

PRODUCED BY THE OFFICE  
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# mission 360°

STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

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  - 14 | They Gave Their All
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# Editorial

**R**ecently, Montgomery County, Maryland, home to the General Conference headquarters (GC), was named the most religiously diverse county in the United States. Within a 20-minute or so drive from the GC building, you can find at least 10 Hindu or Jain temples and at least 13 mosques or Islamic centers. In fact, less than 10 minutes up the road from the GC is an international Muslim TV station—Muslim Television Ahmadiyya International.

This is just one example of how ethnically and religiously fluid our world has become as people worldwide relocate their families, their lives, and their religious practices and non-practices. The United Nations estimates there are more than 281 million total migrants.

This huge dislocation of world populations has significant implications for Mission Refocus

as we encounter our three greatest mission challenges: the 10/40 Window, the Urban Window, and the Post-Christian Window.

It means that no matter where you're serving in the world church, you're encountering, at least to some extent, each of these windows. You're getting a taste of the 10/40 Window (albeit in vastly reduced numbers), the reality of urbanization, and the effects of rapidly growing secularism—particularly in urban areas.

Thank you so much for supporting Mission Refocus through your prayers, offerings and donations, and your personal involvement!



**Gary Krause**

Director of Adventist Mission



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## About our cover photo

PHOTO BY RICK KAJIURA

The man in this photo is a member of the Adventist community in Yangon, Myanmar. His warm smile captures the genuine kindness and hospitality I experienced from the people of Yangon during my trip there.

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# Jail Time

Can you imagine being thrust into a cold, dark prison cell for sharing Jesus? This is a common occurrence for Global Mission pioneers serving in a veiled country in our division.



Veiled Country



**Carol de Oliveira,**

a missionary from Brazil, serves as the Office of Adventist Mission communication manager for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division in the Philippines.

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**R**ecently, Chong\*, a pioneer, and Peter, the director of the local conference office, traveled to a closed country in our division to meet with members of a church plant. Included in the group were some 17 families who had recently given up ancestor worship and accepted Jesus as their Savior.

While Chong and Peter enjoyed a sumptuous dinner with the members, they learned about three families who wanted to give their lives to Jesus. Chong was so excited when he learned they were ready to burn their spirit-worship items that he decided to visit them that night.

As Chong, Peter, and some of the church members trudged along the dark, narrow path to the families' homes, one of the members told Chong that he wanted his family to hear about Jesus. So, before the group reached the three families, they stopped at the member's home to share the good news.

Finally, the group arrived at the homes of the three families. It was late and chilly, but the people's beaming faces warmed Chong's heart, and their zeal energized his spirit. As they huddled around a fire, Peter introduced Chong and told the people he was there to help them make a full surrender to Jesus.

But the families didn't seem to need Chong's help. "We are ready to give our hearts to Jesus," the family elder said. "We will walk in the light with Jesus taking the lead; not the worldly spirits."

While Chong was talking with the families, a man suddenly burst into the room, demanding that Chong accompany him to the clan leader's home. Chong knew the clan leader was angry with him for sharing Jesus, yet he graciously followed the man to the leader's home.

Later that evening, Peter and the church members returned to their place of worship to await news about Chong. As the hours dragged on, they became increasingly concerned about how long the meeting with the clan leader was taking. Finally, they received news that Chong was locked up in the clan leader's home.

During the night, the members prayed for Chong's protection while the leaders tried to negotiate his release. But nothing they tried was successful.

It was later confirmed that the head of the clan had conspired with the police to have Chong and the church elder's two sons arrested. The three men had been transported to a detention center where they were kept during the initial investigation of the case.

Providentially, Chong was released four days later. Now, the village where he spent time in a cold, dark cell has more than 100 people who have become Seventh-day Adventist Christians!

Rather than deterring Chong from sharing Jesus, jail time strengthened his resolve.

Despite fierce opposition, God's work continues to flourish in this veiled country. Please pray for our Global Mission pioneers who risk their safety to establish new churches for Jesus. Your faithfulness sustains their ministry.

\*Names have been changed

**"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you"**  
(Matthew 5:11, 12, NIV).

Global Mission pioneers are laypeople sent to start new groups of believers in unreached areas or among unreached people groups. They're paid a small stipend and as much as possible work within their own culture. Please support their ministry with your prayers and financial gifts to Global Mission.

## Ways to Give

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Mike visits  
Karen in Japan

# Serving God Wherever He Leads

**K**aren sat in the airport clutching her passport. She had flown before but never alone and never to an unfamiliar country halfway around the world. She was feeling a mix of excitement and anxiety when a Bible verse came to mind and reassured her: *Do not be afraid . . . for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go* (Joshua 1:9, NKJV). She relaxed, knowing God was right.

Karen grew up in a pastor's home, where the idea of becoming a missionary grew in her heart. But when, where, or how would God make this experience happen?

After completing high school, Karen enrolled at Union College in Nebraska. There, she met Mike Porter, a ministerial student. The two had much in common and quickly became friends. Then, they began dating.

Karen also learned about the student missionary program at Union College. As she browsed through a list of service opportunities, her eyes fell upon an open position in Japan.

She was excited as she imagined serving God halfway around the world. But what would happen to her growing relationship with Mike if she was gone for nine months? Karen prayed and felt sure God was calling her to Japan. Mike also thought she should accept this opportunity to serve. He wanted Karen to remain an important part of his life while he continued his ministerial studies.

The months flew by, and at Christmas, Mike flew to Japan and proposed to Karen. She accepted, and the couple were married following Karen's return to the US.

Being a student missionary had fueled Karen's desire for mission, and Mike shared her passion. After graduating, the couple prayed for a mission call while Mike pastored in several areas. Finally, they received an invitation to serve in Sri Lanka, an island country in Southern Asia. While Mike worked with the Adventist Development and Relief Agency there, Karen cared for their children and worked part-time for women's and children's ministries. Living in Sri Lanka during a civil war was challenging, but these difficulties prepared them for future service.

Karen developed some health issues in Sri Lanka, and the Porters expected that they would have to return to the US. But God surprised them when they were called to serve in Russia, where Karen's health improved. When the couple returned to the US, God led Karen to a position at the General Conference, where she would help new missionaries through the process of moving to a new country.

A few years later, the couple was again called overseas, this time to the Middle East. When Karen wasn't working, she traveled with Mike, who served as president of the Middle East Union. As Mike worked with employees in



**Charlotte  
Ishkanian,**

now retired, served her entire working career at the General Conference, including 20 years as editor of the *Mission* quarterlies. While gathering stories in Russia in the 1990s, she met Karen and Mike Porter, who served there as missionaries.



the Middle East, Karen encouraged the pastors' wives and other women—a ministry no man could do in that part of the world.

