

# mission360

The official mission magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church VOLUME 5 • NUMBER 3



**Best Job in  
the World** 8

**Zero Church** 12

**First-Grade  
Love** 14

**Adopted by  
Orphans** 26

**The Strange  
Dentist** 31

Download the Free App at [Mission360Mag.org](https://Mission360Mag.org)

## EDITORIAL

A few months ago, a new Urban Center of Influence opened in the heart of downtown Nazareth, Jesus' hometown. This Life and Hope Center offers activities such as English language studies, health programs, Bible studies, and computer classes. Located on one of Nazareth's busiest streets, the center aims to help young Arabs build and live better lives, stay off the streets, find employment, and, most important, find true meaning in life. It provides a wonderful platform from which to put Christ's method of ministry into practice.

We often talk about Christ's method of ministry in *Mission 360*°, because it's the blueprint for all of Global Mission's activity. Ellen White captures Christ's wholistic approach so beautifully—He mingled, showed sympathy, ministered to needs, won confidence, and then bid people to follow Him. She says this is the only method that “will give true success in reaching the people.” She adds: “The world needs today what it needed nineteen hundred years ago—a revelation of Christ. A great work of reform is demanded, and it is only through the grace of Christ that the work of restoration, physical, mental, and spiritual, can be accomplished.”

This is a wholistic method. It's Jesus' method. And it's the method you will see in the pages of *Mission 360*°.

Thank you for your continuing prayers and financial support for mission. Thank you for being partners in putting Christ's method of ministry into practice around the world.

\* Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press®, 1905), p. 143.

---

### Gary Krause

Director, Office of Adventist Mission, caring for Global Mission and Mission Awareness



# C O N T E N T S

- 4 **New Eyes**
- 6 **The Wrong Right Message**
- 8 **Best Job in the World**
- 10 **More Than Medicine**
- 12 **Zero Church**
- 14 **First-Grade Love**
- 16 **My Roller Coaster Year**
- 18 **A Reason to Live**
- 20 **Li'l Willie**
- 22 **Showers of Blessing?**
- 24 **The Mediterranean—A Taste of Sunshine**
- 26 **Adopted by Orphans**
- 28 **Fixed on Mission**
- 31 **The Strange Dentist**

---

## ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

Photo by Ricky Oliveras

The Good Samaritan Inn, located in Kingston, Jamaica, is an outreach project that received a portion of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in fourth quarter 2014. I was impressed by how the Adventist churches in the area worked together to reach out to the underprivileged through this ministry. They put smiles on people's faces by meeting their needs and bringing them hope. If you'd like to watch a video story about the Good Samaritan Inn, please visit [m360.tv/s1443](http://m360.tv/s1443).

**Chairman:** G. T. Ng

**Editor in Chief:** Gary Krause

**Editor:** Laurie Falvo

**Contributing Editors:** Benjamin Baker, Cheryl Doss, Kayla Ewert, Karen Glassford, Myron Iseminger, Rick Kajiura, Nancy Kyte, Andrew McChesney, Rick McEdward, Hensley Mooroooven, Teen Nielsen, Ricky Oliveras, Delbert Pearman, Karen J. Porter, Claude Richli, Jeff Scoggins, Gerson Santos, Earley Simon, Karen Suvankham, John Thomas, Homer Trecartin, David Trim, Doug Venn, Gina Wahlen

**Editorial Advisors:** Petras Bahadur, Paolo Benini, Edison Choque, Jose Cortes Jr., Daniel Duda, Richard Elofer, Kleber Gonçalves, Graeme Humble, Zakari Kassoule, Si Young Kim, Wayne Krause, Samuel Lumwe, Julio Mendez, Silas Muabsa, Paul Muasya, Umesh Nag, Alex Ott, Shekar Phillips, Clifmond Shameerudeen, Wesley Szamko, Samuel Telemaque, Amy Whitsett, Gregory Whitsett, Dmitry Zubkov

**Design:** 316 Creative

**Production and Digital Media:** Donna Rodill

*Mission 360* is a quarterly magazine produced and copyrighted ©2017 by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®. All rights reserved. The contents may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher.

