

# mission360°

The official mission magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church **VOLUME 5 • NUMBER 1**

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# EDITORIAL

Lynette Coude has a big heart. Big enough to embrace every child who lives in Togiak, Alaska, where she and her husband, John, serve as lay pastors.

Last year, they helped raise money to send a group of children to nearby Camp Polaris, an Adventist mission camp in the pristine wilderness of southwest Alaska.

For some children, this was their first time away from home. They were nervous about leaving their families, so Lynette packed her bags and went along to provide comfort and support.

Her eyes filled with tears as she watched the children playing in the lake the first day. "It's a happy thing, really," she assured me. "You'd have to see how these

children live the rest of the year to understand why I'm crying. They're finally getting to be kids!"

When the children returned to Togiak, Lynette asked them to share one thing they'd learned from their time at camp.

"I learned how much Jesus loves me," one child replied. "Me too!" said another.

"Everyone at Camp Polaris has one focus," Lynette told me, "that these kids learn that God is their best Friend and that He wants to take them home to live with Him forever." According to her campers, Camp Polaris has been successful in its mission!

In "Camp Polaris Revisited" on page 16, you'll discover how your support of the first quarter 2015

Thirteenth Sabbath Offering made it possible for many more children to learn about Jesus.

You'll also find stories in this issue about people whose lives have been positively changed by Adventist Mission projects around the world. Perhaps you'll feel a heart connection with them as I did with the campers at Camp Polaris. If so, I invite you to respond with your prayers and donations.

Thank you for being part of Adventist Mission. You're making an eternal difference, one life at a time.



**Laurie Falvo**  
Editor



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## VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1

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Unless otherwise noted, Bible verses are quoted from the King James Version.



# Angels in the Water

“Where could they be?” Mrs. Edward asked, a hint of worry in her voice. “They should have been back by now.”

It was evening, and I was on the porch with some of the school's staff. The senior class had taken boats to camp on one of Pohnpei's outer islands, called Ahnd (Ant) Atoll, for the weekend. Now it was Sunday, and everyone had returned from the senior retreat, sun-kissed and filled with laughter.

Everyone, that is, except for the principal, Mr. Edward; the math teacher, Mr. Drusky; and Pastor Tim.

The students and other staff had been back for hours already, and we had grown worried as we continued to wait. We knew they had not even made it back to the dock, so somewhere, out in the wide expanse of the ocean, was a rickety fishing boat filled to the brim with supplies and our missing people.

With no way to contact them, Mrs. Edward, the principal's wife, left to contact the police. Something bad must have happened. Where were they? What happened? Were they stranded? Were they in danger? We formed prayer circles, lifting our petitions heavenward.

The next morning, we finally received our answers when Mr. Edward, Mr. Drusky, and Pastor Tim stumbled onto campus, sun-burned and exhausted but grateful to be alive. Excitedly, we all pressed close and waited to hear their adventure.

The day before, everything had gone normally at first as they climbed aboard the school's tiny fishing boat. After a full weekend, they were ready to go home and rest.

They were more than halfway back to Black Coral Island when the wind-stirred waves started washing over the sides of the boat,

and it started raining hard. The boat capsized, tipping sideways before turning completely over, supplies and gear riding the waves like skilled surfers. The three men clung to the boat for about an hour, but as evening approached, they realized time was of the essence.

“Can we make it to Black Coral?” they wondered aloud, but the current made that impossible. Heading back to Ahnd was the only option. They removed anything shiny or reflective from their bodies, fearful of attracting the vigilant barracuda.

A few life jackets were fished out of the floating supplies, and Principal Edward attempted to empty a gas can for additional buoyancy. But as the gas streamed down his arm onto his chest and stomach, it left a burning pain in its wake. Mr. Drusky inhaled the fumes, which induced continual vomiting.

The sun was dropping steadily now, and they swam and swam hurriedly; the strong current pushed back, and they moved at an agonizing pace. Finally, the sun



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Adventist Volunteer Service facilitates volunteer missionary service of church members around the world. Volunteers ages 18 to 80 may serve as pastors, teachers, medical professionals, computer technicians, orphanage workers, farmers, and more. To learn more, please visit [AdventistVolunteers.org](http://AdventistVolunteers.org).

set, shrouding the three castaways in complete darkness.

Thirsty, hungry, and utterly exhausted, the men prayed continuously throughout the night, asking God for protection and stamina.

Suddenly, the wind shifted, pushing against their backs, and the current began carrying them in the right direction. They swam hard, adrenaline pumping through their veins.

At one point, Pastor Tim asked, "Do you think our angels are above us, or do you think they're swimming in this water with us right now?"

Without hesitation, Mr. Drusky replied, "You know, I think they're swimming with us." So as the night dragged on, six beings—three humans and three guardian angels—cut through the water, focused on the single goal of getting home.

Finally, Mr. Drusky's voice cut through the darkness as he signaled to his companions that they had reached the shore. They

stretched out desperately and found a foothold, scrambling to safety. Throwing themselves on the sand, they lay there drained after eight hours of constant swimming, prayers of thanksgiving pouring from their lips.

The owners of the island helped them contact the mainland by radio and then fed and housed them for the night. This is the story they relayed to us the next morning, and we joined them in praising God for His deliverance.

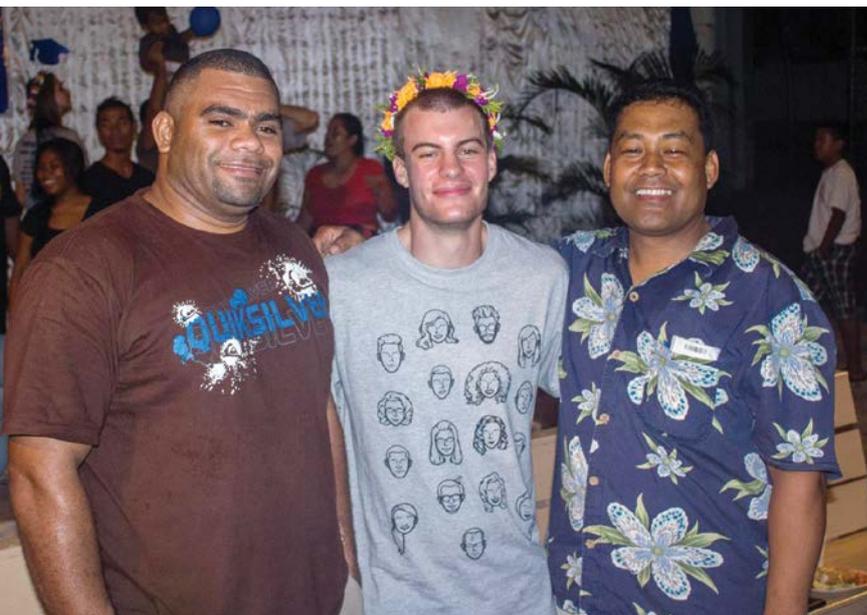
We may never know why the boat was allowed to sink, but I believe that God picked the three people He knew could handle the situation and survive it. They could still see Ahnd in the distance before the sun set, and God protected them from the hundreds of sharks and other dangerous creatures they undoubtedly swam past in the night.

Above all else, I know He and His angels were with them every step (and stroke) of the way.



Karyn Davis spent a year as a student missionary at the Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist School, teaching third grade. Today, she is a graphic designer in Spartanburg, South Carolina. Karyn enjoys hiking, a vast array of music, and traveling.

- 1 With my students at Pohnpei Seventh-day Adventist School.
- 2 Pastor Tim, Mr. Drusky, and Mr. Edward.
- 3 Playing with a little friend.
- 4 The school where I taught third grade and made wonderful memories.





# WAVES

“I can’t wait to get my feet wet!” It was a picture-perfect holiday in Thailand, and my family and some friends were traveling to the beach for fun in the sun and waves. With smiles everywhere, I couldn’t have predicted the devastation rapidly headed our way. All I could think about was playing in the ocean.

We were nearly halfway through our 11-hour drive from Bangkok to Krabi, a beautiful Thai beach, when my dad received a phone call. Instantly, I could tell something was wrong.