When the couple returned to the US in 2006, Mike accepted a position with the Quiet Hour ministries in California. Karen worked with medical students at Loma Linda University who wanted to serve overseas to help repay their student loans while serving as mission doctors and dentists.

Finally, Karen was called to be assistant and then associate secretary of the General Conference, where she continues to help newly appointed missionary families transition to their new assignments. Mike, now retired, keeps busy supporting mission to under-reached people.

"It's been an exciting and fulfilling journey, following God wherever He leads and witnessing His hand in every step," says Karen. "Serving as a volunteer opened my eyes to the challenges and rewards of serving cross-culturally and set me on a career path that led to helping others embark on their mission adventures. I would highly recommend experiencing the joy of volunteer mission service. It will enrich and expand your view of the world and our mission to it."



## Adventist Volunteer Service

Would you like to help make a positive impact in the lives of others? If so, please consider volunteering through Adventist Volunteer Service, which facilitates church members' volunteer service worldwide. Volunteers age 18 to 80 may serve as pastors, teachers, medical professionals, computer technicians, orphanage workers, farmers, and more. Find a call at [AMSda.org/Call](https://amsda.org/Call).

## VividFaith

A service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, VividFaith is an online platform connecting people with service opportunities, including Adventist Volunteer Service. To learn more, visit [VividFaith.com](https://VividFaith.com).



Karen and Mike visit pyramids in Egypt



Karen and Mike ride on a longtail boat in Thailand



Karen visits with a friend in the Middle East

# Amelia's Promise



A Veiled Country

At her lowest moment, Amelia couldn't envision a future worth living for. She had struggled with mental health for years and carried deep pain from the harsh words and actions of others. Her world felt like a dark tunnel with no light in sight, so she considered ending her life.

Then she recalled a conversation with a friend. He had encouraged her to pray for the people who hurt her. It seemed impossible, but Amelia was desperate for change, so she decided to try. "I remembered the Bible verse in Psalm chapter 37, verse 5 that says, 'Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass,'" Amelia said. "I was crying, and I claimed that promise. I told God I wanted to serve Him and become all He wanted me to be. I begged Him to do something to help me. 'I will work for you, Lord,' I promised, 'if You help me out of this problem, whatever that work is.'"

Amelia's prayer of surrender opened doors for God to change her life. Free from the resentment that kept her focused on herself, she now wanted to share His healing love with others.

One day, Amelia's friend told her about an opportunity to serve as a Global Mission pioneer, teaching at an Adventist school in the mountains of a veiled country.\* The travel to the area sounded daunting—four hours by motorcycle and six hours on foot. When she discussed the possibility with some local pastors, they were concerned the journey would be too strenuous for her. They suggested she teach at a city school instead. But Amelia felt called to the more challenging position. Despite her fears, she braced herself for the obstacles ahead.

Amelia's days were long and demanding. She was the only teacher in the village. When she arrived, the children were shy and hid whenever they saw her. It took time, but eventually, the children grew fond of her. In the evenings, she visited the students and their families and led worship services—not only for the Adventist members but for the animists, who made up most of the community.

Not everyone supported Amelia's mission. The local village leader made it clear that he didn't want her around. He even demanded that the locals stay away from her. He started attending her evangelistic meetings, thinking he could use his influence to stop the people from listening to her teachings. During baptisms, he would mock the ceremony, yelling, "Do you not have another place to take a bath?" Amelia had heard that the leader used witchcraft and cursed those who upset him, so she made his opposition a constant matter of prayer.

One evening, she held a parent-teacher meeting to discuss the students' performance and share her plans for the school. She hadn't gotten very far when the angry leader strode in and caused a disturbance. Amelia tried to ignore him, but his shouting drowned out her voice.

Amelia rushed to the church and knelt at the altar with tears streaming down her face. "God help me. I can't find a solution with this man because I know he has an evil spirit. So, I surrender the meeting to you. Please, Lord, make me strong and guide our meeting." Feeling God's presence, she calmed down and returned to the meeting with newfound courage.

The village leader's hostility didn't subside. He continued interrupting Amelia and rejecting her ideas. Amelia kept her composure and answered his questions respectfully. He demanded that the parents take his side, but they stood firm in their support of Amelia.

In the end, the meeting was inconclusive. Amelia didn't know what the future held, but she was determined to remain faithful to her promise, submitting herself to God's will and trusting Him to guide her through every challenge.

Global Mission pioneers such as Amelia often serve in difficult and even dangerous conditions. Some face continual threats to their ministry and safety. Others have even sacrificed their lives because they refused to stop sharing the gospel. Please pray for Amelia and for the hundreds of pioneers who are sharing God's love.

\* We call a country veiled when we have withheld its name to protect the lives and ministry of frontline workers serving there.




**Mwamba Mpundu**

is the senior editorial assistant for the Office of Adventist Mission.

Your prayers and financial gifts help Global Mission reach the unreached for Jesus around the world. To give, please visit **GMsda.org/Give**.





A person is shown in silhouette, crouching or sitting low to the ground. They are facing left, with their head bowed and hands near their face. The background is a massive, dynamic explosion of fine powder or paint in bright, saturated colors: yellow, orange, red, and blue. The explosion radiates from behind the person, creating a dramatic, high-contrast scene. The overall mood is one of intense emotion or creative energy.

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# From Soldier to Servant



## A Veiled Country

**M**y first contact with Irshad\* was the Sabbath morning a fellow church member handed me a slip of paper scribbled with his name and phone number. “He might be interested in spiritual things,” my friend said, with a gleam of hope in his eyes. I nodded my thanks and decided to contact Irshad that afternoon.

It took me only a few minutes visiting with Irshad to realize that God had been working in his life for a long time and that his wasn’t a casual interest.

After the usual courtesies, Irshad launched into his story. He told me that he already knew Jesus based on his study of his own faith. He explained that he had attended a well-known national university to become a leader in his community and, while there, noticed a vast difference between the teachings of his childhood and the Bible. He concluded the Bible was inspiring and not corrupt as he had been taught.

Years later, after he had joined the army, a Christian friend urged Irshad to leave the military and become a servant of God. Soon after that unusual advice, Irshad had a dream in which someone delivered the same message to him: “Quit being a soldier to serve God better.” Dutifully, Irshad left the army and began studying what he could about Christianity.

Now, another Christian friend noticed Irshad’s interest and urged him to be baptized. Irshad was thrilled to experience baptism, but he realized he knew very little about Christianity and even

less about the Bible. He told me how puzzled he felt. No one seemed to think he needed to do anything beyond accepting Jesus or that there was anything more for him to know.

As Irshad ended his story, he reached out to me with pleading eyes: “Would you teach me so I can know more about Jesus?” Would I be interested? Would I be willing to tell Irshad more? Did I have the time? Absolutely!