**12501 Old Columbia Pike**

**Silver Spring, MD 20904-6601, USA**

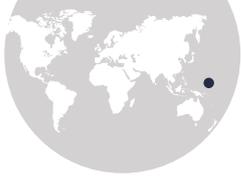
**Telephone: (301) 680-6005**

**Email: [questions@mission360.org](mailto:questions@mission360.org)**

### VOLUME 5, NUMBER 3

Adventist® and Seventh-day Adventist® are the registered trademarks of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists®.

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



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



# NEW EYES

I blazed down the court toward the basket, imagining myself taking flight like Michael Jordan and slamming the ball through the hoop with ferocity. But as my feet left the ground, I felt something leave my face. I instantly knew—my glasses! With my vision lost, my concentration vanished, and I dove out of bounds into the grass.

My students and I searched in the waning light, but my glasses were nowhere to be found. I finally sent the kids home and walked toward my apartment with a heavy heart.

Suddenly, an agonizing thought froze me in my tracks. *My glasses had to be somewhere near that court, and tomorrow the children would be playing there. What if someone stepped on my glasses before I had a chance to find them? How would I replace them on an island in the middle of the Pacific? This was not how I wanted my student missionary year to go!*

I met our principal, Mr. Me-harry, on the way to my room and shared my dilemma. He suggested that we continue the search now, but before we began, he did something that had completely slipped my mind. He invited me and his young son, Joshua, to pray. Ten minutes later, Joshua ran to show me his discovered treasure—my glasses!

That evening on the court wasn't my only experience with the power of prayer when it came to my glasses. During my year abroad, God used my temporary loss of vision as a lesson in humility and trust several times.

The weather was warm and sunny—a perfect day to explore the island on our day off. When my turn to swing came, I was excited to show off my Tarzan-like abilities. I grabbed the vine and began the launch from the runway



1

College in Nebraska.

- 1 A selfie with some kindergarteners while I was their substitute teacher. Love their smiles!
- 2 One of the best birthdays I've had, surrounded by my students.
- 3 I had the opportunity to climb some of the lovely mountains in Kosrae.
- 4 I enjoyed getting involved in school activities, especially when I was a main attraction.



2

of water and rocks. Soon I was airborne. I realized my mistake the instant my face hit the water. My glasses were gone. We searched the murky depths of the river but found nothing.

When Mr. Meharry heard about my mishap, he said we would return the next morning to continue the search. *Why bother?* I thought. *This time, they're gone for good.*

Mr. Meharry woke us up early the next morning to lead the search party. When we arrived at the site of the incident, he suggested something I had forgotten the previous day—prayer. He asked for God's help, and in just a few minutes he was waving my glasses triumphantly over his head.

The sun beat down unmercifully as my students and I cleaned up trash around campus. Every time I bent down to pick something up, drops of sweat splashed on my lenses, making it impossible to see. I tucked them in my shirt pocket and got back to work.

When we'd finished the job, a queasy realization settled over me—my glasses were gone, again. My students and I searched and searched, but the elusive spectacles were not found.

That night I did what I hadn't done before. I prayed.

I didn't find my glasses the next day, or the next, and I was

tempted to doubt. But then I remembered my past experiences of God's power and providence. He had come through before; I needed to trust Him now.

Two days later, one of my students came up to me wearing my glasses. "We were collecting the

trash piles to take to the dump," he explained. "We raked through each pile carefully just in case your glasses had fallen in the trash, and here they are!" This was the final miracle in the trilogy of my lost glasses and by far the greatest.

I gained new sight when I found my glasses that day. I saw clearly that God cares about even the little things in our lives. I saw that when we pray, He's always there, listening and willing to give us new eyes to trust Him.

Originally from the United States,

**J-Fiah Reeves** served on the island of Kosrae as a volunteer missionary, teaching grades three through five at the Kosrae Seventh-day Adventist School. He lives in Houston, Texas, and is a senior theology major at Union



3



4



# THE Wrong Right MESSAGE

**M**y heart soared as I read the message that popped up on our Facebook page at Hope Channel Middle East. The author, a 19-year-old man named Ali, said he'd just given his life to Jesus because he watched our programs. "I love Jesus Christ!" he enthused. "I want to serve Him and share His good news with others."

God has been doing amazing things in this region to woo the

"For the first time in my life, I felt the tangible presence of God."

hearts of people, and I never tire of hearing their stories. I promised Ali that I'd pray for him and asked about his conversion.

"I always did my best to please God," Ali shared. "But I never experienced peace or joy. I felt lonely, disappointed, and lost with no real purpose in life. These feelings broke me to my core, and I became depressed."

