80th Anniversary T-shirt coming next spring.

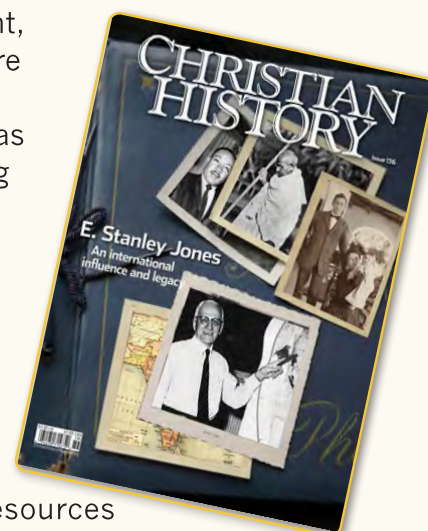


J.T. Adkins, Chair of the UCAI Board Communications and Marketing Committee in front of our new backdrop! We want to record you telling your stories of what the Christian Ashram means to you.

7. Volunteer to serve in a new way or in a new location. Pray about God's call on your life and the unique gifts and talents God has given you. Then contact the Director of your local Christian Ashram to offer your gifts to God and that community.

If you are willing and able to travel, email Matt Henson at matt@christianashram.org or call (618) 830-6670. Ask how to serve the Ashram ministry in the USA, Canada, India, Argentina, Haiti, Africa, or Brazil.

8. Invest your time, talent, and treasure to ensure that the Christian Ashram movement has a bright and enduring ministry for the next 80 years! Consider special anniversary gift in multiples of 8. Give \$8 or \$80 or \$800 or \$8,000 or \$80,000 to provide leadership training scholarships, and resources for mission expansion in North America and around the world. You'll receive a special edition of **Christian History** magazine which highlights the legacy of E. Stanley Jones and United Christian Ashrams movement.



"The one supreme business of life is to find God's plan for your life and live it." ~ E. Stanley Jones

A conversation with Roberto Escamilla



This is the first in a series highlighting our dear Brother Roberto Escamilla. Here he is with people at an Ashram in the early 1960s.

The Four were established in 1972 by E. Stanley Jones at the International Ashram held in Jerusalem. The Four serve as the

guardians of the spiritual purpose of the Christian Ashram ministry. The first members of The Four were Bill Berg, Gordon Hunter, J. T. Seamands, and Roberto Escamilla. Brother Roberto is the last remaining original member of The Four. We honor him and his contributions to UCAI for the past 65 years.

When did you become involved in Ashrams?

In 1955, I graduated from seminary in May and I went to my first Texas Christian Ashram in August of that same year. That's when I first met Brother Stanley. I kept going every single year to the Texas Ashram. Eventually I became a speaker and went to other Ashrams as well. As Brother Stanley and I got acquainted, he invited me to join him in missionary trips to Latin America and Puerto Rico, starting in the early 1960s.

In every one of the countries where we traveled including Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Peru, and others, we established Ashrams with their own local

leadership. I'm originally from Mexico and we held Ashrams every year just outside Mexico City. In the daytime and early evening, we would hold the Ashram sessions. Afterwards, we would take an hour-long drive into the city to hold revival meetings in the local churches! He was tireless!

What was it like to work with Brother Stanley?

It was a very inspirational experience that has lasted my entire lifetime. It was such an honor to work next to a man who, in my opinion, was the greatest missionary since Saint Paul.

Most impressive to me was his compassion for people. Brother Stanley gave good, practical counseling advice, with positive results. He could put his finger on the problem and then say "Let's do something about it." He would encourage the person to make changes – beginning with him or herself. To BE the answer, not to FIND the answer. If someone was having a problem with their spouse, for example, he would encourage the person to consider "What can I do to change before trying to change my spouse? Let ME be the answer to the problem in our marriage." When we begin with ourselves, it's amazing how often that will impact the people around us in a positive way.

I am convinced Brother Stanley was led by the Holy Spirit in founding the Ashram. The key to Christian Ashrams is to help people to be transformed, to be new creations. God is able, not only to transform us as individuals, but our society as a whole.

Testimony from Donna Bell Sanders

I came to Redwood's Online Ashram this year wanting peace and healing. 2020 has been a difficult one for everyone on the planet and it had been especially hard for me and my family. Everything happening in the big world had been very real for us. We had been opened up by the suffering and the way we saw God working in it; but it had been a struggle and I had felt very flattened by it all. I needed to surrender the weight I had been carrying. I needed direction and energy and power to do what God has in store for me to do. By the end of the week I was praising God. Here's part of what I shared during our time of Overflowing Heart.

"This week I saw clearly how God provides for my needs. My children and others nurtured me with their compassionate care. Each facet of this retreat has been such a blessing to me – a true vehicle of the Holy Spirit. Through the teaching, the sharing, my prayer group, and my quiet time with God, I felt the burdens I've been carrying lifted. Just being able to name my needs and lay them at His feet and being connected to other seekers after God's heart has brought me out of the malaise I've been struggling with. I feel 1000% lighter and I'm so grateful that God has a plan and a purpose that I can trust and fully inhabit. **Jesus is truly Lord!!**"



Sister Donna is one of the UCAI Mission Coordinators.

Invest in United Christian Ashrams International



Please consider a special year-end gift to the UCAI. Even better, make the decision to give monthly by using the ACH form below. This commitment to a monthly gift will multiply our ability to grow and expand more quickly. We have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for this form or a one-time gift. You can also go to our website christianashram.org/support-uca and donate on-line.

Authorization for Direct Payment via ACH

I (We) authorize United Christian Ashrams International to electronically debit my (our)

☐ Checking Account or ☐ Savings Account (check one)

at the depository financial institution named below:

Depository Name of Bank or Institution: _____

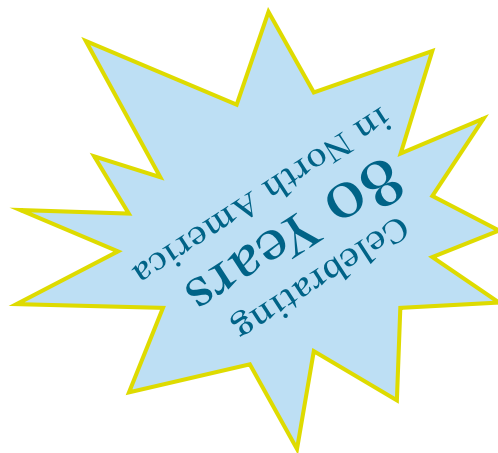
Routing Number: _____ Account Number: _____

Amount to be debited each month: \$_____

I (We) understand that this authorization will remain in full force and effect until I (we) notify the UCAI in writing to revoke this authorization. I (We) understand that the UCAI requires at least 7 DAYS prior notice to cancel this authorization.

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