

# a new chapter for twr's **MISSION**



INSIDE

Sounds  
of Hope  
catalog

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



**Andy Schick**

**TWR  
President  
and CEO**

Our story at TWR is filled with ordinary people who gave God their hesitant “yes,” and he accomplished extraordinary things.

Dr. Paul Freed, our late founder, never intended to go to Spain. But God captured his heart, and out of that reluctant “yes” came The Voice of Tangier in 1954 – the first TWR station and broadcast.

Young couple Bill and Joan Mial asked, “Do you need any help?” Out of this simple offer came a decades-long trailblazing missionary journey.

In Africa, the Rev. Stephen Boakye-Yiadom launched the *Africa Challenge* program, driven by his conviction that “Africa needs Jesus.”

Story after story reminds us of an important reality: It was never about towers or transmitters or technology. It was always about people meeting and obeying Jesus.

The world has shifted dramatically. More than 3 billion people remain unreached with the gospel.

We are also living in unprecedented times technologically. We have already seen one revolution in digitization. Now we are moving swiftly into the era of artificial intelligence. The tools are changing. The scale is staggering. The urgency of our mission is only increasing.

In this issue of TWR Magazine, you'll learn some of the ways we are adapting. Closing one chapter on our beloved Guam station (see Page 6), we open an exciting new one in which Latin American partners are video livestreaming; The Better FM provides a unique blend of AI-supported content over the internet to men in India; and Ukrainian pastors in the U.S. co-host programs with family members in the war zone.

As we consider TWR's future, we're reorienting our conversations with these questions:

- Who are we seeking to reach?
- Given their context, what do they need to know?
- How can we reach them?

In some contexts, that will still be radio. In others, it will be podcasting, social media, short video, online discipleship groups, webinars and more. Our duty is to become experts in every useful form of communication available – for the sake of those who need to hear about Jesus.

Thank you for continuing to support TWR's calling to reach the world for Christ by mass media so that lasting fruit is produced.



# BECAUSE YOU GAVE

## EXTENDING THE REACH OF THE GOOD NEWS

### Men of Courage

The *Men of Courage* program, a vital part of TWR's ministry to men, provides the listener with a biblical perspective on life's daily challenges. Episodes are used in a variety of formats for AM and FM radio, web radio, podcasts, video and social media. A listener in Indonesia wrote, "*Men of Courage* messages match what we really face in daily life — pressures, responsibilities, and the need to lead with strength and love. The program gives encouragement and real answers. It helps me reflect and grow as a man who wants to follow God's will, not just in words but in everyday action." Thanks to the \$271,000 you gave to support *Men of Courage*, the program is expanding into new languages.

### Ministry to the Chinese

It is becoming more difficult to be a Christian in China or to gain access to biblical materials. God is using your prayers and gifts to comfort and teach spiritually hungry listeners in China. In 2024, our co-workers who distributed media resources visited 629 families, including 11 individuals who indicated a decision to follow Christ. Your support of \$258,000 is helping TWR to continue the personal outreach among China's unreached people groups and broadcast our Chinese programs on a variety of platforms.

### West Africa Transmitting Station (WATS)

Your gifts of \$239,000 to TWR's WATS are a lifeline of spiritual food for listeners throughout West Africa, including areas of intense persecution of Christians. A listener wrote: "I want to testify of God's faithfulness in my family, that ever since we made it a daily habit to use the TWR messages for our evening meditations, we have been witnessing so many positive changes.

### anniversary milestones

Beginning this month and running through the first half of 2026, we are honoring these colleagues who are celebrating service milestones of five years or more with TWR. Join us in praising the Lord for their faithful service.

#### 55 YEARS

Arnie & Dawn  
Remtema

#### 50 YEARS

Gary Whitmore

#### 40 YEARS

Bill Early

#### 35 YEARS

Bonnie Keith

#### 15 YEARS

Gina Ennis

#### 10 YEARS

Lisa Hall  
Laura Boyd

#### 5 YEARS

Sarah Haynes  
Brad Livermon  
David Petersen  
Jennifer  
Rajaonarivony

We do this regularly before retiring to bed. It's been a tremendous blessing. My wife and I see our three children being drawn closer to our heavenly Father daily. Praise God!"