“What did you say?” he exclaimed. He quickly pulled the van to the side of the road. I listened hard but couldn’t quite hear what the other person was saying.

My dad turned to face us and his words jumbled together. An earthquake. A tsunami. Even then, it rushed along the coast of Southeast Asia, including the beach we planned to enjoy. “They’re strongly recommending that we head back to Bangkok,” he said.

I thought back to my wonderful memories of the past few days in Bangkok: the smell of fresh sweet rolls, granola baking in the oven, and Christmas tree lights twinkling in the corner of my eye as I fell asleep on the couch. Everything had been perfect—for seven-year-old me, at least. Our friends from Brazil had even joined us for the holidays this year.

Interestingly, when my parents had prayerfully considered our holiday plans, they’d felt impressed to spend Christmas at home and then drive to Krabi the following day. The year before,

we had enjoyed Christmas Day at the beach. I wondered whether the tsunami was why God had impressed them to change their plans.

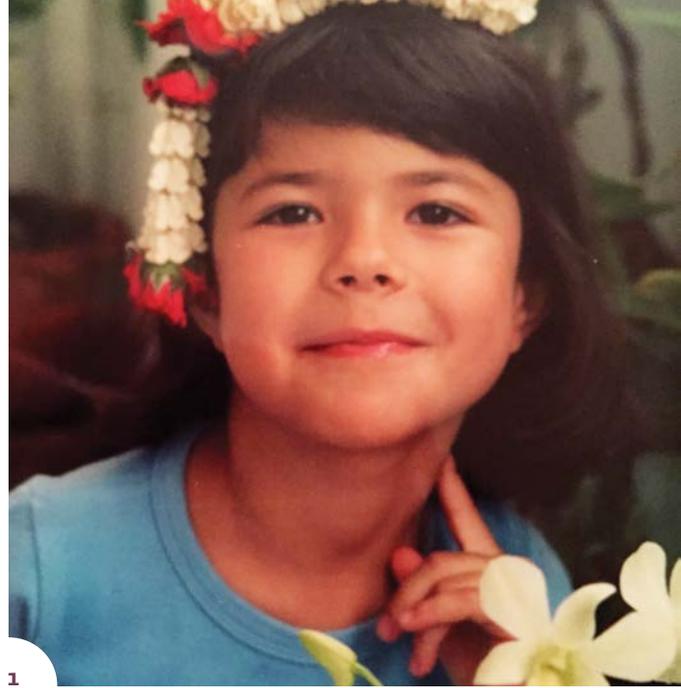
Back in the van, the adults discussed what we should do. My dad called the hotel where we would stay to find out more details. “The beach is a mess, but the hotel wasn’t affected by the waves,” she told him.

My mom pleaded that we turn around and head home. My dad, who worked for the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Asia regional office, felt it was critical to continue. They discussed our situation for a few tense moments and decided to press on.

We arrived at Krabi late that night. Dad wanted to walk to the shoreline first thing to see for himself what had happened. Everywhere we looked, we saw devastation. Boats were overturned, and the beach was blocked off by yellow barricade tape. I was scared I’d see a dead body on the shore, so I turned my head away. It was unbearable.

The next morning, we continued exploring the beach and still-standing shops. Passing a 7-Eleven store, we saw a poster with “Girl Missing” written on it in large letters. I looked at the poster and wondered what it was like for the family of the missing girl. “Do you think she’s still alive?” I asked my mom. She didn’t have an answer.

We looked online that night to find out whether her friends who had been on the beach when the tsunami hit had been found alive



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- 1 My first day in Thailand.
- 2 Enjoying Christmas at the beach one year before the tsunami.
- 3 Me (right) with friends at Bangkok Adventist International School.
- 4 This photo was taken the day after the tsunami.
- 5 Missing persons poster board after the tsunami.

Among many other things, your weekly mission offerings and world budget offerings help support more than 700 missionaries around the world. Thank you!

### WAYS TO GIVE:

- During Sabbath School
- Securely online: Giving, [AdventistMission.org](http://AdventistMission.org)
- In North America, mark a tithe envelope “World Budget” at your local church
- Call 800-648-5824

If we had left Bangkok the day before Christmas as we had done the year before, we would have most likely been on the beach when the waves hit. Those waves had destroyed many lives. I could have been the little girl missing that day.

It’s been more than 10 years since the Christmas tsunami. The experience shook me as a child, but today it encourages me to be grateful for each day. Sometimes terrible things happen—yet through it all, God is sovereign and I have to keep trusting Him. Each day is a journey with its own waves. Big or small, I want God by my side.

Brazilian-born Daniele Kuhn and her family have served as missionaries in 10 countries. She is currently studying to become a missionary doctor.



Kayla Ewert is a communication projects manager for the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



and well. To our horror, they were reported dead.

As I sat next to my shocked mom, I heard the sound of someone sobbing. A man sat at a computer near us, staring at the screen. In his hand was the same poster I had seen at the 7-Eleven. Was that the missing girl’s father?

I headed to the playroom with my sister, Caroline, for fresh air and some mental relief. This was too much for our little minds to handle.



# The Man With a Blue Guitar

Pastor Kaminsky scours the dirty windshield with handfuls of fresh snow, and then jumps in the car with a blast of numbing wind.

"There's plenty of washer fluid, but for some reason I can't get it to spray on the windshield," he explains as little puffs of frozen steam billow from his lips.

Pastor Kaminsky is taking me to see one of the Global Mission projects he directs, a church plant about 20 miles northwest of Moscow.

A few minutes later, we pull into the driveway of a nice home. Upon entering the house, we find it barely warmer than outside. I'm not surprised; the centralized city heat doesn't get turned up very high this early in winter.

"This is the home of one of our church members," Pastor Kaminsky explains as we climb the stairs. "We meet in a hallway because there isn't a room large enough in the house to accommodate us."

I round the corner to find a group of about 20 people waiting for me, their warm smiles a welcome contrast to the weather.

"This is Valerie," says Pastor Kaminsky, pointing to a man about 50 years old who is clutching a blue guitar. "He's the Global Mission pioneer who started this church."

Valerie leads us in singing several praise songs and then asks whether anyone has an experience they'd like to share about reaching out to people in the community



for Jesus. Everyone's eager to respond, and Valerie has a hard time settling them down to discuss the Sabbath School lesson.

The discussion, on the book of Job, is the most animated and enthusiastic I've experienced in a long time. I long to join in, but my rusty Russian is not up to the task. I notice that one man, a car mechanic and member of another faith, is particularly involved in the dialogue about why God allows suffering.

I'm asked to preach the sermon, and with the assistance of a translator, I tell the story of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. The mechanic sits on the edge of his chair, smiling and nodding. I have the impression he's never heard this story before.

After the service, we sit down to a traditional Russian feast. I savor the familiar tastes and the personal connection between the members as they talk and laugh. *This is what Global Mission projects are all about, I think, established believers and new believers fellowshiping in friendship and joy.*

I stop Valerie just before we leave, and ask how he became a Global Mission pioneer.

"I was a circus gymnast," he says. "I lived a lifestyle that almost killed me and decided that I wanted a relationship with God. I started attending church, and one day a visitor told us that that Saturday is the Sabbath. I was intrigued. I studied the subject and became convinced that I should look for a church that observes the seventh-day Sabbath."

Valerie was baptized and became a literature evangelist. Later, he was asked to serve as a Global Mission pioneer, and he decided to combine the two ministries. By selling books door-to-door, he's made contacts, developed relationships, and started multiple churches in different cities.

"What's your biggest challenge as a pioneer?" I ask Valerie.

"Overcoming fear," he responds quietly. Recent laws in Russia restricting religious freedom have severely limited Valerie's ability to work. He wants to serve God boldly yet wisely—to avoid trouble with the police.

Pastor Kaminsky and I are saying our goodbyes to the congregation when the car mechanic comes in from outside.



“Your windshield washer works fine now,” he says, smiling ear to ear.

Please pray for Valerie, his new groups of believers, and the people in their communities whom they’re trying to reach for Jesus. Your support of Global Mission is making a positive difference in the lives of many Russian people.