Ali attends college classes during the day and works the night shift at a restaurant to help

support his family. He has little free time, but when he does, he enjoys watching TV. One day while channel surfing, he stumbled upon Hope Channel.

"As I listened to the speaker, I became indignant," Ali said. "He was talking about Jesus being our Lord and Savior. I thought, *This man is preaching the wrong message and leading people astray!*

"The man's words made me angry, but they also made me think. There was no relationship between God and me, and something about that felt wrong. The speaker said God wants to be my friend and that He's interested in the details of my daily life—just like how a caring father feels toward his son. That's exactly the kind of relationship I longed for, but I found it difficult to believe God wanted that too."

Ali prayed earnestly that God would show him the truth, and soon something very unusual happened. "One morning around one o'clock, I awoke to a voice calling my name," he recounted. "It said, 'Ali, Ali, I'm coming back soon. Go tell others.' I looked around the room, but there was no one there. I thought maybe I'd been dreaming and went back to sleep, but the same thing happened two more times.

"The last time I heard the voice, it was loud and majestic

and seemed to shake the room. This was no dream. I was wide-awake and scared! For the first time in my life, I felt the tangible presence of God. I saw a light so bright, I couldn't look at it. Again, the voice called my name and said, 'I'm coming back soon. Go and tell others.'

"I was completely changed because of that meeting with the real, living God. I felt genuine joy and peace and an extraordinary love for people."

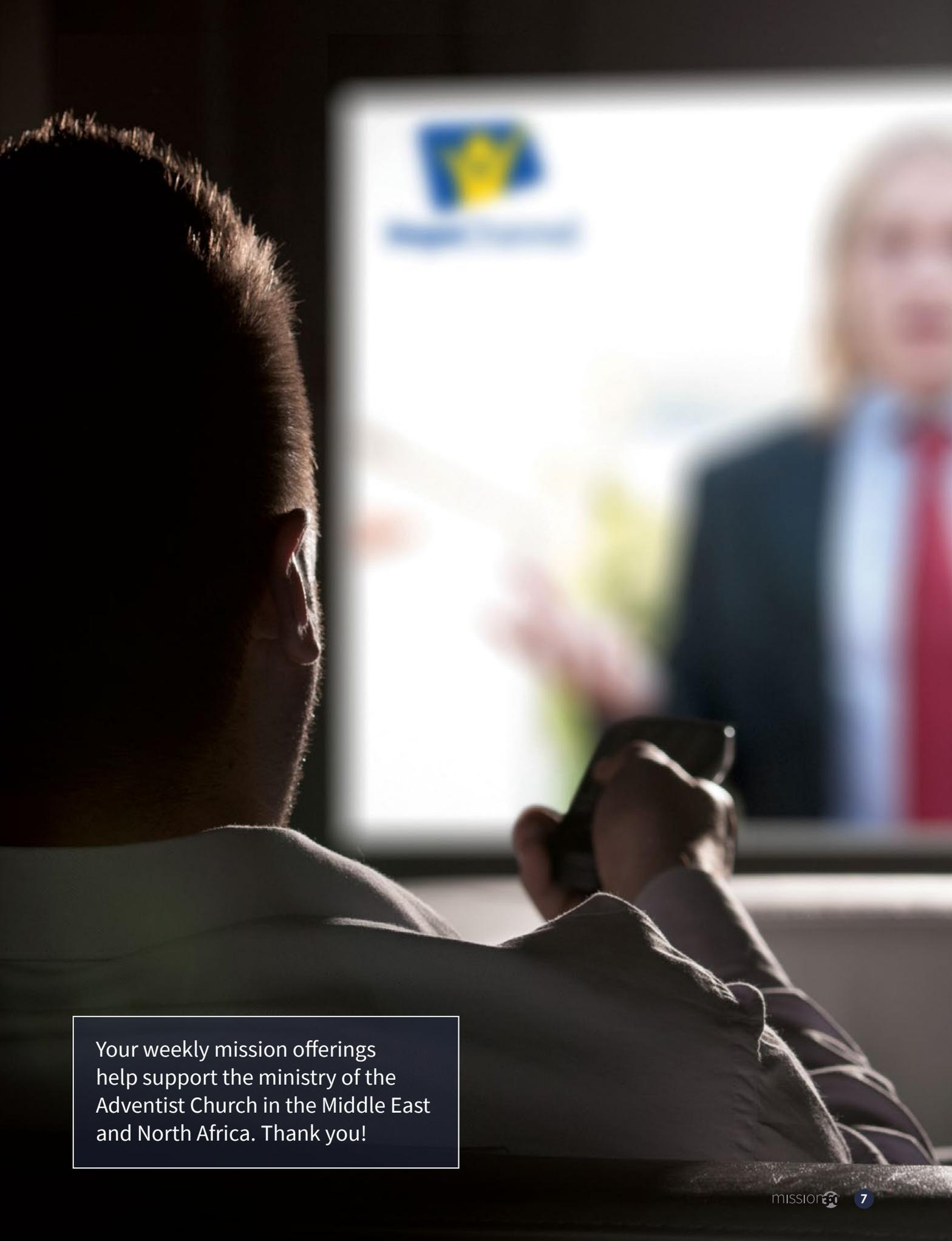
Currently, Ali is eagerly studying God's Word to learn more about Christ and His teachings, but he faces a difficult challenge at home.