### A Season of Hope in Japan

A Japanese listener to the *Power of the Gospel* program wrote, "As I listened, I found myself pondering what it means to be forgiven of sins, what it means to pray and what it means to have one's life governed by the Savior. I knew the name Moses from the Ten Commandments, but I had no idea what kind of person he was. I am now very interested. Christianity and Christians are not familiar to me, but it's great to gain knowledge through a radio program. Thank you for broadcasting such an interesting program!" The \$198,000 you gave to support TWR's programs for the Japanese is having an eternal impact on lives there. Thank you!

# Recommissioned

## TO PROCLAIM CHRIST BY MEDIA



BOTH IMAGES © TWR BY RACHEL MEHLHAFF

**BY JON HILL**  
TWR MAGAZINE EDITOR

If you're looking for a way to describe Andy Schick's first few months as president of TWR, "hit the ground running" probably is the perfect idiom.

Marking his official start date of Aug. 13 in his personal office at the Auckland, New Zealand, home where he, his wife, Kate, and four daughters live, Schick traveled the next week to the other side of the globe for meetings at TWR Cary, North Carolina. One week of intensive meetings getting acquainted with his Global Leader Team and structuring an annual budget was followed by a second week with the Global Executive Team for more of the same.

After a week of meetings with staff, partners and listeners for a weeklong conference in Sri Lanka in early September, and then a three-day virtual conference with European and Middle East partners, Schick and his eldest daughter, Scarlett, climbed on a plane headed again to Cary for a very special event: a commissioning service hosted by the TWR board of directors.

All the travel, meeting of new colleagues and strategizing led to this historic evening at Cary Alliance Church, a solemn and uplifting experience for the enthusiastic crowd of TWR friends and family on hand. Filled with praise music, prayer, Bible reading and



*Andy Schick, top, addresses the enthusiastic audience on hand for his commissioning as TWR's fifth president. Above, board member Dr. Sona Minz reads a Bible passage in English and her heart language, Kurukh.*

inspiring speeches, the installation ceremony took on the character of a worship service focused wholly on Jesus Christ.

TWR board of directors Chairman Jeff Jones presided over the event and included special greetings to Lauren and June Libby, who reportedly watched the livestream from Colorado Springs, Colorado, where they now live. Lauren served 16 years as the ministry president until a severe stroke led him to step aside.

"Today, Sept. 28, 2025, we all come together to officially welcome and entrust Andy with the responsibility of guiding us toward greater heights of service, impact and the fulfillment

of our mission, which is to reach the world for Christ by mass media so lasting fruit is produced,” Jones said. “With true faith as our foundation and unity as our strength, we as the board, our staff, our friends, our supporters, stand ready to collaborate with you, Andy, to further our reach and to fulfill our mission, a mission that unites us all.”

Beginning his remarks with a touching personal greeting to his wife, Kate, and three younger daughters watching back home in New Zealand, Schick began sketching his vision for a new chapter of TWR ministry within a rapidly changing media landscape.

“That is why we are here today, not to celebrate a person or a position, but to remember God’s mighty acts and to be recommissioned for the next chapter in his mission,” the 42-year-old New Zealander said. “Our story as TWR is filled with ordinary people who gave God a hesitant yes, and he did extraordinary things with the hesitant yeses.”

The national-partner model of organization is the “enduring secret” of TWR’s scale and impact, he said, and going forward we will lean on our faithful national partners even more. Innovation will also continue to be an essential tool in TWR’s mission. What’s the best way to reach a given people group with the gospel? For many, Schick said, it will still be radio, while others will need podcasting, social media, short video, or even artificial-intelligence-supported program production.

“I think our teams are so dedicated and will become so dedicated to finding the right way to reach audiences that should a carrier pigeon be the right strategy somewhere, then someone from TWR will be figuring out the best birdseed to buy,” he quipped, eliciting a laugh from the audience. “Our call is to become experts in every form of communication available to us.”

After Schick’s remarks, the board members gathered around him on the platform and placed their hands on his shoulders. Cassius Smith, who stepped into the breach and led TWR as interim president during the yearlong period leading to Schick’s selection, gave the prayer of dedication.

Other distinguished ministry leaders also played roles on the program, including board members Tracy McKenzie of North Carolina, Sona Minz of India and Ross Campbell of Canada, and Susanne Thyroff of Germany, the executive director of one of TWR’s largest and oldest national partners, ERF Medien.



*TWR leaders meet with listeners of ministry broadcasting in Sri Lanka. TWR staff and Asian national partners met on the island in September.*

There were also heartwarming remarks by Schick’s 14-year-old daughter, Scarlett, the only family member to travel with him from New Zealand. She spoke affectionately and admiringly of her parents, shared life lessons learned from them and said, “I think having a passion for missions is in my blood.”