Since that first visit months ago, Irshad and I have studied the Bible together every week. Please pray that God’s Spirit will continue to work on Irshad’s heart so that he and the people of his community may come to know Jesus.

Also, please pray that I, a frontline worker in this veiled country, will have the wisdom to present Jesus in all His beauty so the people of this region may be ready for His soon return.

\*Name has been changed

The identity of this author has been withheld to protect their ministry.

Global Mission reaches the unreached for Jesus in the 10/40 Window. We do this in various ways, including through the service of Global Mission pioneers, urban centers of influence, and tentmakers who use their careers to share Christ.

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# Worth the Risk



United States



**Kayla Heidinger,**

who lives on the West Coast of the United States, volunteered in Chinle, Arizona, where she taught school, operated programs for children of alcoholic parents, and conducted Bible studies. She says her biggest passion is to learn to become the heartbeat of God to the broken.


**M**y mind wanders. It's been some years, and I still can't stop thinking about those people on the reservation—God's people. In my mind's eye, I'm 19 years old again. I see myself dragging my weary body from my bed as I attempt to mentally prepare

myself to step again into the small schoolroom. Outside, a high desert windstorm blurs the barren landscape into a whirlwind of red dust. My heart pounds with dread as I cross the short distance to the school door.

If I'm honest, I'm scared of my students. I'm five-foot-zero-inches tall, and one of our third graders is nearly as big as me and stronger.

We're only on the first subject of the day when he begins shouting with defiance. He rips the pages out of his math book, then shoves his desk across the room, which makes a resounding thud as it crashes to the ground. The room falls silent, everyone wondering what will happen next. All eyes are locked on my fellow teacher and me.





Truth is, he's a bully. He knows how to be a bully because he is bullied. He knows how to manipulate because he is manipulated. My heart hurts for him. He's abused and controlled and does the same to others in a desperate attempt to survive.

My mind wanders to another scenario. This time, I'm in church. In the front row sits a woman. I hadn't seen her before, but I was later told who she was. Weeks later, I learned the heartbreaking story that is a common reality for these dear people. She had been drinking, and a church friend took her home to ensure she arrived safely. Unfortunately, she never made it inside her front door. She froze to death on her porch—another victim of alcohol, another precious life destroyed and gone. My heart hurts deeply.

Again, my mind jumps. I see myself in the little room with the yellow wall. I grab an armful of wood and start a fire so it will be warm inside for the kids. I'm exhausted, but my heart is warmed when they arrive. I hear their little voices calling me to push them on the swings before I tell them Bible stories and do activities with them. These little people come from abusive families, none of them free from pain. Some deal with self-harm, others have experienced family members who have committed suicide, and most, if not all, know way more than they should ever have known.

I feel privileged to be someone they open up to and trust. Once a month, I get to look into the eyes of their addicted parents and tell them Bible stories, too. I get to tell them that there's hope and that Jesus cares deeply about them. My heart is full when I have the opportunity to love these people. Yet it aches, because sometimes love hurts.

I remember these people, their stories, and the truth of the dark realities in which they live. I share their stories not to be discouraging but to expose how desperately they need to be loved like Jesus loves, to experience grace that can set them free.

I share their stories to inspire love. Yes, sometimes love hurts, but it's always worth the risk.

As C. S. Lewis says, "To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable."<sup>1</sup>

1 Lewis, C. S., 1960, *The Four Loves*, Geoffrey Bliss: London, pages 138, 139.

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If you're interested in volunteering, visit **vividfaith.com** to explore service opportunities.



Pacifico and Delie Mae Maypa celebrate a birthday together

# They Gave Their All

## The Maypa family

As I anticipated the memorial service and burial that would begin in a few hours, I contemplated the high cost of cross-cultural mission service for the Maypa family and many others I'd come to know and love over the years.

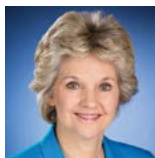
I first met the Maypas, originally from the Philippines, in Thailand as they were preparing to serve as cross-cultural missionaries. Dr. Pacifico Maypa, a surgeon, and his wife, Delie Mae, a nurse, had accepted a call to serve at Yuka Adventist Mission Hospital in Zambia. Their 16-year-old daughter, Carlene, would continue her schooling in the Philippines while their 14-year-old son, El Rej, and their 13-year-old daughter, Kaye, would be homeschooled for at least their first year at Yuka to anchor the family in their new environment.

Yuka Adventist Hospital is some 500 miles west of Lusaka, Zambia's capital city. It's remote and exhausting to reach, requiring many hours of travel by plane, bus, and boat. It's not an easy place to serve, especially for a family with two early teens. But easy wasn't a priority for either Pacifico or Delie Mae. They were always willing to serve in the most needy and challenging areas.

After their first year at Yuka, El Rej and Kaye attended Maxwell Adventist Academy in Kenya. While Kaye adapted well, El Rej struggled to develop a sense of belonging. I visited them during the school year, and it was clear that El Rej felt isolated and alone. His parents brought him back to Yuka and then decided it would be best for him to return to the Philippines to continue his education.

Kaye graduated from Maxwell Academy and then attended Southwestern Adventist University in Texas. Her mother helped her register and settle in the dorm and left her there to study. Being on three different continents was difficult for the Maypa family. Communication was unreliable at Yuka and only somewhat better when Pacifico and Delie Mae transferred to Akomaa Memorial Adventist Hospital in Ghana. The sadness and loneliness of being separated as a family was hard for each of them.

After six years at Yuka and two years in Ghana, Pacifico and Delie Mae decided it was time to return to the Philippines. Their



**L. Ann Hamel**

has provided mental health care and support for missionaries during the past 30 years. She has a PhD in psychology and a doctor of ministry degree in formational counseling. Ann and her husband, Loren, live in Berrien Springs, Michigan.





trip home included a stop in Texas to attend Kaye's graduation. They were proud of Kaye who had earned a degree in medical laboratory technology and secured a job at Kettering Medical Center in Ohio.

In the Philippines, Pacifico and Delie Mae spent what seemed like too little time with El Rej and Carlene before taking up responsibilities at Calbayog Adventist Hospital, the smallest and poorest Adventist Hospital in the country. They chose to go to Calbayog rather than Palawan Adventist Hospital where they had worked before going to Africa, because the need for a surgeon at Calbayog was so great.

Ten months after relocating to Calbayog, Pacifico and Delie Mae enjoyed a beautiful Friday evening vespers with the hospital staff, singing, praying, and talking together before retiring to their small apartment. It had been a busy week, and they were happy for the Sabbath rest. Just a few hours after they went to bed, Kaye called from Ohio, and they had a long and enjoyable conversation. Around 2:30 AM they



Daniel Lui and his wife, Prima

said goodbye to each other, and Pacifico and Delie Mae went back to sleep. An hour later, an electrical fire started in their apartment. The flames spread quickly. Pacifico and Delie Mae were unable to get out.