"My family won't accept my decision to follow Jesus," he confided. "I love them, and I need wisdom to know how to relate to them and show them Christ's love."

I'm so grateful that I have the privilege of serving in a ministry that helps people like Ali connect with Jesus. Please pray for Ali to remain courageous in his commitment, for our staff at Hope Channel Middle East as we uplift Christ, and for the millions of people here who are searching for a loving relationship with God.

---

This story was shared with *Mission 360°* by the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission.



Your weekly mission offerings help support the ministry of the Adventist Church in the Middle East and North Africa. Thank you!

# Best Job in the World

1

**Editor's note:** The Seventh-day Adventist Church is young in post-communist Mongolia, with a married couple from Adventist Frontier Missions only entering the country of three million people in 1991. The church's current membership of 2,000 people also is young, and most members are the first in their families to be baptized. This has led to several challenges, including member retention, as illustrated by the story of a 28-year-old Global Mission pioneer in Mongolia's capital city. Enkhmandakh Bold was baptized as a teen but left the church seven years later. This is his story.

was a very hard man and judged people. If someone made a mistake, I always let him know what he had done wrong. I wanted him to be punished. I thought that God likes to punish us.

I grew unhappy and eventually decided that believing in God was pointless. Something was broken in my life. I stopped going to church. I stopped keeping the Sabbath. My wife was sad, and she prayed for me.

In the back of my mind, I lived in dread of punishment from God.

I thought that God had blessed me for seven years and now was going to punish me for turning my back on Him.

A year passed, and nothing happened. Instead of punishing me, God loved me and blessed me more than before. I got a well-paying job as an editor with a Mongolian television channel.

This shocked me. My thoughts returned to God, and I wondered, *What is the point of life if all I do is earn money and spend it? The only person who's benefiting is the*

*television channel's owner, who is getting richer. What's the best job that I could have?*

After much thought, I concluded that the best job would be a missionary. I rededicated my heart to Jesus, returned to church, and prayed, "If You want me to be a missionary, I'm ready to go."

After several months, the leaders of the Adventist Church in Mongolia offered me the position of a Global Mission pioneer. I would take over a dying house-church on the first

floor of an apartment building in Mongolia's capital and teach English at a nearby public high school. My wife would oversee the children's Sabbath School and teach Chinese. I prayed for a week before quitting my television job to become a full-time missionary. I've only been a pioneer for six months so far, and I love it! There's nothing more thrilling than seeing a life change through God's power.

## A Cheating Husband

On the first Sabbath, a former member who hadn't attended in three years showed up for Sabbath School. I didn't know him, and he didn't know me. I tried to connect with him, and I encouraged him to return the next Sabbath. He didn't seem happy about the invitation.

I found out why when he called me during the week and said he wanted to talk. I went to his workplace and learned from him that he was cheating on his wife. He said his wife had found out and wanted a divorce.

"What should I do?" he asked. "What do you want to do?" I replied.

He didn't know.

I advised him to ask for God's forgiveness and to stop cheating on his wife. I said, "Tell your wife the truth and then promise her, 'From now on, I'll be a man of God. I'll be faithful to you.'"

We prayed together, and I left.

A week later, the man told me that he had ended the affair by announcing to the other woman that he had recommitted his life to Christ. He also told the truth to his wife and, fortunately, she had forgiven him.

