



# Transforming Lives *spring 2021*

*Our Mission – A Life-Transforming Fellowship with Christ*

## Leadership Transition

### Tom Albin and Matt Henson

In early 2020, the United Christian Ashrams International (UCAI) President of the Board, Brother Wade Paschal, Jr., shared with the Executive Committee and The Four that Brother Tom Albin would like to phase out of his position as UCAI Executive Director. He recommended they consider a three-year plan to transition Brother Matt Henson into that position. The full Board of Directors approved the plan at the Annual meeting.



*Tom Albin, Esther Ghosh, and Matt Henson in New Delhi, India*

**Brother Tom:** I am delighted that we have the support of the Board for this plan! Matt, you are one of the few General Evangelists in the United Methodist Church – very similar to E. Stanley Jones' status as a global missionary and evangelist. Tell our readers about your call.

**Brother Matt:** My answer to God's call on my life led me to change my major, pursue a Master of Divinity Degree, and then serve as an Associate Pastor focused on youth and young adults. In 2007 I moved forward in obedience to start *Living the Adventure Ministries*, a new mission and evangelism ministry. Later, the Holy Spirit confirmed in my spirit the calling to leave local church ministry to serve full-time as a missionary and evangelist.

Over the past fifteen years God has opened the doors for me to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to people in Canada, Mexico, Liberia, Zimbabwe, Haiti, and India. God also drew me to the Christian Ashram movement and the legacy of E. Stanley Jones. Through his writings, he has been a wonderful guide and encouragement to me as an evangelist, a missionary, and as a follower of Christ.

**Brother Tom:** Matt, we have known each other for more than a decade. I remember our first meeting at the *Congress on Evangelism* in 2009 and our first ministry trip to India in 2015. Over the years I have observed your ability to relate to children, youth, and adults of all ages. In your preaching, teaching, and writing, you demonstrate a deep knowledge of Brother Stanley's perspective on the Christian life and mission. How did you develop your ministry skills and when did you learn about E. Stanley Jones?

**Brother Matt:** The ministerial life was modeled for me since my birth. My grandfather (who I called Paw-Paw) was a Methodist Pastor for fifty years. When I was nine-years old, my dad answered his call into pastoral ministry. Through watching Dad and my Paw-Paw, I picked up on many needed skills for ministry. Those skills have been honed in the classroom; in the local church; and on the mission field.

I was introduced to E. Stanley Jones when I read his name on the side of a building in seminary. It was much later that I picked up "*A Song of Ascents: A Spiritual Autobiography*" and found in Brother Stanley a spiritual father whose practical evangelism fit how I understood God's call on my life. I started looking for other books Brother Stanley wrote and began a journey to learn more about the Christian Ashram movement.

**Brother Tom:** You've served six years as a UCAI Board member and have traveled to India four times. In 2019 you were consecrated as the

youngest member of The Four. Last year you accepted the invitation to become the Assistant Director of UCAI so we could work closely together to prepare for the next steps – for you to become Acting Executive Director in September 2021 and then be installed as the new Executive Director at the Annual Meeting of the Board and Council in 2022. How are you feeling about this past year and the year to come?

**Brother Matt:** It has been a unique year due to COVID with the abrupt stop to my normal traveling in ministry. I am thankful for online platforms that help us connect with people at virtual Christian Ashrams and in other ways. I'm grateful we've been able to share stories, experience life together, and to build relationships. I'm looking forward in the coming months to being together again "in the flesh." Working with the Christian Ashram family has been a great opportunity for growth in all areas of my life.

**Brother Tom:** What would you like the Christian Ashram family to know about you and your willingness to accept this invitation to lead us?

**Brother Matt:** I know the Christian Ashram is poised to be a great movement around the world to proclaim "Jesus is Lord!" and to model the transformed life for all people. I am blessed, honored, and humbled to accept the invitation to serve in this way. I look forward to partnering with brothers and sisters across North America and internationally, as we seek to live "word become flesh" lives in line with 1 John 3:18 "let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

**Brother Tom:** As we close, we ask the worldwide Christian Ashram family to pray for Brother Matt, his family, his ministry, and this leadership transition plan for the United Christian Ashrams International. Together, we can bring the whole gospel to the whole world, and witness to the truth that *Jesus is Lord!*

## Christian Ashrams: Expanding Worldwide

We are excited for the continued expansion of the Christian Ashram around the world. Nearly three years ago, the International Committee began to identify leaders who were at one time involved in the Christian Ashram ministry.



*Matt Henson with young friends in Haiti*

The Christian Ashram is expanding in Latin America as God opened a door in 2019 for Brother Doug Ruffle and Brother John Davis to travel to Mendoza and Patagonia, Argentina. Two more ashrams are planned in Cordoba and Rosario and will include key leaders from Paraguay, Uruguay, and Chile. More recently, we were introduced to Bishop Maia and Bishop Leite from Brazil.