Soon after the ceremony ended, Schick was involved in several days of in-person meetings with the board. Then he and Scarlett flew back to Auckland, where he worked a few weeks alongside Executive Assistant Pearl van Staden getting TWR’s new South Pacific outpost organized. By the end of October, he was in Colombia for another week of meetings with Latin American staff and partners.

The conclusion of Schick’s commissioning speech set the tone for the future.

“I’m going to finish with this last passage, which has been with me and us as a leadership team since my very first day, the powerful command given to Joshua and the Israelites as they stepped into their new era. ‘Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.’”

## THERE'S MORE

Read the full coverage of the installation at [twr.org/andy-commissioning](https://twr.org/andy-commissioning). We also invite you to click a link on that page to see a video of the full ceremony.



# 5 DECADES

## OF REACHING THE NATIONS FROM GUAM

BY JOHN LUNDY  
TWR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**A**fter nearly 50 years of broadcasting the gospel to Asia from the island of Guam, TWR signed off for the final time on Oct. 25. But, praise God, the message is still being told across Asia.

TWR's executive team publicly announced the difficult decision about Guam and station KTWR in June after months of prayer and consideration. Mounting challenges led to the hard call. The expense of living on Guam made it cost-prohibitive for most staff and missionaries and for those who otherwise might join the work. The few who remained faced unreasonable strain with no end in sight. Environmental challenges and aging equipment that soon would need to be replaced also played into the decision.

On the other side of the ledger, shortwave broadcasting from Guam was no longer the only way to get the message of salvation to large swaths of Asia. In fact, only the source has changed.

"Ralf [Stores] and George [Ross] were able to get pretty much all of our same frequencies, same times," said Grant Hodgins, previously station director on Guam and now TWR

chief personnel officer. "So we haven't lost any of our listeners, or we won't, prayerfully, lose any listeners."

So, mission accomplished on Guam. What remains are untold numbers of people who came to faith in Christ through the message that was proclaimed, along with the memories of the hundreds of missionaries, staff and volunteers who served there.

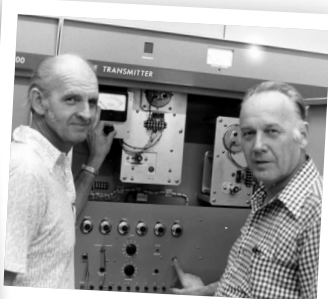
We tapped into just a few of those memories.

### First impressions

It was 3 o'clock on a February morning in 1978 when John and Sue Roessner (Guam 1978-90) and their two sons arrived on the island to begin their service with TWR. Even at that hour, it was 83 and humid.

"And as soon as I stepped on the tarmac, I went, 'Oh, honey, I love it here,'" Sue recalled. "And John was walking behind me, and he goes, 'I'll get used to it.'"

On Aug. 9, 2017, the day Carol Witthun (Guam 1993, 1997, 2017-present) arrived to begin her long-term service on Guam, "I find out Guam is in the international news because North Korea is threatening to send missiles to wipe out the U.S. military and people living here."



Mark and Debbie Blosser (Guam 1979-92) were scheduled to arrive on the island on Dec. 1, 1979, with the final leg being a flight from Hawaii.

Debbie tells the story: “We got up in the morning. Mark said, ‘You know, I had the strangest feeling that our plane left at 2 last night rather than 2 this afternoon.’ ... And sure enough, the people in Guam had shown up at the airport to meet us, and we weren’t there.”

## Island life

“We loved it,” said Hodgins (Guam 2014-25). “Eighty-five degrees year-round, cool breeze. ... It’s 30 miles long, eight miles wide. It’s U.S. territory. So they drive on the right side of the road.”

“People living in Guam are very family-oriented, which I have loved,” Witthun wrote. “The people love to eat – and they make some great local dishes. You will never go hungry in Guam.”

“Living on Guam, for a single guy especially, was a lot of fun,” said Scott Hollinger (Guam 1982-91), who began his time on Guam as a bachelor. “To be able to go hiking in the mountains and to ... all these different places where [World War II] battles were fought, or to the waterfalls and the caves. And then there was the snorkeling.”

“I found it to be a really relaxing place to live,” said Harry Bettig (Guam 1981-95), single while on the island. “And the staff was quite close-knit. So we worked together, but there were a lot of social activities, picnics, Christmas dinners, potlucks.”