### Daniel Lui and Janelle Alder

I traveled to the Philippines in 2023 to provide crisis intervention and psychological support for missionaries serving with Philippine Adventist Medical Aviation Services (PAMAS). PAMAS is a self-supporting medical aviation organization that provides medical evacuations



Ann Hamel with her husband, Loren, and Kaye, Carlene, and El Rej Maypa





Ann Hamel with Dr. Gordon and Janet Lui, who lost their son in an aviation tragedy

for people living in the remote mountainous regions of Palawan. I was asked to go to the PAMAS base near Brooks Point after their medical relief helicopter, known throughout much of the Philippines as the Yellow Bee, disappeared.

When the call came to transport a patient in need of emergency medical care, helicopter

pilot Daniel Lui and nurse Janelle Alder quickly responded. Andrew Hosford, also a mission pilot with PAMAS, tracked the flight. When the Yellow Bee's signal suddenly stopped and he was unable to contact the helicopter, he organized a search team. Pilots throughout the region converged at Brooks Point and systematically combed the area where the Yellow Bee sent out its last signal. When I arrived, the pilots had given up the aerial search but still gathered at Brooks Point to search the numerous nearby islands. They found Janelle's shoes and a cushion the patient had brought on board but no trace of the helicopter or its passengers.

Daniel's parents, Dr. Gordon and Janet Lui, were on site when I arrived. They had been missionaries at Hong Kong Adventist Hospital. Growing up as a missionary kid, Daniel had developed a passion for sharing the gospel and helping people in areas of the world with the greatest need. Although he had served as a medical relief helicopter pilot in Palawan for the past seven years, he and his wife, Prima, a resident physician, had been married only two years when the Yellow Bee sent out its last signal.

Janelle's parents, Mark and Cheryl Alder, and her four younger brothers came to Palawan a few days after I arrived. Mark was a pilot, and



Ann Hamel with Janelle Alder's parents, Mark and Cheryl; her brothers, Caleb, Luke, Andrew, and Nathan; and James Lalonde, a counselor with an organization that supports mission aviation



both he and Cheryl supported Janelle's decision to become a missionary flight nurse. They had lived many years in Alaska where Mark had worked as a civil engineer and his job often required him to travel the state in a small plane. One summer, he and Janelle traveled together, she as his assistant, inspecting bridges and roads. From a young age, Janelle had a love for sharing the gospel and helping people. Living and working on Palawan fit who Janelle was and what she believed God had called her to do. She and Andrew (Hosford) shared a passion for mission and were planning a future together. Andrew had intended to ask Janelle's parents for her hand in marriage the next time they were together.

While with the PAMAS missionaries, I was touched by the willingness of the pilots and their families to risk their own lives to serve others. Each was keenly aware that what happened to Daniel and Janelle could happen to them.



Nurse Janelle Alder, second from left, with pilot Andrew Hosford, nurse Mariane Joyce Nesle, and pilot Daniel Lui

Elma's daughters are both physicians, like their late father, Dr. Manuel Bellosillo, and both work at Adventist Hospital Palawan.

Manuel and Elma were long-term missionaries, who served cross-culturally for more than 32 years. They spent their first 11 years at Yuka. Fem

## The Bellosillo family

While in Palawan, I visited Elma Bellosillo and her two daughters, Fem and Joy and her son LJ, as well as Joy's husband and sons.



Manuel and Elma Bellosillo



Ann Hamel with Elma Bellosillo and her daughters, Fem and Joy, and Joy's husband and son



and Joy attended Maxwell Academy, and when LJ left home to go to Maxwell, the Bellosillos left Yuka and continued to serve throughout Africa and Asia for the next 21 years.

When the pandemic started in March of 2020, they were serving in Cameroon. Even though most foreigners returned to their home countries as borders closed and air traffic ceased, the Bellosillos stayed. The workload was heavy, and the demands were high, but Manuel continued to serve. In May, he contracted malaria, and before he had fully recovered, he tested positive for COVID. This was an extremely challenging time for Elma as well as Fem, Joy, and LJ. Early in the pandemic, the disease was poorly understood and treatments were extremely limited. With his health compromised, Dr. Bellosillo succumbed to the virus more quickly than anyone anticipated. Not even Elma could visit him and he, like many others, died alone—the first Seventh-day Adventist missionary in active service to die of COVID.



Gary, Cherise, and Wendy Roberts



Bob and Jan Roberts

## The Roberts family

Ten years ago, I traveled to Papua, Indonesia, to support my good friend, Jan Roberts and the aviation team that she and her husband, Bob, had led for more than 22 years. On the morning of April 9, 2014, Bob's plane had crashed on takeoff killing Bob and one other passenger.

Bob and Jan were long-term missionaries. I got to know them in Africa before they went to Papua. Their sons Eric and Gary were teenagers, and their daughter Stephanie was a toddler when they moved from Zaire [DRC] to Papua in 1992. As the longest-serving mission pilot in our denomination, Bob was experienced, having flown over some of the most difficult terrain on earth. I didn't make it in time for his funeral, but the sense of loss among the whole community was palpable when I arrived.

When I met with Jan, she told me that she had begun each day with the realization and acceptance that Bob might not return. Of course, she grieved, but not as many others do. She saw what had happened as a part of the package she had signed up for in marrying Bob and accepting a call to missions. Like our Savior, it was a part of taking up the cross that she had been asked to bear.

The Roberts children, Eric, Gary, and Stephanie, all grew up in the mission field, aware of the risks involved yet choosing to serve as missionaries themselves. Like their father, Eric and Gary were both mission pilots.



As a family, the Roberts understood well the high cost of cross-cultural mission service. Gary and his wife, Wendy, were serving in Chad when their four-year-old son, Kaleb, died of malaria in 2009. Gary and Wendy grieved as they buried their son by the runway there in Chad. Like our Savior, they shared in the suffering of the people they had gone to serve, people who frequently lost children to malaria. After Bob's death, Gary, Wendy, and their daughter Cherise left Chad and moved to Papua to continue the mission there.

In June of 2024, while feeling physically strong and energetic, Gary began experiencing symptoms that neither he nor Wendy could explain. To find out what was wrong required getting medical care outside Papua. Upon arrival in the States, Gary was diagnosed with two glioblastoma brain tumors and died one month later. Wendy and 18-year-old Cherise now face the challenge of building a life without Gary.

The death of a parent and spouse is *always* hard, but it is particularly hard when that loss entails the loss of one's home, identity, and way of life. Gary and Wendy had built their lives serving God cross-culturally. Cherise has never lived in the United States. The cost of cross-cultural mission service is disproportionately high for missionary kids, particularly those who lose a parent.