Jeff Scoggins is the planning director for the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



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- 1 Valerie is a Global Mission pioneer serving in Troitsk, Russia, a stronghold of Russian Orthodoxy.
- 2 About 20 new believers meet at the Troitsk church plant.
- 3 It had been years since I enjoyed a traditional Russian meal!

## Global Mission pioneers

- ▶ plant churches in areas or among people groups where there’s no Adventist presence;
- ▶ are usually local people who already speak the language and understand the culture, enabling them to contextualize the gospel message for a lasting effect;
- ▶ receive a basic stipend, presenting an affordable way to do frontline mission work; and
- ▶ share the good news of Jesus through wholistic ministry, including providing medical care, teaching agricultural skills, offering literacy programs, holding evangelistic meetings, and giving Bible studies.
- ▶ In the past five years, pioneers have supported 5,281 church planting projects in 104 countries. Their ministry wouldn’t be possible without your donations and prayers. Thank you!

If you would like to support Global Mission, be assured that every dollar will go directly to the front lines of mission, reaching people who are still waiting to hear about Jesus.

## Ways to Give

- ▶ Online  
Visit [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org) to make a secure online donation quickly.
- ▶ Phone  
800-648-5824
- ▶ Mail  
In the United States:  
Global Mission, General Conference  
12501 Old Columbia Pike  
Silver Spring, MD 20904-6601  
  
In Canada:  
Global Mission  
SDA Church in Canada  
1148 King Street East  
Oshawa, ON L1H1H8

To learn more about Global Mission, please visit [Global-Mission.org](http://Global-Mission.org).



# The Salted Café

“For years my sister and I dreamed of creating a place where people felt comfortable and that reflected our artistic and Christian lifestyle values. A place where we could reach out to people and make friends for Jesus,” says Antoniya.

Recently, Antoniya and Silviya launched the Salted Café in the city of Sofia, Bulgaria. Silviya, an architect, describes it as a new concept of place. It combines unique features under one roof, including a café, a juice bar, a bakery, a Christian library, a bookstore, a venue for social events, and a screening room.

“Our secular society views believers as outsiders,” says Silviya. “They see us as people who either keep to ourselves or, on the other extreme, are annoying in our attempts to persuade them to believe what we see as truth. We don’t believe we’ve shared the gospel simply by telling people the truth. We want to follow Jesus’ example of mingling with people and meeting their needs and only

then inviting them on a journey with God.

“We also want to show society that you can be modern and innovative, appreciate and create aesthetic design, and still be a Christian with God at the center of your life.”

When Antoniya and Silviya created the Salted Café, they’d never heard Ellen White’s concept of establishing centers of influence to reach urban people for Christ, but through study and prayer, God gave them the idea to create just such a place.

“We secured a building and made the necessary renovations, but when it came to thinking of a name for it, we were stuck,” says Antoniya. “We both kept thinking of Jesus telling us to be the salt of the earth and decided on the name the Salted Café. We want to be the salt that makes people thirsty for Christ.”

Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, has a metro population of approximately 1.7 million people. With its universities, businesses,



and cultural centers, it teems with young people. It’s a very beautiful but secular city where only a



## Urban Centers of Influence

Adventist Mission supports wholistic mission to the cities. This includes a rapidly growing number of Urban Centers of Influence that serve as a platform for putting Christ's method of ministry into practice and an ideal opportunity for Total Member Involvement in outreach that suits each person's particular gifts and passions.

From refugee assimilation centers, juice bars, and secondhand shops to cooking classes, cafés, and after-school child care, Urban Centers of Influence provide long-term, on-the-ground ministry that connects with people on a local and personal level.

To learn more about Urban Centers of Influence, please visit [UrbanCenters.org](http://UrbanCenters.org) and [MissionToTheCities.org](http://MissionToTheCities.org).

## Christ's Method of Ministry

"Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, 'Follow Me'" (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).

small portion of the population is spiritually oriented.

The Salted Café is listed on all the major tourist Internet sites for vegetarian and vegan food. A rack filled with books and magazines provides a variety of resources while beautiful posters share Bible texts that encourage and inspire customers.

The main table area in the Salted Café can be easily rearranged as an informal meeting space where pastors and other specialists make presentations and lead discussions. Topics vary from Bible subjects to cooking classes to healthy relationships. Between

20 and 45 non-Adventists attend each event.

One tangible way that Antoniya and Silviya share Jesus' love is through their reinvention of the fortune cookie. They've placed a bowl filled with paper fortune cookies close to where customers pay for their meal. When their guests select a cookie, they find an inspiring Bible promise.

Openly Christian, attractive, friendly, inviting, and nonthreatening, the Salted Café is a doorway in Sofia inviting clients to taste and thirst for more of the gospel. "This has been so rewarding," says Silviya. "We encourage others to

use their gifts in a creative way to reach people for Jesus."

*Photos courtesy of Brad Thorp and the Salted Café.*

Pastor Brad Thorp is the assistant to the president for Evangelism Outreach at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters. He visited Bulgaria in preparation for the Total Member Involvement initiative in Eastern Europe.



To learn more about the Salted Café, please visit [facebook.com/saltedcafesofia](https://facebook.com/saltedcafesofia).



## CAMEROON

**M**y phone! I thought with a wave of panic as I patted my flat pocket. *It's still in the taxi!* I raced toward the vehicle, but it slipped out of reach as the driver pulled away from the curb.

I started running, trying to flag down the driver, but he didn't see me in his mirror. Then, he stopped about 450 feet from me and honked at a potential customer to see whether he needed a ride.

*If that man climbs in, I can make it,* I thought, bursting into a sprint. But the man shook his head at the driver, and the taxi sped away. *Why didn't I put my phone in my backpack?* I asked myself angrily, realizing my situation was hopeless.

No sooner had I given up than a taxi pulled over and stopped about 60 feet from me. I was amazed because the driver had no apparent reason to stop. There was no one in his car to unload and no one waiting for a ride. Seeing my opportunity, I ran up, jumped in, and ordered the driver to "follow that taxi!"

I always thought the taxi drivers in Buea, Cameroon, were a little on the wild side, but now I felt like I was in a movie chase scene as I hollered, "I'll pay anything, just drive, drive, drive!"

Unfortunately, by this time my first taxi was out of sight, but I remembered that the only other passenger had asked to be taken

to Bakweri town. It wasn't far; it took only three minutes to get there, but it was the craziest ride of my life.

I wasn't sure I'd recognize the taxi or the driver when we got to Bakweri town. All I had to go by was that I was looking for a yellow taxi with an African driver. That didn't narrow things down much!

My current driver was more clear-headed than I was at the moment. "We can call your phone," he yelled over the roar of traffic. I thought he was going to hand me his phone. "Give me the number."

I yelled the numbers, and he entered them into his phone while careening around corners and never seeming to look at the road.

# Runaway Taxi



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*This is what you can do with a lot of practice, I thought, clutching the door handle.*

He talked to the driver of the first taxi for about 30 seconds, and then his credit ran out. *Oh, great, I thought, what if the other driver didn't hear enough to know what's going on? Maybe I should just buy a new phone.*

Eventually, we caught up to the first taxi, and I got my phone back after paying that driver the finder's fee he demanded and substantially tipping my second driver. It wasn't the cheapest taxi ride I've taken, but it was less expensive than purchasing a new phone. And it taught me a valuable lesson about God.

Everything had happened so fast that day, I had neglected to pray

before tearing off after the runaway taxi. I realized that God had answered a prayer that I didn't even pray.

While serving as a volunteer missionary, I've had many experiences when God answered requests that were on the tip of my tongue. Our heavenly Father knows our needs before we do!

Originally from Merced, California, United States, Corbin Clark served as a volunteer medical scribe at the Seventh-day Adventist hospital in Buea, Cameroon. He's currently attending Walla Walla University and hopes to become a missionary dentist.



3

- 1 Visiting a cultural festival.
- 2 Making palm oil the old fashioned way in a small village.
- 3 Atop Mount Cameroon, one of Africa's largest volcanos. Buea lies on the southeastern slope of the mountain.