## Typhoons

“It got cold when we had typhoons,” Sue Roessner said. “It would drop down to the 60s or 70s.”

“Lee Lowell and I went up on the antenna field during a typhoon (a crazy and very dangerous thing to do) to watch the huge blocks lift off the ground to release the

LEFT: Phil Binder works on a Guam tower (2005).

MIDDLE: Engineer Bob Schultz and TWR founder Paul Freed at Transmitter 1 (1977)

RIGHT: Volunteer Jen Montour with missionary Eli Sabin (2013)

tension on the wires of the curtain antennas,” Mark Blosser wrote in an email.

After one super typhoon, Bettig said, the power where he lived didn’t come back on for three weeks. This was when TWR broadcast via shortwave on KTWB and owned local AM station KTWG.

“I remember working the night shift during the storms,” Bettig said. “We had to be on the air. That’s how people got emergency information.”

“Mawar – it was the worst storm that Guam has had,” Hodgins said of that 2023 super typhoon. “We have readings at the station of 180 [mph winds]. ... I have video of a 10,000-pound block of concrete bouncing like a basketball.”

“You walk out of your house and ... there’s no palm branches, there’s no leaves, everything’s stripped,” Flora Rittenhouse said. “You see your neighbors. ... Somebody down the street had bagpipes. ... And it was so silent after all that noise, and he was playing ‘Amazing Grace.’ And I thought, ‘Yes, God. This is so cool.’”

Flora and her late husband, David, served on Guam from 1981-98.

## Kingdom impact

During a typhoon, KTWG – then part of TWR – was the only station that remained on the air, Sue Roessner recalled. Afterward, as John and the boys were cleaning up, a neighbor named Inez came to see her.

“The power went out, the electric and the

## ABOUT GUAM & TWR

- Speed limit on Guam – **35 mph**
- Price of milk, 2025 – **\$18/gallon\***
- Price of gas, 2025 – **\$5/gallon\***
- TWR staff on Guam, May 1984 – 14 TWR families, 2 single missionaries, 2 seconded families, 5 short-term workers
- TWR staff on Guam, Oct. 2025 – **7**
- Strongest wind gust – **236 mph\*\*** at Anderson Air Force Base during Super Typhoon Paka, Dec. 17, 1997
- First broadcasts – KTWG (AM) Aug. 1975; KTWR (shortwave) Sept. 1977
- Final broadcast – Oct. 25, 2025



*\* Civilian costs. Military personnel pay reduced rates at military exchanges. \*\* Disputed*

SOURCES: Grant Hodgins; Guam field director's reports; U.S. Department of War; TWR archives

water, and there was nothing except I found this radio station," Inez told Sue. "And that was the first time I heard about the Lord."

People from as far away as Africa could hear the Word of God from KTWR's powerful shortwave transmitters on Guam. One day, working in the office on Guam, Debbie Blosser received a request for a Bible from an Ethiopian man. She sent the Bible.

"And he actually wrote back to me later and said that through the help from that Bible, he did become a believer," Debbie said.

The man, Tedla Woldeyohannes, is now on the faculty of Huntington College in

Huntington, Indiana. He exchanges visits with the Blossers – who now live about 60 miles away in Goshen, Indiana.

"I don't think we'll know this side of heaven the impact, but I think it was immense," Hodgins said. "People that you spoke to on an island or as you went and visited, whether it was Singapore or China, Philippines, whenever you went to those places, people would say, 'Yeah, we've heard. We've listened.'"

Bettig learned of a man in Siberia who had listened to KTWR's Russian-language programs in Siberia. The man became a pastor and planted around 20 churches in Siberia. "And he said, 'It's because of what I learned on KTWR,'" Bettig related.

Flora Rittenhouse talked of traveling to China and communicating "with people who heard the message from our towers. And I thought, 'This is so cool. Those crazy things on Guam are doing this.'"

## NEW RESOURCES FROM TWR

- 1 A 31-day devotional to encourage you in the Great Commission. Great for advent, too! It's yours free at [twr.org/hope-within-reach](https://twr.org/hope-within-reach).
- 2 A fun and effective way to interest kids in missions! See more at [twr.org/kids-resources](https://twr.org/kids-resources). Order your own kit from [request@twr.org](mailto:request@twr.org) or call 1.800.456.7897.



# MY STORY WITH GOD IS PRODUCING FRUIT

**BY DAVID IRONDI**  
TWR AFRICA

In Nigeria and in Côte d'Ivoire, Muslims are coming to faith in Christ through the testimonies of others who have followed the same road.