Gary's brother, Eric, and his wife, Heidi, having worked in Papua themselves for more than 20 years, understand well the demands and challenges of the work there. Leaving their two sons behind, Eric has already returned and Heidi will join him soon. Before he died, Gary shared details of the work that will enable Eric to more effectively carry on the mission and legacy of the Roberts family.

Eleven months after arriving in Kenya, Johnny had a fatal heart attack and died on the campus of the University of East Africa, where he and Lorraine both served. Lorraine and Matthew decided to bury Johnny there on the campus.

Several months later, I stood with Lorraine by Johnny's grave and grieved with her. I sat with Lorraine and Matthew in their home as they shared the challenges they were facing as cross-cultural missionaries without their beloved husband and father. Remaining in Kenya after Johnny's death has not been easy. I personally know the pain of burying a husband in Africa and the challenges of being a widow and single mother.

Yes, cross-cultural mission service is costly. It has always been costly. But for the Maypa, Lui, Alder, Bellosillo, Roberts, and Villagomez families, the cost has been particularly high. As followers of Jesus, we are all asked to take up our cross and to follow Him. None of us know what that cross will entail but we know and can trust the One who invited us to take it up.

Photos courtesy of Ann Hamel and the family and friends of those honored in this article.

## The Villagomez family

Before leaving Manila in 2023, I met Lorraine Villagomez and her son Matthew. Unfortunately, I never had the privilege of meeting Lorraine's husband, Johnny, who had died several weeks before.

Johnny had grown up as a missionary kid in East Africa. When he and Lorraine received a call to Kenya, Johnny was delighted. He loved Africa and was happy to return with his wife and their 15-year-old son, Matthew.



Lorraine, Johnny,  
and Matthew  
Villagomez

# A Legacy of Compassion

## Mario Oliveira's Lifelong Mission to Serve

**I**n a world where disasters seem to grow in scale and frequency, some dedicate their lives to being a beacon of hope during crises. Mario Oliveira is one of those individuals.

For more than two decades, Mario has worked at the forefront of disaster relief, coordinating emergency responses as the director of Emergency Management for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International. Through his work, he has witnessed the power of compassion and the transforming impact that serving others can have—not just on those who receive aid but also on those who give it.

Mario's journey began in Angola, a nation ravaged by civil war, when he arrived in 1998 with his family to serve as ADRA's country director. His mission was clear: to provide vital nutrition, healthcare, and education to those displaced by the conflict.

"I didn't plan on being a humanitarian worker, but when I saw the devastation around me, I knew I had to make a difference," Mario shares. "It wasn't just about providing aid—it was about walking alongside people, empowering them to rebuild their lives."

One experience left an indelible mark on Mario's heart. While visiting a hospital in Wamba, he met Maria, a malnourished 10-year-old girl. After a month of life-saving aid from ADRA, Mario returned to find Maria completely transformed. "It was in that moment I understood the true power of our work," Mario reflects. "Our mission isn't just a job—it's a lifeline."

That moment transformed Mario's life, strengthening his commitment to ADRA's mission and inspiring him to pursue a master's in humanitarian work in Switzerland. "I realized I needed to combine hands-on experience with academic training to serve better, especially as global disasters continue to grow."

It wasn't long before Mario's decision to focus on disaster response proved prophetic. "The world is seeing more disasters, larger in scale and more devastating in impact. I chose to focus on humanitarian emergencies because they will

only continue to increase, and I want to be ready when they do," Mario explains.

Through it all, Mario has learned a powerful lesson: true transformation doesn't come from imposing solutions—it comes from empowering the people you serve to be agents of change in their own lives. "We think we have the answers," Mario reflects. "But the people we serve—they know the solutions. They just need the resources to make their vision a reality. Our job is to partner with them, not do it for them."

ADRA's ability to partner with local communities in times of crises is one of its greatest strengths. Whether it's mobilizing local volunteers or providing immediate relief to devastated areas, ADRA, part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, ensures that help is never far away. "When a community is in the depths of despair, it's not just about giving them aid—it's about showing them that they haven't been forgotten," Mario says. "To be there for them in their darkest moments, to be the hands and feet of Christ—that's the greatest reward."

Mario's mission is not just about responding to immediate needs; it's about sowing seeds of hope that will endure. "I dream of a world where ADRA is no longer needed because peace and stability reign," Mario says with unwavering hope. "But until that day comes, we continue to grow, to learn, and to serve with a heart full of compassion."

From the war-torn villages of Angola to the refugee crisis in Armenia, Mario has been a steadfast witness to the difference one life, one act of service, can make. And through it all, his message is simple: true service to others is not about seeking recognition but about being a vessel of love in a world that so desperately needs it.



Angola



**Iris Argueta**

is the communications and public relations director for ADRA International.



"Service," Mario says, "it's not a duty—it's a calling. It's about standing in the gap and being the light for those who are suffering. This is what ADRA is all about: reaching out to those who need us most and showing them that they are not alone."

Mario's story is a living testament to the mission of ADRA. It's a story of selfless service, unwavering faith, and the transformative power of compassion. To watch it, visit [bit.ly/4kcbCHk](http://bit.ly/4kcbCHk).

## About ADRA

The Adventist Development and Relief Agency is the international humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, serving more than 120 countries. Its work empowers communities and changes lives around the globe by providing sustainable community development and disaster relief. ADRA's purpose is to serve humanity so all may live as God intended. For more information, visit [ADRA.org](http://ADRA.org).



When you give to the mission offering during Sabbath School, a portion of that offering helps fund ADRA's ministry around the world. Thank you for your generous support.



ADRA International's director of emergency management, Mario Oliveira, right, engages with a field technician to coordinate on-the-ground efforts in Africa.





# Ukulele Is the Way!



**Mongolia**



**Joshua Sagala**

is a video producer for the Office of Adventist Mission.

**M**ongolia, a large East Asian country, offers both challenges and rewards for mission work. Adventist Volunteer Service missionary, Danilo, has served as an English teacher and assistant chaplain at Tusgal School for two years in the nation's capital, Ulaanbaatar. His life journey has taken him from Mexico to Saipan and now to Mongolia.

"I decided it was really important to let God lead and to live in the center of His will," Danilo says. "Trusting Him is what brought me to Mongolia."

At Tusgal School, Danilo faces the challenge of religious restrictions that impact how he interacts with his students.

"We can't overtly pray with our students or read the Bible or speak about God," Danilo explains. "So, we focus on demonstrating biblical







Danilo teaches his students songs about Jesus

values and communicating that in character building. It's a blessing to see that God works even with the restrictions."