2



If you're interested in being a volunteer, please visit [AdventistVolunteers.org](http://AdventistVolunteers.org).



# Prayers in the Park

**W**hat are the chances that a non-Christian searching for truth will meet a Christian in the capital of one of the most closed countries to Christianity in the Middle East? Humanly speaking, it's almost impossible, yet God works in miraculous ways!

One evening, a friend of mine was trying to sell some Adventist books. She approached a young man whom I'll call Ali to protect his identity. "I don't have any money on me," Ali said, "but if you give me your phone number, I'll call you later."

We often hear this response from people who aren't interested in making a purchase, but Ali did call my friend. He said he had many questions about religion

and would like to meet with her to learn more. "In fact," he said, "I'd love to have a Bible. Would it be possible for you to get me one?"

This wouldn't be such a significant request if you lived in the West. But you need to be very cautious in this region of the world. If someone tells the authorities that you've been preaching, talking about Jesus, or giving someone Christian material, you can be imprisoned, deported, tortured, or killed. Despite the risk, my friend and I met with Ali quickly and gave him a Bible.

Ali started reading his Bible in secret so that his family wouldn't know. He began to ask more and more questions and wanted to talk with us about what he was

discovering. It was as if a new horizon was opening up before him.

My friend and I wanted to talk with Ali, but we didn't know where we should meet. I couldn't invite him to my house, and we couldn't go to his. We thought about meeting at a restaurant, but it would be hard to be discrete with people sitting so close to us.

Finally, we decided to meet Ali at the city park for a picnic. It was a large open space with people constantly coming and going. We arrived first, and Ali arrived a few minutes later. Like us, he was nervous.

Ali told us he wanted to discover the truth for himself. "I don't want to learn from anyone else because everyone I talk to tells me it's something different."



If someone tells the authorities that you've been preaching, talking about Jesus, or giving someone Christian material, you can be imprisoned, deported, tortured, or killed.

*That's good, I thought. Now that he has the Word of God in his hands, the Holy Spirit can lead him.*

Ali told us that he had read from the story of Creation to the story of the Flood in Genesis. He asked many questions about freedom of choice.

We suggested that he begin his study by reading the New Testament, but Ali disagreed. "Everything has a beginning," he said. "That's where I'm going to start in the Bible."

After three hours of interesting conversation, it was time for us to leave the park. We asked Ali whether we could pray together.

"I don't want to attract attention," he said anxiously. "Tell me how you pray."

"We can just close our eyes and talk to God quietly," I said. "It will be very discreet."

When I had finished praying, I noticed that Ali's eyes were filled with tears. "I've never heard anyone pray without a lot of repetition," he said. "This was very personal."

We told Ali that we can talk to God as a Father or a Friend about our fears, problems, and joys. We told him that we'd pray for him, and then we said goodbye.

I don't know how our next meeting with Ali will go, but I'm not worried. After giving him a Bible of his own, answering his questions, and praying a simple prayer with him, I know the Holy Spirit will work in his heart.

**Total Employment™** is an initiative of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to recruit, train, and place "tentmakers"—self-supporting professionals who have a desire to share Jesus—in restricted access countries.

The church has an urgent need for tentmakers in the 10/40 Window, an area that stretches from northern Africa through the Middle East and Asia. This is home to two-thirds of the world's population, most of the world's least-reached countries and people groups, and the fewest Christians. If you think God may be calling you to this unique mission service, please visit [TotalEmployment.org](http://TotalEmployment.org).

**Tentmakers** can work as entrepreneurs, computer technicians, public relations specialists, graphic designers, engineers, agriculturalists, international development workers, artists, teachers, and healthcare professionals, among other professions.

## Fast Facts

- ▶ **3,423**  
Number of Adventists in the Middle East and North Africa Union.
- ▶ **3,800**  
Estimated Sabbath attendance at the Loma Linda University Church in Loma Linda, California.
- ▶ **86 percent** of Muslims worldwide are not aware of having ever met a Christian.
- ▶ **Islam** is the fastest-growing major religion worldwide.



## UNITED STATES



1

YOUR MISSION OFFERING AT WORK!

# Camp Polaris Revisited

Attending summer camp at Camp Polaris is a tradition for many families in south-west Alaska. For generations, children have eagerly boarded planes and boats to spend a week in this remote, pristine setting.

Many of these campers come from less-than-ideal homes where poverty, alcoholism, and abuse are common. Some work hard every day and carry heavy responsibilities.

Camp Polaris is an oasis where the kids can escape the challenges they face at home. They look forward all year long to this special time when they can grow closer to Jesus, play with friends, and enjoy activities from crafts to water sports.

"It's a really big deal that these kids get to come to camp," says Lynette, a lay pastor in Togiak, Alaska, where many of the campers live. "The fact that they can get away from the pressures of home and just be kids is huge. They struggle every day."

Through the years, the staff at Camp Polaris has done an incredible job of reaching out to the community children with the few resources they've had. But they've

faced some real challenges. Many of the buildings were in desperate need of repair, having been built more than 60 years ago. Restroom and bathing facilities included two outhouses, a rundown sauna, and the icy waters of Lake Aleknagik.

But all of this has changed, thanks to your contributions to the first quarter 2015 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, which provided supplies to build two bathhouses with a sauna, showers, and toilets.

"The new bathhouses at Camp Polaris are going to make a tremendous difference," says Debbie, who serves as camp caretaker with her husband, Ken. "It rains a lot here, so the kids were often wet and cold. Or they'd get cold swimming in the lake. In the past, we didn't have a way to get them dry, and sometimes they went home sick. The new saunas and hot showers will help them stay healthy. Parents who wouldn't let their kids come to camp because they were concerned about them getting sick will send them now. That means we'll be able to reach more kids with Jesus' love!"

The new facilities will make it easier for the staff to reach the

children spiritually because they'll be able to focus better when they're warm and comfortable. Camp will be extended during the summer, and this extended time will include the addition of a family camp for the community.

Campers and staff at Camp Polaris were blessed by your generous support through prayer, giving, and even letters from around the world!

"We received heartfelt notes from around the globe," says Laurie, camp director. "I couldn't respond to some people because I don't speak their language, but I want everyone to know how thankful we are for your support. It's going to make a tremendous impact for sharing the gospel here."

Laurie Falvo serves as the editor of *Mission 360°* for the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



To watch the "Camp Polaris Revisited" video story, visit [AdventistMission.org/videos](http://AdventistMission.org/videos).



2 3



- 1 Nestled between Lake Aleknagik and Jackknife Mountain in southwest Alaska is Camp Polaris, a tiny mission camp with a huge heart.
- 2 Before your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped provide Camp Polaris with hot showers, the only way for campers to get clean was to soap up in a rundown sauna and rinse off in a frigid lake.
- 3 Creative devotionals help children learn about Jesus' love.

- 4 Thomas loves creating model cars and planes in the craft house.
- 5 Putting the finishing touches on the girls' bathhouse.
- 6 Matrona, left, and Reanna show you what your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped make possible.
- 7 The campers spend as much time as possible outside enjoying canoeing, swimming, and archery.

4



5



6 7





## THAILAND



# My Joy

“I’ve always been inquisitive,” says Tan with a mischievous smile. “When I was a girl, I asked a famous monk in town how humanity came into being. I remember feeling disappointed with his reply, and that may have been when I determined to learn the truth to the many questions whirling around in my mind. I began studying the Bible, and 20 years later, I decided to become a Seventh-day Adventist Christian.”

Recently baptized, Tan was bursting to share her new faith with others, so she became a program host on the local Adventist FM station in Bangkok.

“It’s funny,” Tan says. “When I was young, I never dreamed I’d be working in radio one day, but for some reason I’d practice reading the newspaper in front of the mirror.”

At New Life Radio, Tan began hosting a live program every

morning, and her voice could be heard across the sprawling, sweltering metro area of more than 14 million people. She had no way to know how many listeners were tuning in or who they were, but she took her new role seriously.

“I spent a lot of time in prayer before each program,” says Tan. “I wanted to be sure that each word I said was inspired by God’s Spirit.”