Although both countries have a strong Christian presence, the Bambara people of Côte d'Ivoire and the Hausa people of Nigeria both overwhelmingly follow the religion of Islam.

But *My Story With God*, launched last year in those languages to present testimonies of faith and transformation, is already bearing fruit.

Consider Hajara, a teenage girl in Nigeria who with her mother listened to the testimony of a woman named Maimouna Kone on *My Story With God*. Kone, a former Muslim, shared how she encountered Christ and experienced true peace. Her testimony resonated deeply with Hajara and her mother, leaving them hungry for more. Today, they are actively growing in faith and have become a source of encouragement, even to the program's producers.

## POWER OF TESTIMONIES

Developed in West Africa for West Africans, *My Story With God* first went on the air in July 2024 and is heard weekly in African English, African French, Hausa and Bambara.

The Rev. Abdoulaye Sangho, TWR international director for West and Central Africa, envisioned the project.

"Testimonies have a unique power to touch hearts and break barriers," he explained.

"When people hear how Christ has changed the lives of others, they realize that transformation is possible for them, too. This project is not just about stories; it is about igniting faith and bringing people into the kingdom of God."

An example of the power of testimony is Umar, a gang member in Nigeria whose life was changed by *My Story With God*. Umar was moved by the testimony of another young man who left a life of violence and found peace in Christ. Umar reached out to a local pastor, gave his life to Christ and is now part of a discipleship group.

## RELEASED FROM FEAR

In Côte d'Ivoire as well, listeners are responding. A listener named Fatoumata shared how she had struggled with fear and uncertainty but found hope through a testimony on *My Story with God*. She connected with a local Christian group and is actively engaged in Bible study.

The response to *My Story With God* has been positive, demonstrating the profound power of oral-based media in the region. The goal is to expand the reach of these broadcasts by translating them into additional languages and providing more discipleship opportunities for new believers.

*"This project is not just about stories; it is about igniting faith and bringing people into the kingdom of God."* – Rev. Abdoulaye Sangho

# Two Ukrainian pastors call home

BY JOHN LUNDY  
TWR ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Roman Kapran and Serhii Rybak are both years and many miles away from their Ukrainian homeland.

But the two men, both pastors, are speaking to Ukraine through TWR. That came about because of a common link with Alexander Chmut, another pastor who is director of TWR Ukraine in Kyiv.

Kapran got to know Chmut in the early '90s, when both were at Irpin Theological Seminary in Ukraine. Rybak has a family connection: His brother, Alexander Rybak, is married to Chmut's daughter, Anna.

Another similarity: Both men are in the United States because of their wives. Rybak's wife, Maryana, is Ukrainian but grew up in California and is a U.S. citizen. They and their two children made the move from Ukraine to her hometown of Hemet, California, seven years ago. For Roman, the move to the States in 1998 was made possible because his wife's family had obtained permission from the U.S. government to immigrate.

## Bible scholar

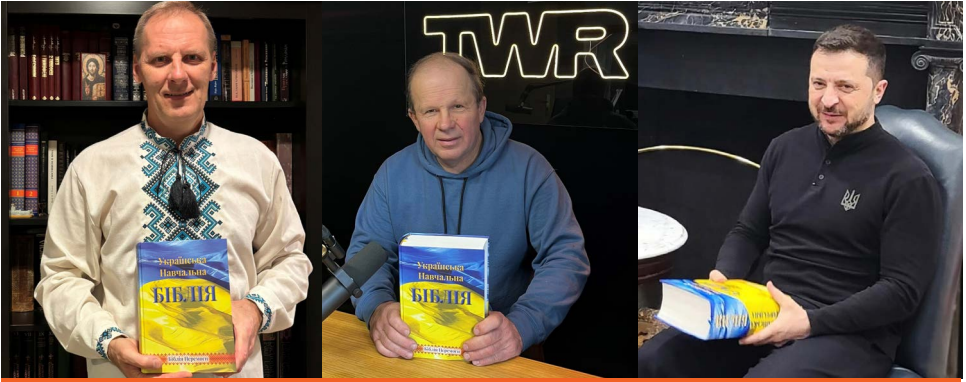
Kapran, who grew up in the Ukrainian city of Novovolynsk when it was part of the Soviet Union, is a Bible scholar who has studied at Odessa Theological Seminary in Ukraine and Biblical Theological Seminary (now Missio Seminary) in Philadelphia (U.S.) as well as Irpin. At Odessa, he majored in New Testament and New Testament Greek, particularly focusing on Paul's epistles.