Danilo looks beyond academics, cultivating a classroom marked by compassion and spirituality. Every class begins with something unique that fosters a sense of love and connection for his students. And they appreciate all he does for them.

"He's like a friend to us," says seventh-grader Ninjin. "He's our motivator. He encourages us to be greater and better every day."

"He starts every lesson with singing and playing the ukulele," adds eighth-grader Khuslen. "So that makes every student really into the lesson and helps them understand it more."

In Mongolia, the temperature can drop to -40°, and the language barrier complicates communication, just to name two of the challenges. Yet, Danilo and his family embrace these obstacles, forming meaningful relationships and demonstrating God's love.

Danilo invites others to join him in volunteer mission service. "Being a volunteer will change your life," he says. "When you leave your comfort zone and choose to trust God's leading and allow Him to select a place for you, it gives you a life-transforming experience. You truly get to know God more deeply. You can also get to

know yourself through God's eyes and make meaningful relationships. It's truly a blessing."

For those interested in volunteering yet uncertain, Danilo has some inspiring words to share. "I would say pray, bring it to the Lord and say, 'God, wherever You lead, I will follow. I want to live in the center of Your will.' [Serving] will be the best decision you ever make. You'll have peace and joy. You can do it, knowing that you're in His hands."

Please pray for all the Adventist Volunteer Service missionaries serving around the world. Thank you for supporting the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



Watch "Ukulele Is the Way" at [m360.tv/s2525](https://m360.tv/s2525)!

If you're interested in volunteering, visit [vividfaith.com](https://vividfaith.com) to explore service opportunities.



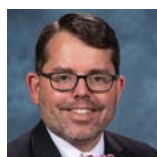
Are you an Adventist organization that needs volunteers? Become a recruiting entity today! Visit [AMSda.org/Provider](https://AMSda.org/Provider) to learn more.



# The Unconventional Maud Sisley Boyd



***Maud Sisley Boyd (1851–1937) was a Bible teacher, editor, compositor, Bible worker, and school matron. She was also the first woman missionary sent by the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Foreign Mission Board.***



**Michael W. Campbell**

is the director of the North American Division Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research. This story is adapted from his biographical article in the online *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*. We invite you to visit [encyclopedia.adventist.org](http://encyclopedia.adventist.org) to enjoy more stories about Adventist missionaries.

**M**aud Sisley was born into a family of eight children in Kent, England, on November 25, 1851. After her father's death, she and her family relocated to the United States on a farm in Convis, Michigan. There, her eldest brother attended meetings held by Adventist minister J. B. Frisbie, and soon, the entire family embraced the Advent message.

A visit by James and Ellen White convinced Maud's mother to sell the farm and relocate to the church headquarters at Battle Creek, Michigan, so Maud and her siblings could have better educational advantages. The family moved to Battle Creek in 1867, where Maud became a student of Goodloe Harper Bell, a recent convert who held evening classes for Review workers. She also found employment with the Review and Herald Office, arranging type for printing.

Maud was a firm financial supporter of the church's effort to spread the Adventist message. For example, in 1873, she secured \$10 in shares in the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing

Association. Two years later, she gave \$11.50 toward the "Pacific Mission."

Maud was also involved in personal evangelism. After 10 years of service at the Review and Herald, she traveled to Newark, Ohio, with her friend Elsie Gates to distribute literature. They rented a small room and shared tracts and pamphlets at every opportunity. The *Australasian Union Record* later regarded this endeavor as the first time two Adventist "ladies" entered "the work of house to house visitation with our tracts and periodicals."

## Pioneer Missionary to Europe

Maud was an active member of the tract and missionary society in Battle Creek in 1877 when she sensed God calling her to become a missionary. She wrote, "While kneeling in prayer about 7:00 one evening, I heard a voice distinctly ask me this question: 'Are you willing to do anything that the Lord wants you to do?' At this time I had been a member of the church for 10 years, and I had often thought I was willing to do anything... [But] I now found that I had not made the wholehearted surrender that I thought I had."

Viewing herself "arraigned before the judgment seat of God," Maud wept and prayed until midnight. She surrendered herself to God. The following day, she received a call from the Foreign Mission Board to go to Europe.

On November 17, 1877, Maud left Boston for Europe, traveling with fellow missionaries William and Jennie Ings. She would later become particularly close to Jennie, whom she described fondly as "a mother and sister." Together, they assisted in missionary work from early morning until six o'clock in the evening when they studied the French language and had family worship using their French Bibles. Upon arrival in London, the Ings and Maud met J. N. Andrews, who was there to purchase printing equipment. The group accompanied Andrews to Basel, Switzerland, where Maud assisted with the early publishing work, including translating and editing the church's paper, *Les Signes des Temps*.

Maud wrote, "A room in the house where the mission family resided in Basel, about twelve feet square, I should judge, was set apart for



the office. Here, we set the type for our French paper and various tracts in German and French. When the forms were ready for the press, Charles Andrews [J. N. Andrews' son] took them in a handcart to the city, where the printing was done. The sheets were brought back to the house in the same vehicle, and then folded and addressed on our dining room table."

Maud was saddened when the Ings went to pioneer the work in England, but reported, from a letter from them, that "the country seems ripe for the message. . . I believe a great work will be accomplished there. I feel interested for my native land."

A particular highlight for Maud was setting the type for the first Adventist tract in Italian. However, in 1878, she learned of two new converts from Italy who were more conversant in French, German, and Italian. She offered to have one of these young men take her place at the publishing house.

By April 1879, Maud had joined missionaries J. N. Loughborough and his wife, Anna Mariah, in Southampton, England, to follow up on interests generated by the Ings's efforts. She stayed only six months before returning home.

## Return to America

Maud returned to the United States in time to attend the second annual General Sabbath School Association session held in Battle Creek, Michigan. There, she met another participant, the widower Charles L. Boyd. The couple wed on December 8, 1879, and later went to Nebraska, where Charles served as conference president and Maud led the Nebraska Tract Society. She supported him in missionary work as they traveled in a covered wagon across the region. In 1883, Charles became president of the church's work in the Northwest Territory (today Washington, Idaho, and Oregon). Here, their two daughters, Ella and Ethel, were born.

## Pioneer Missionaries to Africa

On May 11, 1887, the Boyds went as part of the first group of Adventist missionaries, with Dorcas A. Robinson, to Cape Town, South Africa. Tragically, the Boyd's youngest daughter, Ethel, died at age three in Capetown. The Boyds left the other missionaries to travel to Kimberly, where they conducted evangelism and organized a church of 21 members in Beaconsfield. Maud reported that there were nine young men she was training as colporteurs. "The canvassing work looks more encouraging now than ever before," she wrote. "It seems to me

we must depend mostly upon our literature, as it is so difficult to reach the people by means of preaching, and I am very thankful that the Lord does bless the canvassing work here."