One of the people listening to New Life Radio was a woman named Pensee. She had been scanning radio stations one day when she came across Tan’s program. She became interested in the messages she was hearing and signed up for *Voice of Prophecy* Bible lessons.

“Pensee sent in many completed lessons until she got her certificate,” Tan says. “She was very curious. She wanted to know everything about the Bible.” Later,

Pensee’s husband, Suwit, joined her in studying the lessons.

Initially, Tan talked with Pensee and Suwit on the phone almost daily. “They knew me as a friend, but only through the radio and phone,” says Tan. “Then they invited me to their house. Later, they wanted to take me to their church, and I was happy to go. When they went to another province to do evangelism for their church, I went along.”

Finally, Tan invited Pensee and Suwit to visit *her* church, but she never pressured them to take action on the new religious concepts they were learning.

Another radio announcer invited listeners to join a new Adventist group that was meeting next to the station. Pensee and Suwit began attending that church in addition to meeting with their own church family each week. “At that time, we had two hearts,” Suwit says, “but eventually we made

the choice to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

Today, Pensee and Suwit live in the countryside near Asia-Pacific International University in Muak Lek, Thailand. Although they had spent their entire adult lives in the big city, they felt that God was calling them to come to Muak Lek. Their Adventist pastor in Bangkok had bought land in Muak Lek, and Pensee and Suwit bought a piece of property there on short notice.

“We were scared at first,” Suwit says. “We were used to Bangkok, and it was very wild out here. But we were sure God was leading us.” They worked on clearing the land, building an attractive house, and planting an assortment of fruit trees.

Where was their dear friend Tan at this point in the story? She had moved away from Bangkok some time before and had lost touch with Pensee and Suwit. But it turned out that she was not far away at all: she was studying at Asia-Pacific International University, minutes away. The three friends, along with Tan’s husband, were overjoyed to be reunited.

“Pensee and Suwit don’t have children of their own, so they’ve adopted many students into their home and become a real center of warmth and hospitality,” Tan says. “They’re very active as elders in the church, and the community is blessed by their outreach.”

Looking back at her experience with New Life Radio, Tan says, “I received such joy through doing the radio program and from hearing listeners say, ‘The Bible verses you read really encouraged me.’ I still keep the letters from people who wrote to me. This is my joy!”

“There are 64 million people in Thailand,” says Dr. Surachet Insom, Adventist World Radio’s Asia/Pacific region director for Thailand and Laos. “How else can we hope to reach all of them, except through radio?”

Shelley Nolan Freesland is the communication director for Adventist World Radio at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



Adventist World Radio (AWR) is the official global radio ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its mission is to broadcast the Adventist hope in Christ to the unreached people groups of the world in their own languages. AWR’s programs can be heard in more than 100 languages through AM/FM and shortwave radio, on demand, and on podcasts at awr.org and iTunes.

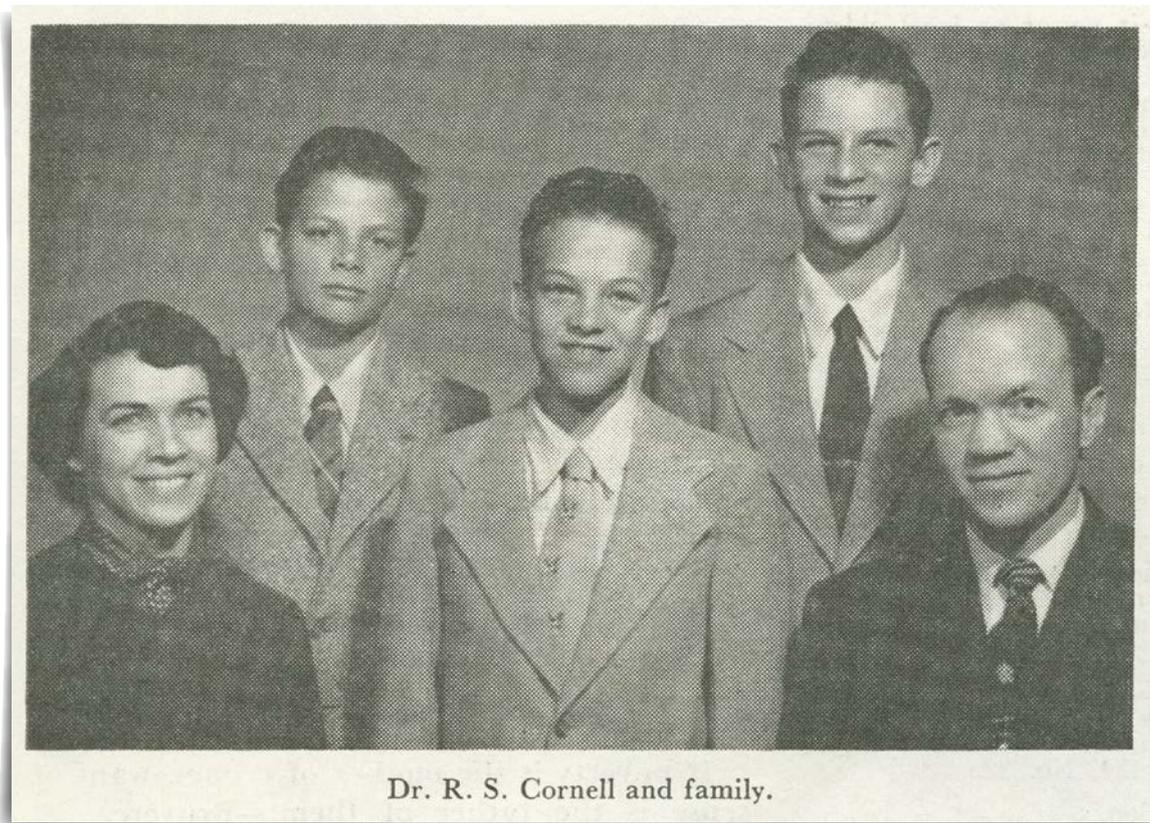
Thank you for supporting AWR through your mission and world budget offerings!

- 1 Tan, left, with her newly baptized friends Pensee and Suwit.
- 2 Suwit and Pensee became curious about the Bible after listening to Tan’s “sweet voice” on the radio.
- 3 Tan, right, patiently nurtured a relationship with Pensee and her husband.





# The Vanished Mission Field



Alta, Kendal,  
Vaugh, Clinton,  
and Roy Cornell.  
Circa 1955.

**M**uhammad Idris bin Muhammad al-Mahdi as-Senussi, simply known as King Idris, was born in the country now called Libya sometime around 1890. Heir to leadership of a powerful Muslim Sufi order, he formed an alliance with the British during World War II to end the Italian occupation of North Africa. In 1951, he became Libya's first and only king and would prove to be an exceptionally gracious monarch to Seventh-day Adventists.

In February 1955, Adventist physician Roy S. Cornell arrived in Libya to offer his much-needed skills as chief surgeon at the government hospital in Benghazi. Prior to his arrival, the Adventist

presence in Libya had been virtually nonexistent, with only a few literature evangelists selling publications in the Italian colony in the late 1920s.

Cornell, however, aimed to establish a Seventh-day Adventist presence in Libya through the means of a health ministry. Shortly after his arrival, he began supervising the renovation of a war-damaged hotel building to serve as an Adventist hospital. The versatile physician drew up papers, transacted fiscal deals, forged political connections, purchased equipment, and arranged for a staff—all while serving as a surgeon and advisor to the Libyan government on medical matters.

The modest Adventist hospital was formally opened on May 21, 1956, with a capacity for between 25 and 30 patients. Articles appeared in the *Adventist Review* heralding the achievement with titles such as “The Right Arm of the Gospel in Libya.” Tragically, a year later, Dr. Cornell contracted acute paralytic poliomyelitis, which left him completely paralyzed and unable to continue directing the project that he had pioneered.

The medical facility was operated by the Nile Union Mission until it came under the direct control of the Middle East Division (MED) at the end of 1958. That, itself, was a miracle, for even during the reign of King Idris, the

## The golden opportunity to plant Adventism in a strategic locale in Libya would be tragically interrupted by political upheaval.