He is pastor of a Ukrainian Baptist Church in Newark, Delaware, and is vice president of the Ukrainian Baptist Convention in the USA after previously serving as president. He was chief editor of the Ukrainian Study Bible, with its cover in the yellow and blue of the Ukrainian flag, that was released in 2024.

He now collaborates with Chmut on a study of Romans as part of the TWR Ukraine program *Studying the Bible Together*.



Ukrainian brothers Alexander, left photo, and Serhii Rybak, right, produce the podcast *10,000 km* for TWR Ukraine. Alexander lives in Kyiv with his wife, Anna, the daughter of TWR Ukraine's director. Serhii and his wife, Maryana, live in California. The wives now join their husbands in recording the podcast.



Roman Kapran (left), TWR Ukraine Director Alexander Chmut (middle) and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy all hold the Ukrainian Study Bible, edited by Kapran and released last year on Ukrainian Independence Day (Aug. 24).

“We made a Zoom [video] with Alexander when the war started, the full-scale invasion,” Kapran said. “I said to him that ... my interest is in Romans, and he proposed [that we] make this program on Romans.”

The two men were recording the programs together, via Zoom, on Saturdays, Kapran said, speaking across seven time zones. But because of busy schedules on both sides, they now record their portions separately, sending questions and comments back and forth.

### Long-distance podcast

Meanwhile, Serhii and Alexander Rybak are co-hosts of the *10,000 km* podcast, which roughly reflects the distance between Kyiv and Hemet. It grew out of the brothers’ lengthy phone conversations. They discussed ministry and cultural differences between the two countries. Now, they’re joined by their wives with a focus on family matters.

“We started seeing things like divorce ... addictions in families,” said Serhii Rybak, who is pastor of youth and worship at his church. “So when we started talking with my brother about this, he said, ‘Let’s just talk about this with our wives.’ Both of our families, his family as well, they both are involved in ministry.”

One of the things Serhii Rybak won’t talk about on the podcast is the war. Since he’s not experiencing the war directly, he doesn’t feel it’s appropriate for him to offer advice to those who are, he said.

### ‘People are tired’

Nonetheless, both Serhii Rybak and Roman Kapran feel the war’s effects. Kapran still has family in Ukraine, including a niece and nephew in the Ukrainian army. Rybak told how his brother and sister-in-law, who have a very young child, made the decision to always be in the same room. They had seen too many reports of one family member surviving when a bomb killed others in another room.

“So they decided: If we die, we die together,” Rybak said.

Asked what they’re hearing from home about the war now in its fourth year, they used almost identical words.

“People are tired, and they’re exhausted of that war,” Kapran said, but added that they don’t want to surrender.

“They’re tired,” Rybak said. “Very often they are desperate, and they feel hopeless.”

Strangely, though, he said, the war has had a positive spiritual impact on Ukrainians. “It helped to destroy religion in a good way,” he said. Ukrainians are turning to a genuine relationship with God in which they aren’t afraid to ask questions. “You understand that he’s with you, that he is grieving with you.

“He is going through this with you.”



# a unique & **'better'** online station

“In my walk with Jesus, I've learned that when we mess up, God doesn't turn us away. He steps closer because he's not surprised by our missteps. And he doesn't walk away when [bad] headlines hit. Instead, he invites us to be honest about where we have been, and he still walks with us into what's next. ... We've been forgiven. We are made new and covered by his mercy.”

— Enosh Lama, from  
*The Better FM Podcast*

## **The Better FM 1st-year fast facts**

**500,000** streams

**123 people** indicating  
decisions for Christ

**233 million** English  
speakers in India/Pakistan

Main audience:

**Men ages 25-35**

**at** first, The Better FM looks and sounds like most other polished commercial internet radio sites: It streams a wide range of pop songs from classic hitmakers like the Eagles and Paul Simon to more recent ones like Alabama Shakes and Ed Sheeran. Listeners are invited to check out social media links and plenty of lifestyle content. There's the familiar link to “Meet Our Host.”

Soon, however, listeners on the site, at URL [thebetter.fm](http://thebetter.fm), will notice differences. The DJ, Enosh Lama, speaks English but with that beautifully lilting accent from India. A couple of the links on the drop-down menus point to “Spiritual Connection” and “Wisdom for a Better Life” content. And Christian artists like Michael W. Smith, For King & Country and Kutless are well-represented in the music rotation.