On January 6, 1891, the family began their journey home to America aboard the steamer *Tartar*, stopping in London before leaving on February 11 for New York. Traveling upon the *Majestic* of the White Star Line, the fastest ship to cross the Atlantic Ocean, Maud wrote that as they entered the New York harbor, they admired the magnificent Statue of Liberty, which held her electric torch to light us safely home in our native land. They reached Battle Creek in time to attend the 1891 General Conference Session.

## Later Labors

At the session, Maud's husband, Charles, was asked to take the presidency of the Tennessee River Conference located in Nashville, Tennessee. The Boyds were early workers in the American South, answering Ellen White's resounding call to break down racial barriers and to work for the downtrodden Blacks in the American South. Maud was particularly active in establishing two mission schools. While Charles and Maud held tent meetings in North Carolina during the summer of 1898, Charles caught typhoid. He passed away on July 2, 1898.

After Charles' death, Maud went to Australia to assist with the newly formed Avondale School at the request of Ellen White. Accompanying her were her daughter, Ella, and mother, Susannah. Maud spent nine years there as preceptress (women's dean), matron (cook), and educator. She also served as the secretary of the Victorian Tract Society for a time. In 1907, her daughter, Ella, went as a missionary to Tonga. That same year, Maud went to assist the Adventist school in Warburton. Two years later, she returned to Avondale.

Maud spent three additional years in Bible work in New South Wales and Victoria. When her sister, Nellie Sisley Starr, fell ill, she returned to the United States to be closer to her while continuing to conduct Bible work. During the last 17 years of her life, she served as a Bible teacher at the Loma Linda and Glendale Sanitariums in California. She spent one school year (1927–1928) teaching at Oakwood Junior College in Alabama. After her sister died, she returned to Australia in 1934 to live with her daughter, Ella. She died on May 17, 1937, and was buried next to her mother, Susannah, in the Avondale Adventist Cemetery in Cooranbong, New South Wales.

For citations, please see the original article at [encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=AAZ0](https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=AAZ0).



A photograph of Anteneh Hailu, a man with a beard and a baseball cap, sitting and talking to another man whose back is to the camera. The background is a vibrant, abstract splash of colors including pink, yellow, and blue.

# From Depressed to Disciple Maker

Anteneh Hailu, provides health counseling to a member of the community



**Ethiopia**



**Sandra Dombrowski** is a freelance writer living in Connecticut, United States. She has a passion for highlighting, promoting, and working in urban ministry.

**A**nteneh Hailu is a third-generation Adventist, but his life in Ethiopia revolved around soccer, politics, and money. He traveled to the United States, eager to achieve the American dream. Instead of finding worldly success, he sank into depression and tried to commit suicide. He was about to return to Ethiopia when someone suggested he try medical missionary training, “just for three weeks.”

At Tekoa Mission, an Adventist training center in New Hampshire, Anteneh found Jesus. It was as if he was learning about the Adventist health message for the first time. He also learned how to teach it to others, share the gospel, make disciples, and start a center of influence. Instead of three weeks, he stayed three years. “I found that I had a calling,” Anteneh said.

Anteneh returned to Ethiopia in 2015 to start a ministry that trained young people to be missionaries for life. “I didn’t know if anyone would be interested in health evangelism,” he said. “I went to the Ethiopia Mission Conference

and told them my plan. I was praying to the Lord to give me people.”

The conference approved Anteneh’s plan and God sent him people. With these committed workers, Anteneh organized Parousia Mission.

By 2020, they started Parousia café and restaurant, an urban center of influence serving more than 200 people daily. Customers can also buy or borrow Adventist books and watch Hope Channel Ethiopia (which Parousia Mission’s media department helps produce) on a television in the café. They also offer health classes and, every holiday, they give each customer an outreach book.

Parousia Mission’s urban agriculture department, like the café and restaurant, meets the needs of the people and shares Jesus with them. On the outskirts of Addis Ababa, they rent several acres of land from an Adventist school to grow vegetables. At harvest time, they conduct a health expo in the area and sell their fresh vegetables. Once, they met an 82-year-old woman who didn’t have any food in her house. They brought her bags of vegetables and introduced



her to the local Adventist pastor. Soon, she was baptized, which shows what God can do with just a few bags of vegetables and compassionate follow-up.

Parousia Mission also teaches health to communities where most people don't have enough food. They collaborate with FARM STEW, a nonprofit organization that trains local people how to grow food, sustain themselves, and live an abundant life based on biblical principles. "That was a missing piece for our ministry that helped many areas," Anteneh shared. "We were even able to plant a church in one area."

Profits from the café/restaurant provided most of the funds for Parousia Mission to conduct a nine-day health expo with evening evangelistic meetings in southern Ethiopia, where there had been a drought. By the fourth day, some people wanted to join the church. "You're going to leave us in a few days. Please start a church here," the people pleaded.

"We didn't have money to start a church," Anteneh said, "but the people pushed us to secure a house to meet in." By the next Sabbath, where there had been no Adventist church, there was now a building and body of believers. The local people also requested the team to pray for rain. They prayed earnestly, and after the last program on Sabbath, God sent rain.

Parousia Mission also brought a five-day health expo and evangelistic meetings to war-torn northern Ethiopia, an area where you can expect to be stoned by those with opposing beliefs if you walk the streets with a Bible in hand. "It was a miracle that over 1,000 people came out for our health expo," Anteneh marveled. "And none of us were harmed."

Parousia Mission's next goal is to duplicate the café/restaurant in 12 of the largest cities in Ethiopia and start four more in Addis Ababa.

"Right now, Parousia Mission conducts a training school every summer," Anteneh explained. "But we are praying for more evangelistic workers." Many young people in Ethiopia are struggling to find a job and make a living. Anteneh plans to provide training for these young people and work with the Eastern Ethiopia Union Mission to hire them as evangelistic workers.

These young people, rightly trained, will change lives in Ethiopia for eternity, and surely this ministry will change their lives, too, like it did for Anteneh.

"The Lord has helped me come up from my depression and hopeless situation and blessed me with this kind of work," Anteneh testified. "This is the only thing I want to do until Jesus comes."



The Parousia café and restaurant serves more than 200 people daily



Parousia Mission's health expo serves people on the street of Addis Ababa

## Urban Centers of Influence

Global Mission supports a wholistic mission to the cities through the ministry of dozens of urban centers of influence. These centers follow Christ's method of ministry to meet people's needs and start new groups of believers. Please support urban centers of influence by visiting [GMSda.org/Give](https://GMSda.org/Give).