Libyan government didn't permit foreign organizations to hold titles to property. This Seventh-day Adventist hospital was renowned for being one of the few exceptions to this law.

Around this time, the discovery of oil reserves in Libya propelled it from being one of the poorest nations in the world to being one of the wealthiest. This oil revolution would be a boon and bane for Adventism: a boon because the oil money largely financed the new hospital plant; a bane because it was this turn of fortune that would spell Idris' downfall and the end of royal patronage.

By late 1961, due to the need for expanded medical services, MED decided to relocate the hospital to a more advantageous location in the port city. Providentially, a member of the royal family

made about 10 acres of choice property available for purchase. Community support was enlisted, and oil companies operating in the area also made substantial contributions. Construction on the project began in early 1966.

The January-February 1968 issue of the *Middle East Messenger*, the official magazine of the MED, proudly announced the opening of the new 65-bed facility. On January 17, 1968, it was dedicated, with Adventist dignitaries attending the joyous event, including F. L. Bland, a vice president of the General Conference, and Frederick C. Webster, Middle East Division president. Omar Giouda, Libya's minister of health, gave the keynote address, culminating his speech with the announcement of a US\$28,000 gift courtesy of King Idris.

Benghazi Adventist Hospital's 105 expatriate staff—consisting of 48 families and single workers from all parts of the globe—embodied the sacrificial spirit of Adventist mission that marked the 1950s and 60s.

Two nurses from Seoul, Korea, Jo Chung Jah, 25, and Oh Hey Jah, 26, were the first Korean Adventists to be assigned to an overseas hospital. Ellen Lorenz, a nursing student at what is now Washington Adventist University, was the first Adventist student missionary to be assigned to the Middle East. Other medical missionaries hailed from the Philippines, Indonesia, India, and the Middle East. These expatriate missionaries were the only Seventh-day Adventists in Libya. The Benghazi Adventist Hospital seemed destined to be a successful example of the health message being the entering wedge for

Jo Chung Jah and Oh Hey Jah were the first Korean Adventists to be assigned to an overseas hospital. Chung Jah was a general duty nurse; Hey Jah specialized in surgical nursing.



Friends and the military band gathered for the opening exercises, including cutting of the ribbon in front.

The building where the Adventist hospital in Benghazi, Libya, is being conducted.



The hospital staff on opening day. Dr. and Mrs. Roy S. Cornell are in the center, front row.



Dr. Roy S. Cornell in an iron lung on arrival at McGuire Air Force.



D. A. ROTH



**Libya** is located within the 10/40 Window, a region of the world that presents mission with one of its toughest

challenges. Stretching from northern Africa into the Middle East and Asia, this area is home to two-thirds of the world's population, most of the world's least-reached countries and people groups, and the fewest Christians. It's a high priority for Global Mission church planting. To help, please visit [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org).

the presentation of the three angels' messages.

Only months after the grand opening, the hospital was visited by King Idris, who had come to visit relatives being treated there. The ruler could not praise the facility enough. Soon Benghazi Adventist

Hospital had the reputation for being the best hospital not only in Libya but in all of North Africa. However, this golden opportunity to plant Adventism in a strategic locale would be tragically interrupted by political upheavals.

King Idris, so accommodating to Seventh-day Adventists, was falling in general popularity in Libya. Political upheaval spread in Libya, and Colonel Gaddafi grasped the leadership of the nation. On November 23, 1969, the new Revolutionary Command Council, whose policy required that all medical services be owned and administered by the government, nationalized the Benghazi Adventist Hospital.

The *Adventist Review* of January 15, 1970, reported that the staff of Benghazi Hospital would be assigned to other posts in the MED, and Gaddafi, who vowed to remunerate Seventh-day Adventists for the seized hospital, would negotiate with Adventist

administrators for a fair price. In 1977, the General Conference received a settlement from the Libyan government for US\$1,290,963.

With the nationalization of the hospital and the departure of the medical missionaries, the short-lived Adventist work in Libya ended. Currently, more than four decades later, there are few Adventists in Libya.

The saga of Adventist mission in Libya warns us that a possibility to share the gospel can vanish in a moment's notice. We must seize every opportunity, praying as Paul did "that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ" (Colossians 4:3).

Benjamin Baker is the managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* project at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



# Where Do My Mission Offerings Go?

In the Seventh-day Adventist church in Libreville, Gabon, they collect the offering in a cloth bag attached to a wooden pole.

**H**ave you ever felt as if you're putting your money into a "black hole" when you give your weekly mission offerings?

You probably know which countries and projects are supported by part of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering. But what about the regular mission offering you give each week? Where does it go? Who does it support? And what does it achieve?

You may be surprised to learn that your weekly mission offering helps to support more than 700 missionaries around the world. In fact, 70 percent of the weekly mission offerings each quarter help to support overseas missionaries and the international work of the church. Appropriations from the General Conference to world divisions, the Middle East North Africa Union Mission, and the Israel Field help these regions build and sustain mission activities in their territories.

The remaining money helps various institutions and agencies that serve the world church. For example, it helps the

compassionate medical mission work of Loma Linda University, the spreading of the gospel by Adventist World Radio, and the humanitarian ministry of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.

In recent years, millions of people from challenging areas of the world have found salvation in Jesus and have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thousands of new congregations have been established in new areas. But after these new believers have been baptized, how are they nurtured? How do they receive resources, materials, and programs to strengthen their new faith and help them grow as disciples? How do they receive ongoing pastoral care? Your mission offerings help sustain and grow new work throughout the world.

To keep in touch with the exciting story of Adventist mission around the world, please visit



AdventistMission.org. And thanks again for your prayers and financial support for Adventist mission. You *do* make a difference.

Gary Krause is the director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



## About our cover photo . . .

Photo by Laurie Falvo

I met this little Inuit girl at Camp Polaris in Alaska when I went to report on the bathhouses built with the help of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering first quarter 2015. In the past, she had buckets of cold water poured over her body so she wouldn't get swimmer's itch from playing in the lake. I'm so glad she has the option of a hot shower now!



# Apricots

## JEWELS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN CUISINE

The beloved apricot, one of the golden jewels of agriculture since ancient times, remains a treasured fruit in our modern era. Since the season for this fresh fruit is fleeting, most apricots are dried or canned to provide maximum availability. Historians have differing opinions about the origin of this delicious stone fruit, but many believe that it was first cultivated in Armenia.

### GRILLED APRICOTS WITH PISTACHIOS AND DARK CHOCOLATE

*(Serves 4)*

A great way to celebrate apricot season is to grill the fresh fruit. Be sure to select firm, but ripe apricots for the best taste and presentation. Later, you can experiment with peaches, apples, and pears.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 4 firm, ripe, fresh apricots, cut in half
- Canola oil (or other vegetable oil with a neutral flavor, just enough to brush fruit)
- 16–32 dark semi-sweet chocolate chips (or 4 tablespoons of shaved dark chocolate)
- 2–3 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons pistachios, chopped

#### PREPARATION

1. Preheat grill to direct high heat (450–500 °F). Brush both sides of the apricots with a thin coat of oil.
2. Place the apricots cut side down on the grill for 1 1/2 minutes, and then carefully flip so that the cut side faces up.
3. Grill for 1 more minute, and then add 2–4 chocolate chips to each cavity (depending on the size of the apricot halves and how many chips fit inside). Grill for another minute until the chocolate softens and turns glossy. (The chips will hold their shape.)
4. Carefully remove the fruit from the grill and place on a small serving platter. Drizzle the apricots with honey to taste, sprinkle with pistachios, and serve immediately.