TWR's blueprint for the online station explains that the purpose is to reach men across India and elsewhere in Asia with content that speaks to their hearts and struggles.

“Through a unique blend of a live DJ and cutting-edge artificial-intelligence technology, we create engaging, timely, responsive, interactive and relevant discussions that can ultimately lead our listeners to a life-changing encounter with the gospel,” the blueprint reads.

TWR Chief Content Officer Jon Fugler said the strategy behind this outside-the-box initiative is to “lead the listener through five stages of engagement, beginning with building trust and continuing all the way through to discipleship.”

“The station is gaining a following,” he said. “More than a station, it’s really a web-based ministry with an audio-streaming component. We need to be willing to innovate to keep up with the ways people consume media.”

In July 2023, after extensive research into the idea of creating an internet station geared to the massive numbers of people in India and other regions who speak English as a second language, Fugler asked Tom Terry to serve as general manager of the project. The highlights of Terry’s 42-year resume in broadcasting reveal that he started out in Christian radio in Arizona and then worked with Campus Crusade, now known as Cru, in the Middle East. He managed a TV station in Mongolia for several years before leading Jesus Film Project’s global broadcast strategy and consulting with TWR.

Recognizing the difficulty of making a single radio station culturally relevant in multiple regions, Terry recommended that The Better FM focus more narrowly on India and its surroundings. In its first year, the guiding theme of the online station was pre-evangelism, Terry said, while subsequent months have seen a more direct presentation of the gospel.

“And so the way we do that is we do something that’s really unique for a Christian broadcaster,” Terry said. “We air 80% secular music and 20% Christian music. And the secular music is not just any secular music. We carefully curate every individual song to make sure there’s nothing in the song that would be sinful or bad, that we don’t want to promote, but instead is about things like love and life. Nothing that is anti-biblical at all.”

The DJ’s commentary and professionally produced spots between the songs encourage listeners – many tuned in via the

free mobile app – to explore the content on thebetter.fm. Brief articles based on carefully screened AI research are grouped under categories such as finances, career, health and fitness, and marriage and family. Alongside each article is an ad bearing a question such as “Is this all there is?” and a click takes the reader to a short presentation of the gospel and prayer. Amazingly, in 2024, 31% of the readers who clicked on those ads indicated a decision for Christ.

“That’s just huge,” Terry said. “That really shows, to me, that the pre-evangelism strategy has merit. And so we get to use that to invite people to the gospel, and we’re seeing some results from that.”

Terry attributes much of the station’s early success to host Lama’s warm and energetic style. He calls Lama “our online therapist” and one of the most encouraging announcers he’s heard in his 40-year career.

Lama comes from Darjeeling (famous for its black tea) and was raised in a Christian family, growing up active in church because of its youth ministry and his love for music and bass guitar. As he grew, his relationship with God deepened, became truly personal and continues to shape his life. He earned a bachelor’s degree in theology and served as church worship and youth leader doing outreach to slum communities in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta) before working as a sound engineer recording materials for the visually impaired.

“I’ve always believed that music and stories have the power to heal, to guide and to quietly awaken something within us,” he said. “And when I heard about this role, I was excited that I could be that person to reach out to not just one person but countless people. I sensed it wasn’t just a role; it was a quiet mission to meet people right where they are and walk with them a little while.”

Lama’s roughly 15-minute monthly podcast has been added to the website, and The Better FM team hopes to expand the focus from India and Pakistan to other areas where sizable audiences that speak English and are tech savvy live.

– By Jon Hill, TWR Magazine editor

**WILL YOU JOIN US?** Your gifts will help us keep The Better FM running – even expanding, we hope! Visit [twr.org/better-fm](https://twr.org/better-fm).

# Reaching the Arab world with *The Way Companion*

BY DAVID KELLY  
TWR EUROPE WRITER



**Y**oung men in the Arab world are like young men everywhere: They're seeking a real purpose and a direction for their lives.

That's what JN,\* a TWR local producer, had in mind when he developed *The Way Companion*, a topical outreach that uses medium-wave radio, online radio streaming, visual and audio podcasts, social media and a website.