Today, the man comes to church every Sabbath and is an active church member.

I'm not an emotional person, but I become so happy when I see God's love transforming lives. I can't express this feeling with words. I want everyone to know about God's love, and that's why I'm a Global Mission pioneer. Being a pioneer is the best job in the world!

1 Enkhmandakh Bold leaving the apartment building where he leads a house-church in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

2 Enkhmandakh Bold and his wife, Lhagvasuren Enkhtaivan, standing in their house-church.



Story by **Enkhmandakh Bold** as told to **Andrew McChesney, Office of Adventist Mission**.

## Global Mission

The Global Mission program was established by the 1990 General Conference Session to reach the unreached people groups of the world.

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.

## 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, making them more affordable than traditional missionaries; and
- share the good news of Jesus through wholistic ministry, such as 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 for your support!

## Ways to Give

- **Online**  
Visit [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org) to make a secure online donation quickly.
- **Over the phone**  
Call 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).



1

# More Than Medicine

If you hear the term *medical missionary*, you may think of a doctor traveling on foot, by boat, or by plane to remote villages—risking life and limb to bring medical care to unreached people groups. Indeed, some of the most exciting tales of God's providence come from this type of mission work.

However, it's not just the jungles that need missionaries—so do the cities! And medical ministry in the city may come with its own risks, such as war or political upheaval. That's what Dr. George H. Rue discovered when he dedicated most of his life to being a medical missionary in Seoul, South Korea.

Dr. Rue and his family set foot in the city of Sunan in 1929. They

were eager to make a difference in their new home, but already they faced a huge challenge—they didn't speak Korean. Pressing on, they learned as much as they could over the next two years.

Then, Dr. Rue was called to open a new clinic in Seoul. The Seoul Sanitarium (later the Seoul Hospital) started as an eight-bed facility, but he envisioned something bigger. Providential funds from the 1935 Week of Sacrifice Offering and a Thirteenth Sabbath Offering Overflow paved the way for the construction of a small, 138-bed hospital not long after.

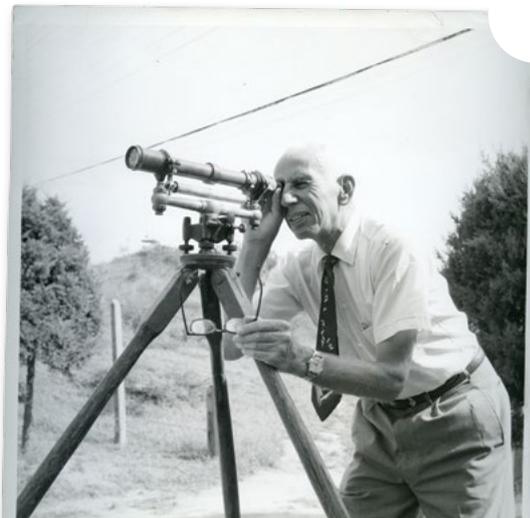
Sadly, Dr. Rue's wife, Mae, passed away in 1936. More tragedy followed when World War II began; this forced the Americans, including the Rues, out of the country in 1941. Dr. Rue was allowed to return in 1946—joined by his new bride,

Grace—and immediately set to restocking the depleted hospital. These tireless efforts caught the eye of then-President Rhee, who recruited Dr. Rue as his personal physician.

The respite from war was brief, and in 1950 the hospital's work was disrupted again, this time by the Korean War. Dr. Rue was sent south to care for refugees and start two new hospitals. Heartbroken from the growing number of orphans, he and his wife felt called to start an orphanage. In 1954, President Rhee awarded Dr. Rue the Republic of Korea Medal, the highest honor a civilian could receive for service to the nation.

Miraculously, the Seoul Hospital was still standing at the end of the war, even though many other buildings became rubble. How could this be? Dr. Rue was later told that a ranking North Korean officer had once been his patient and still respected Dr. Rue. While invading Seoul, the officer had ordered the hospital untouched.

No longer battered by war, Dr. Rue tried to get the Seoul Hospital back in shape. The division sold land, and donations poured in from church members and workers. The call for offering funds to repair and expand the hospital was well received, and many Adventists sacrificed to support the initiative financially. In 1967, part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering Overflow in first quarter was set aside for the hospital.