### APRICOT ENERGY SMOOTHIE

*(Serves 2)*

Almost everyone likes fruit smoothies because they taste so good. Boost your energy with an apricot smoothie, and enjoy its subtle flavor.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup liquid (such as almond milk, soy milk, or coconut water; not fruit juice)
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 15-ounce can of apricots, drained and rinsed
- 1/3 cup plain yogurt
- 6 ice cubes

#### PREPARATION

1. Place all ingredients in a blender, and blend until smooth.
2. Pour into pretty glasses and serve.



### Top Ten Apricot-Producing Countries

- Turkey
- Iran
- Uzbekistan
- Algeria
- Italy
- Pakistan
- Ukraine
- France
- Spain
- Japan

## HERITAGE APRICOT SPREAD

*(Yields 3 cups)*

Brighten your breakfast with this delicious apricot spread on toast or English muffins.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 cups dried apricots
- 3/4 cup apple juice
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 2 3-inch pieces of lemon peel
- 1/8 teaspoon salt

### PREPARATION

1. Bring apricots, apple juice, water, honey, lemon peel, and salt to a boil in a small heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir until honey has dissolved.
2. Reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, until the liquid has reduced and become syrupy and the apricots have become very soft (about 15 minutes if you're using California apricots or 45 minutes for Turkish apricots). If the liquid has been absorbed and the apricots are not yet soft, add 1/4 cup of water and continue cooking.
3. Remove from heat. Discard the lemon peel. Let cool for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Puree the mixture in a food processor until the consistency is very smooth. (If needed, add a little water to achieve a spreadable consistency.)
5. Serve at room temperature or chilled.

## APRICOT QUINOA SALAD

*(Serves 4–6)*

Surprise your guests with this “fancy restaurant” menu item. The unexpected combination of sugar snap peas, apricots, and fresh herbs makes a delicious and memorable salad.

### INGREDIENTS

#### FOR THE SALAD:

- 3 cups of cooked quinoa, cooled
- 3 tablespoons fresh cilantro or parsley, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped
- 1/4 cup feta cheese
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1 cup sugar snap peas, sliced diagonally into half-inch pieces
- 3–4 apricots, sliced (if using canned apricots, use 6–8 halves)

#### FOR THE SALAD DRESSING:

- 3 apricots, sliced (if using canned apricots, use 6 halves)
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

### PREPARATION

1. Put all of the ingredients for the salad dressing in a food processor or blender, and blend until smooth.
2. Prepare the quinoa according to package instructions. When cooled, fluff with a fork.
3. Gently mix the fresh herbs, feta cheese, almonds, sugar snap peas, and apricots with the quinoa. Reserve a little of the fresh herbs, feta cheese, and apricots to garnish the top of the salad.
4. Toss with 1/4 cup of the salad dressing.
5. Garnish with reserved fresh herbs, feta cheese, and apricot slices.
6. Refrigerate and serve cold.
7. Just before serving, drizzle the remaining salad dressing over the top.



Recently retired, Nancy Kyte served for 10 years as the marketing director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.





# Meeting the **GOD OF THE UNIVERSE**

“Wait a minute! Start again from the beginning, please. Who is Jesus and what is a Christian?” I was intrigued by what Lai\* and Ping were telling me, but I’d never heard these terms before, and I was struggling to understand them.

# I had to fight very hard for the privilege of worshipping the Creator each Sabbath.

The missionary couple smiled understandingly and explained again why they'd come to my village. They had good news to share about Jesus—the God of the universe—and they had rented a building so that we could learn about Him.

I was familiar with many gods, such as the god of the harvest and the god of thunder. But I'd never heard of the God of the universe. I wanted to know about Jesus, and I eagerly attended the meetings.

I listened intently as Lai and Ping read from a sacred book called the Bible. I discovered that the God of the universe created

the earth, the heavens, and the first human beings. I learned that He loves us and became a man to save us from our sins. Best of all, I read His promises to take us to heaven where there will be no more sorrow, death, or pain.

When the meetings ended, I told Lai and Ping that I believed Jesus is the only true God and that I wanted to follow Him. I was baptized and began worshipping at their house each Sabbath with a small group of believers.

I had to fight very hard for the privilege of worshipping the Creator each Sabbath. My husband, a traditional Chinese farmer, believes in the god of the harvest. He opposed my new faith and challenged the notion that Jesus could give him a good harvest. I began to pray earnestly for Jesus to touch his heart.

When harvest time came, I found it so difficult to worship on Sabbath. I knew that my husband needed my help, yet I felt that I must be faithful to Jesus.

One Sabbath morning, my church had a Communion service planned. This would be my first time experiencing this special event, and I was looking forward to it.

But when I went to leave the house, my husband was standing at the door. He hit me and yelled insults. He snatched my Bible and

pushed over my bike. I cried because I couldn't go to church, and I prayed silently that the Holy Spirit would soften his heart.

Suddenly, a man came and asked my husband to help him with a project. My husband stared at me angrily as he went to lend a hand, but my heart soared. I could go to church after all. I was so thankful for the opportunity to worship Jesus that Sabbath!

My husband is still very strong in his traditional beliefs. I've explained to him that I'm no longer superstitious and that church is a good place for people to learn about the true God. I tell him that Jesus loves him, and I've pleaded with him to accept the Lord who protects him and provides for his needs.

Something within my husband is beginning to change because he allows me to go to church now. I work hard on the farm during the week and try to show him that I love him very much.

Please pray that my husband will come to love Jesus and that our church plant will grow as we reach out to others with Jesus' love.

—Sister Mei

\* All names have been changed.

This story was sent to *Mission 360°* from the front lines of unreached China. “Our work here is difficult,” Lai and Ping shared, “because the majority of people are very traditional and superstitious, but we know that nothing is impossible with God, and we continue to share the gospel with all who will listen. After nine months in Sister Mei’s village, God gave us three baptisms.”

Please keep Lai, Ping, and all our church planters around the world in your prayers.



BRAZIL

# Lights in the Amazon

I'm Fernando Borges, a volunteer missionary for the Amazon Lifesavers Ministry (ALM) in Brazil. I've been doing this for years, and I love it!

ALM missionaries minister to the needs of the people living along the Amazon River. We introduce them to Jesus and start groups of believers where there's no Adventist presence.

If our ministry sounds familiar to you, it may be because you've heard of the Adventist missionaries Leo and Jessie Halliwell who started this work in the 1930s. They traveled all over the Amazon in their legendary launch called the *Luzeiro*, or Light Bearer. We're doing our best to continue their legacy, sharing the light of Christ's love to one heart at a time.

## Here's a glimpse into my world.



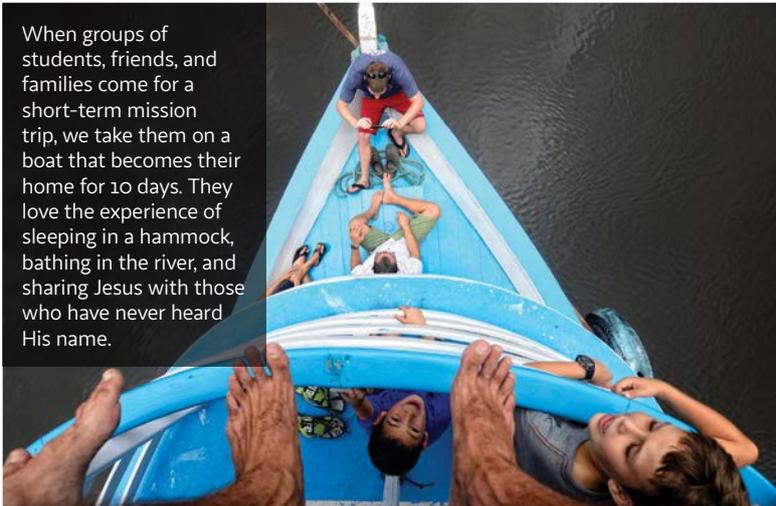
In some communities, if you really make an effort, it's possible to find a phone signal. Note the ladder built by the villagers!



This woman lives in a solitary home on a small piece of land with her mentally challenged daughter. Living in this area can be rough for the elderly and even more so for those who have no one to help them. She works hard to care for her daughter.



Being a missionary is amazing, but sometimes I miss my family and friends. Whenever I feel discouraged, I spend time with the local children. Their joy is contagious.



When groups of students, friends, and families come for a short-term mission trip, we take them on a boat that becomes their home for 10 days. They love the experience of sleeping in a hammock, bathing in the river, and sharing Jesus with those who have never heard His name.



Paulina, a five-year-old girl, is happy to have her hands on lunch. This is a matrinxã fish, a favorite among the river people.