JN knows the challenges and mindset of those in the Arab world, and so the topics he chooses reflect this – focusing on issues such as shame, addiction, depression and fear. As both the producer and presenter, JN says his goal is to remind the young men: “*You are not alone; Jesus is with you, even in silence.*”

## Binge Listener

The approach is gaining adherents. One young listener reported listening to more than 250 episodes over nine hours a day for seven days “because God was speaking to me in nearly every episode.”

*The Way Companion* isn't just a multimedia program. It's a ministry, building relationships with its audience. A follow-up team responds to these young men with prayer and guidance. Each responder is trained to listen deeply, speak gently and guide through Scripture.

Over the past 12 months, the reach of *The Way Companion* has deepened as these young men show their hunger for truth and hope.

We invite you to join us in speaking hope to the Middle East and supporting this growing ministry: [twr.org/companion](http://twr.org/companion)

JN explains that many of these young men wrestle with trauma, abuse and spiritual oppression at a level that can leave follow-up team members themselves feeling overwhelmed by the depth of pain and isolation.

## ‘Tired of Sin’

For example, Shenouda\* in Egypt reported he felt burned out and was spiritually dry. “I'm tired of sin,” he said.

After surrendering his life to Jesus, Shenouda commented, “I used to rely on the prayers of others. ... Now I know him personally.”

Then there's Isaac\* in Afghanistan. He had rejected the divinity of Jesus, but God moved greatly in his heart over 26 days of grace-filled conversations. “Heaven rejoices over the salvation of one sinner who repents,” he said.

As God continues to use *The Way Companion* powerfully, JN is seeking prayer for the discipleship team as they handle the burdens shared by these young men. Please ask the Lord for wisdom to create fitting content and to open more doors in regard to those in North Africa.

\* Name withheld for security reasons.

# Innovating to connect with new audiences



Pablo Vázquez, Liz Acosta & Guillermo Gallo ready to stream RTM Paraguay's *Código Vital*

BY **MARALINA ALFONSO**  
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR  
FOR LATIN AMERICA

In addition to bringing the hope of Jesus Christ to their respective regions, TWR national partners serve as laboratories for identifying and experimenting with new ways to engage audience members.

RTM\* Paraguay and RTM Uruguay are excellent examples of this determination to harness any medium that has the potential to help deliver God's Word to listeners and (increasingly) viewers. For 31 years in Paraguay and 44 in Uruguay, these ministries have mastered radio production and delivery, creating programs and placing them for broadcast with AM and FM stations in their respective countries.

Now these media ministries seek to build new audiences – especially among younger, digital generations – through video livestreaming. RTM Uruguay's *La Mañana con RTM* (*The Morning With RTM*) team of Alejandra Maresca, Johnny Pérez and David Silva livestream on YouTube every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Steeped in opinion, personal reflection and humor, the unscripted program includes discussion about current events, popular culture and issues of the day from a Christian worldview and closes with a biblical devotional.

Real-time interaction allows local listeners and well as some as far away as Mexico, Spain and Chile to share their perspectives, creating a unique bond that transcends borders.

"The ability to read and respond to live messages has created a special connection with listeners, expanding the ministry's reach to a more diverse and engaged audience," Maresca said.

RTM Paraguay revitalized its long-running radio program *Código Vital* (*Vital Code*) to adapt to today's media environment, livestreaming once a month on Facebook. The innovation doesn't stop there: The host team of Liz Acosta, Guillermo Gallo and Pablo Vázquez recently stepped out of the studio to broadcast live from an interscholastic sports event, bringing the message of hope to a fresh and dynamic setting that resonates with youth.

Episodes feature dynamic interaction between the hosts, who discuss real-life experiences related to the topics and apply biblical principles to the proposed situations. Topics have ranged from dating to suicide to being compassionate, and the hosts sometimes also give advice or discuss current events.

You can sample our partners' innovative video livestreams at [twr.org/morning-with-rtm](https://twr.org/morning-with-rtm) and [twr.org/vital-code](https://twr.org/vital-code). If you don't speak Spanish, be sure to set the translated subtitles to English.

\* RTM is the Spanish equivalent of TWR.



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# YOUR LEGACY

## CONSIDER USING YOUR IRA TO ETERNALLY CHANGE LIVES

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Use your rollover to make a gift to a missionary or project of your choice.

If you'd like to know more about how you can create your legacy by making an IRA charitable rollover gift to TWR this year, scan the QR code or visit [twr.org/rollover](http://twr.org/rollover). Ready to talk now? Reach out to Tim McElhaney at 330.647.1789 or [tmcelhan@twr.org](mailto:tmcelhan@twr.org).