# The Day I Saw You





**The Middle East  
and North Africa  
Union**

**T**he hospital waiting room was quiet, except for the sounds of three-year-old Ashraf playing with his toys. Yasmina clung to the faintest hope that her husband would pull through. But when the doctor opened the doors with solemn eyes and said, “May he rest in peace,” her world shattered. Her husband was gone, and she was alone to raise their young son.

Grief overwhelmed Yasmina. That night, lying on her bed, she cried out in anguish: “Why, God? Why should we die? Is this suffering necessary?” Exhausted from the weight of her pain, she fell into a restless sleep.

Then, in her dreams, she saw Him.

A Man appeared, radiant like she had never seen but also kind and full of peace. “Don’t be afraid. I have found you,” He said. Overcome with wonder, Yasmina asked, “Who are you, and what are you doing here?” He answered, “I’m here to comfort you. I’m the one you’ve heard about all your life,” and then He vanished.

When Yasmina awoke, the dream lingered in her mind with unshakable clarity. It wasn’t just a dream; it was something more. The Man had filled her with peace unlike any she had ever known. From that moment, Yasmina was committed to finding Him again.

For 10 years, she searched. She asked her friends, but they mocked her. Even her son, Ashraf, questioned her memory and whether the dream was real. Despite the disbelief of others, Yasmina carried the memory of His presence in her heart, holding on to hope that one day she would find answers. And then, during an ordinary visit to a car mechanic, her hope was renewed.

Yasmina shared her story with Yousef, the mechanic. She described the Man in her dream—the peace He brought and the kindness in His eyes. To her surprise, Yousef said, “I know the Person you’re talking about. I’ll introduce you to Him.”

The next day, Yousef and a woman from his church, Anna, visited Yasmina. Together, they told her about Jesus, the Man in her dream. But Yasmina was still confused. “Where is He? Why didn’t you bring Him with you?” she asked.

Anna responded gently, “He’s with us, Yasmina. You may not see Him now, but there’s a book that will help you know Him better. It will help you understand who He is.”

As Yasmina listened, Yousef shared something that left her speechless. “This is the same book your husband read before he died. It was through this book that he became a believer. The book says that you will see your husband again one day, and Ashraf will see his father—at Jesus’ second coming.”

The truth washed over Yasmina like a flood of hope. She would see her husband again, and she would see the Man from her dream! After 10 long years of searching, she had found her answers, and her heart overflowed with peace.

## From a Dream to a Film

This incredible true story inspired our team in the Middle East and North Africa region, Hope Channel Arabic - Alwaad, to create a powerful new film, *The Day I Saw You*. The film explores how God uses dreams and visions to reach hearts, especially in regions where talking about Jesus is dangerous. Yasmina’s journey, brought to life in this film, demonstrates how God touches lives and then sends Hope Channel to continue providing answers through media.

I’m so excited to share this film with you. I pray it’s a blessing to you as it has been to thousands in the Middle East and North Africa region. The message of eternal hope is transforming new hearts every day!



Watch *The Day I Saw You* at [youtube.com/watch?v=LyjAGUF-5IA!](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyjAGUF-5IA)

## Hope Channel International



**HopeChannel**

As part of a bold vision to reach 1 billion people with the message of eternal hope by 2030, Hope Channel uses various tools to connect people in all corners of the world to the gospel. From films such as *The Day I Saw You* to a variety of digital platforms, online Bible studies, and personal interactions with Bible workers, Hope Channel provides safe and meaningful ways for people to explore their faith and find the truth of Jesus.

To learn more about Hope Channel, visit [hopechannelinternational.org](https://hopechannelinternational.org).



**Vyacheslav  
Demyan**

is the president  
of Hope Channel  
International.

When you give to the mission offering during Sabbath School, a portion of that offering helps fund Hope Channel’s ministry around the world. Thank you for your generous support.



# Scratch, Scratch, Scratch



**L**ittle Boy felt so sad. His hands and feet itched, and he didn't know how to make the itching go away.

Little Boy and his family lived far away from hospitals, doctors, and nurses. They lived in a village high up in the mountains of the Philippines. The other boys and girls in the village also had itchy hands and feet, and no one knew what to do about it.

Then, one day, two young women came to the village. Little Boy heard them say that

Before long, Little Boy and a dozen other children were sitting on the rocky bank of the river with the two missionaries. Little Boy listened with interest as one missionary opened a book with colorful pictures and began to read a story about God. But then his hand began to itch. He scratched it. His foot began to itch. He scratched it, too. Then his other hand and foot itched, and he scratched them. The other children also felt itchy, and they all scratched and scratched and scratched. It was hard to listen to the story

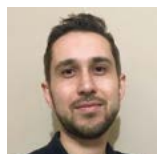


Philippines



**Andrew McChesney**

wrote this story while serving as the editor of the *Mission* quarterlies.



**Illustrations by Diogo Godoy**

they were missionaries from far away. He heard them say they would live for a year in his village. Then, one looked directly at him and invited him to listen to stories about God.

"Come to the mountain river that flows beside the village, and be sure to invite your friends," she said with a bright smile.

about God while they were scratching.

The missionaries noticed that the children were distracted by their itches, and they looked closely at the children's hands and feet.

"I have an idea," said one of the missionaries. "I saw a similar rash in my village when I was a small girl. We boiled guava leaves in water and



then bathed our hands and feet in the water. Let's try it here."

The two missionaries asked the children whether they had guava trees in the village. Little Boy eagerly pointed out a guava tree. The missionaries picked leaves from the tree and told the children to fetch basins or buckets at home. Little Boy scampered off.

When he returned, he found the missionaries boiling guava leaves in a large pot of water. Then, the missionaries removed the pot from the fire and waited for the water to cool. While they waited, the missionaries taught the kids happy songs about God. Then, the missionaries poured water into the children's basins and buckets. "Let's pray to God for help," one said. The other showed the children how to close their eyes and fold their hands. She prayed, "Dear God, please heal these children. In Jesus' name, amen."

The children put their hands into their containers and waited 20 minutes. Then they

changed the water, put their feet in the containers, and waited another 20 minutes. The time flew by as they sang merrily about God.

Every day, the missionaries boiled leaves, prayed, and bathed the children's hands and feet. They then showed all the parents how to do the same. After two weeks, the white bumps disappeared from the children's hands and feet. Everyone was so happy!

Then, the missionaries invited the children to return to the riverbank to hear stories about God. Little Boy went. Now, he could listen because he was no longer distracted by itchy hands and feet. He wanted to know more about the God who had heard the missionaries' prayers and healed him.

The two young women who helped Little Boy were trained to be missionaries at a center built with the help of a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 1986. Thank you for planning a generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter to help more children know about Jesus in Asia.

## More Children's Mission Stories

Find dozens of inspiring mission stories for children at [AdventistMission.org/childrens-mission-quarterly](https://AdventistMission.org/childrens-mission-quarterly).

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