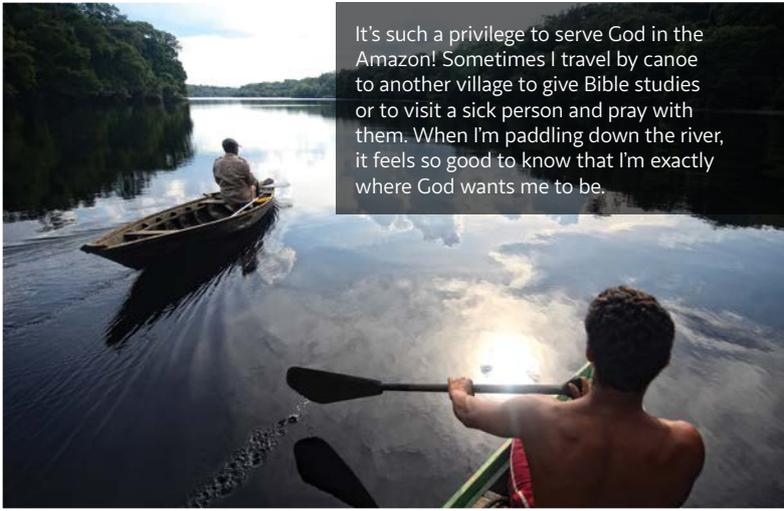
The men and women in the villages along the Amazon River love to play soccer. I join them when I can—it's not only fun, it's a great way to make friends and share Jesus. Soccer seems to be in the DNA of every Brazilian citizen.

One of the first things you ask yourself when you arrive in the Amazon is, "Aren't these kids afraid of piranhas?" While the adults play soccer, the kids play in the river. They spend hours swimming as if there was nothing to threaten their safety.



There are many children in the riverside communities, and they are kind and welcoming to guests who come from far away.

Three siblings play in the river in the community of Nova Jerusalém (New Jerusalem), where the Amazon Lifesavers Health Post is located. We've been able to plant a church here, and almost everyone in the village has become a Seventh-day Adventist.



It's such a privilege to serve God in the Amazon! Sometimes I travel by canoe to another village to give Bible studies or to visit a sick person and pray with them. When I'm paddling down the river, it feels so good to know that I'm exactly where God wants me to be.

Raimunda, left, studied the Bible with us and decided to become a Seventh-day Adventist.



If you're interested in being a volunteer, please visit [AdventistVolunteers.org](http://AdventistVolunteers.org).

If someone told me a few years ago that I'd be in a place like this, I would have thought they were crazy. I used to think that being a missionary was only for those who have a lot of Bible knowledge or who are doctors and nurses, but I was wrong. We can all be missionaries, lighting up a corner of the world for Jesus. Being a missionary through Adventist Volunteer Service changed my life. Could God be calling you to be a volunteer too?

Men in this region don't have beards, so the children aren't used to seeing them. I have a beard, and sometimes the babies cry when they see me for the first time. Apparently this child got a little scared and hid behind his mom.



Before Fernando Borges became a missionary in the Amazon, he worked as a photojournalist in São Paulo. He attended School of Missions, which trains missionaries to live and serve in communities along the Amazon River. He now promotes Amazon Lifesavers Ministry.





## CHILDREN'S STORY

# God Is First

**N**aum (pronounced NOW-oom) was excited to go to first grade. But he knew that he would be missing one day of school every week.

You see, Naum lived in a country called Yugoslavia (in an area that is now part of the country of Croatia), where he was required to go to school six days a week—Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

Naum knew that he couldn't go to school on Saturday, because that was Sabbath and God's special day that He had made holy.

So Naum went to school that first week, but when Sabbath came, he went to church instead. On Monday, Naum went back to school, but when Sabbath came, he went to church again instead of going to school.

The next Monday when Naum and all of his classmates were sitting at their desks, five very important-looking people came in the first-grade classroom. They were the school director, two teachers, and two policemen! Naum was very surprised.

The school director dismissed everyone in the class except for Naum. Then the five adults sat down, and Naum had to stand in front of them.

"Why aren't you coming to school on Saturday?" one man asked.

"Because I believe in God," Naum bravely replied. "And according to the fourth commandment of His law, I'm not to be in school on His Sabbath. This is why I'll be in church every Sabbath, not in school," he said.

"You'll be expelled from school and will have no further opportunities to get an education!" the man replied, glaring at Naum.

Bravely, Naum replied, "I'll be in church anyway, because God is first in my life."

"So what do you do at your church?" the man continued.

"We read the Bible, sing, and pray."

"Sing us a song!" the group demanded.

So Naum sang a hymn and prayed a simple prayer, just like they did at church.

After Naum finished praying, the man asked him another question: "Did your father tell you not to come to school on Saturdays?"

"No," Naum answered honestly.

If the answer had been "Yes," his father would have gone immediately to prison. But because he knew that Naum might be questioned, his father had never told him not to go to school on Sabbath. Instead, he just invited him to come to church with the family. It was Naum's own decision not to go to school on Sabbath.

The group of important people were quiet for a little while. Then the man told Naum: "You will be informed whether or not you will stay in school."

Naum hurried home to tell his mother and father what had happened. His parents weren't surprised. They knew what Naum's decision would be, and they were very proud of their son for standing up for Jesus.

The group of important people never told Naum that he had to quit school, so Naum kept going to school Monday through Friday and went to church every Sabbath.

Naum went all the way through first grade, and then second grade, then third, then fourth, and so on until he finished primary school. Never once did he go to school on Sabbath.

Naum was 15 years old when he finished primary school. He couldn't go on to secondary school because he would have to attend classes on Sabbaths, so he began working on his family's farm.

But soon, Naum and his parents learned that there was going to be a brand new Seventh-day Adventist secondary school in Maruševec where students wouldn't have to go to school on Sabbath but would instead be able to worship God on His special day each week.

This story was excerpted from the first quarter 2017 *Children's Mission* quarterly. You can read more stories from the *Mission* quarterlies at [AdventistMission.org/Mission-Quarterlies](http://AdventistMission.org/Mission-Quarterlies).

Naum was so excited! Now he could go to secondary school and worship God on His holy Sabbath day. After graduating, he went to college and then came back to Maruševec, where he was a teacher for many years.

Today this Adventist school in Maruševec needs a boys' dormitory. You can help to build this dormitory by bringing your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering to Sabbath School this quarter. Thank you for supporting the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering!

When Gina Wahlen wrote this story, she was the editor of the *Mission* quarterlies. She now works in the office of the president at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



# Help Send Global Mission Pioneers!

Millions of people around the world still don't know Jesus. Global Mission sends pioneers to unentered areas to start new groups of believers. Pioneers are often local people who already speak the language and understand the culture. Using Christ's method of ministry, they strive to meet people's needs and bid them to follow Jesus.



## Nigeria

**61,684,000\***  
Unreached population

**95\***  
Unreached people groups

**T**aiwo, left, and Onifade, center, work in southwest Nigeria. They are helping a small Adventist congregation grow. Each day they visit people to ask about their needs, pray with them, and if possible, study the Bible together.

"There is such great need in this city," says Onifade. "It's almost overwhelming. We don't have many resources, but we do what we can to help meet the people's physical and spiritual needs. We want them to know that we love them."

Your support through donations and prayers help make these pioneers' work possible. Thank you!

\*from JoshuaProject.net

## Indonesia

**163,676,000\***  
Unreached population

**222\***  
Unreached people groups

**W**hen Roy accepted an assignment in the mountains of Indonesia, his first task was to register at the government office. This two-day walk took him over a 14,000-foot mountain. He tried to find an easier way back to his village, but he finally decided to walk. Not even a day later, he walked five hours to a funeral in a nearby village.

These long treks are tiring, but Roy feels blessed to be able to minister to the nearby villagers. Nearly 30 people have expressed interest in being baptized, and so far, 20 have been baptized. Please pray for strength for Roy and other Global Mission pioneers.



**GLOBAL MISSION**

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Please donate securely online at [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org). We need your help to train and send more Global Mission pioneers to reach the unreached around the world!

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