We are in conversation with Pastor Michel Morrisette from Haiti about reviving the Christian Ashram there. God is also opening doors in Africa with the E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism at Africa University in Zimbabwe.

Our renewed relationship with the Mother Ashram in India has opened the way for regional Christian Ashrams in Delhi, Jabalpur, and Hyderabad. The Hyderabad Ashram met virtually in 2020.

The Christian Ashram is moving forward to proclaim "Jesus is Lord" around the world. With our growing presence in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and North America, we are excited to see how God will use this ministry in the future. Though the pandemic stopped travel in 2020, we look forward to 2021 and beyond. Your financial and prayer support of UCAI makes this expansion possible.

If you have questions about this ministry or if you would like to travel with us, contact the International Committee Chair, Matt Henson:  
[matt@christianashram.org](mailto:matt@christianashram.org) • (618) 830-6670

# Interview with Roberto Escamilla

Here is Part 2 of 3 of our interview with Brother Roberto, the last remaining original member of the Four.

**What are some of the accomplishments of the Christian Ashram movement over the years?**

First, having a part-time Executive Director has been very significant. It has allowed us to grow in important ways and given us much needed continuity.

Secondly, I'm thankful for the significant gifts we've received in the last 80 years. There have been wonderful benefactors.

Thirdly, I'm so grateful for our relationship with the Sat Tal Christian Ashram in India. We've gone many times to Sat Tal and have begun to establish regional Ashrams and reach out to young seminary students.

We keep reaching new people in local Ashrams. Every single year there are new persons who come, which means people come back and invite others.

And finally, We've been able to preserve the uniqueness of the Ashram and maintain the Pillars of the Ashram as Brother Stanley described them. To me that's very important. The Open Heart, for example, is unique to the Ashram. We provide a safe environment for people to be honest and to open up – a place to open our hearts and to share our problems. The moment we share our true needs, we're opening the door for an answer, to BE the answer through the work of the Holy Spirit.



*Roberto Escamilla with his beloved wife Dorothy*

## In Loving Memory of Rev. Dr. Samuel T. Kamaleson

November 18, 1930 – February 28, 2021



Our beloved brother Samuel Kamaleson went to be with the Lord at the age of 90. Brother Sam and the love of his life, Adela, were blessed with three children and many grandchildren.

Brother Sam and his family lived all over the world in service to God, bringing people to Jesus through service, love, words, and song. Many within the Christian Ashram family regarded Brother Sam as a spiritual father, evangelist, mentor, and friend. He had a special way of making everyone he met feel they were worthy of his time, praise, blessings, and friendship. One thing was perfectly clear to anyone who met him; Sam was a man who had been touched by God.

Although he was a 5th generation Christian, he noticed a change in his Hindu roommate at Madras Veterinary College. He asked him what had changed, and he said, "I've become a Christian." Sam then realized that he wasn't really a Christian and was led to Christ by the witness of his roommate. Sam was later moved by the Spirit to get the crowd's attention in a Madras bazaar. Despite his embarrassment, he sang loudly and proclaimed at the end of the song, "He is alive!" He tried to walk away, but someone grabbed his sleeve and asked him about Jesus. That was the first person Sam led to the Lord. This was just the beginning of his humanitarian ministries worldwide.

Brother Sam lived and died a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ and a strong advocate of the ministry of E. Stanley Jones and the Christian Ashram movement. We will honor him at this year's Annual Meeting of theUCAI Board and Council. May we, like Brother Sam, proclaim in life and in death — **Jesus is Lord!**

# Come to a Christian Ashram in 2021!

These are in-person events, except where indicated.

7/ 5 – 9	Redwood Christian Ashram – On-line event “Come Alive!”
7/ 10 – 15	Texas Christian Ashram – Scottsville, Texas
7/ 12 – 15	Iowa-Nebraska Christian Ashram – Griswold, Iowa
7/ 18 – 23	Keuka Christian Ashram – Keuka Park, New York
7/ 23 – 24	Kansas Christian Ashram – On-line event
7/ 29 – 8/1	Mountaineer Christian Ashram – Ripley, West Virginia
8/ 6 – 8	Blue Lake Christian Ashram – Andalusia, Alabama
8/ 6 – 8	Minnesota Christian Ashram – Onamia, Minnesota
10/ 8 – 10	Western Pennsylvania Christian Ashram – Hopwood, Pennsylvania



## Read the 2021 Book of the Year!

“Growing Spiritually” by E. Stanley Jones is designed to be read over an entire year. Each day there are scriptural verses, a meditation, a prayer, and a thought for the day. It directly addresses the issues we all face which hinder our growth in discipleship. May a whole new generation of Christians read and appreciate this timeless devotional!

Here are two ways to donate!

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[christianashram.org](http://christianashram.org)

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