2

Your weekly mission offerings, collected during Sabbath School or given online at [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org), help support the work of Adventist hospitals around the world. Thank you!

But the gospel still needed to be told, and Dr. Rue couldn't let the need for repairs hinder this medical mission work! One terminal patient was so impressed by what she learned about the Advent message that she pleaded to be baptized before she died. What could they do but say yes? Thinking quickly, someone suggested the hospital's physical therapy tank as a makeshift baptistry.

Field clinics were routinely sponsored across the country. In small villages, these clinics not only provided care but also broke down prejudice against Christians. Young people wanted to attend church, and the clinics helped win over their parents. More than 100 people were baptized because of these efforts.

At one clinic, 150 dental patients and more than 450 medical patients were seen! Even so, hopeful crowds had to be turned away when the supplies ran out. Sixty patients signed up for Bible studies because of this clinic alone, and most had never met an Adventist before.

After surviving two wars, Dr. Rue officially retired in 1967 but went back to Korea to serve for several months each year. Even later in life, he couldn't deny his calling to serve God's children in Korea.

The hospital expansion broke ground in 1969, but the finances hadn't come together yet. Construction progressed off and on for several years. During this time, Dr. and Mrs. Rue never gave up. They were instrumental in fundraising about \$70,000.

God also inspired some surprise blessings. In one instance, a British businessman experienced what doctors told him was an

allergic reaction. When the problem didn't subside, he decided to visit the Adventist hospital for help. Dr. Rue exclaimed, "Oh, my! Chicken pox at your age!" as soon as he saw the man. This quick and accurate diagnosis impressed the businessman. After hearing that the hospital was struggling to expand, he was inspired to support the cause by donating 100 tons of cement.

Dr. Rue's dream came true when this tremendous project was finished in 1976. The expanded hospital's key features included central air conditioning and a speaker system. There to celebrate were the Rues as well as former First Lady of South Korea Mrs. Rhee.

The Seoul Adventist Hospital has grown even more, adding services and increasing its patient capacity. It remains a beacon of health and healing in South Korea to this day, caring for thousands of patients each year.

Dr. Rue's exemplary, steadfast mission service has had rippling effects around the world as the hospital continues to train nurses who are also called to be missionaries.

This pioneer shows what can happen when you follow God wherever He leads—even if He leads you to a city.

**Kayla Ewert**, Office of Adventist Mission.

To watch a video about George Rue, called "Building the Future," visit [m360.tv/s1713](http://m360.tv/s1713).

- 1 Dr. Rue greets orphans awaiting attention at Seoul Adventist Hospital.
- 2 Dr. Rue surveys the location of the new hospital wing.
- 3 George and Mae Rue with their 15-month-old daughter, Betty Jane, in 1924.
- 4 From left: Cleo Johnson, business manager; Dr. George Rue, founder; and Dr. Clarence Lee, medical director. With the new building behind them, they study plans for the completion of the hospital.



4



# Zero Church

An innovative church plant project geared to reach the secular mind is adding to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Madrid, the capital city of Spain. The Zero Church initiative—or simply Zero, as its members and supporters know it—looks to connect people who may have never been in a church with their inner need for a Bible-based spiritual experience.

“People may think that they don’t need to develop their spirituality, but I think human beings have always been the same,” said church member Ana Lugo. “They need a spiritual life, but we need to connect with them by using their language, and I think Zero is fulfilling that role.”

Church plant pastor Jonathán Contero concurred. “The goal of Zero Church is to be attractive for almost everyone while not giving up our principles and fundamentals as Seventh-day

Adventists,” he said. “At Zero, we facilitate moments of fellowship, of real brotherhood, when by knowing each other better, we may foster a better relationship with our Lord.”

## Countdown to Zero

Contero explained that with its current rejection of religiosity and

an overwhelmingly secular spirit, Europe exhibits great challenges for sharing God’s Word. “The mission Jesus Christ gave us of preaching the gospel ‘to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people’ demands a creative and imaginative effort,” he said, “as we try to reach all those who have opted out of God in their lives.”



So, in the context of Mission to the Cities—a Seventh-day Adventist Church initiative to reach billions of people living in urban settings, which is overseen by Global Mission leaders at the General Conference—an initial group of volunteers launched a new church plant in 2015. In October 2016, the initiative was relaunched in a remodeled, larger location. At that time leaders and members chose to give the initiative an intriguing, distinct name, and so Zero Church was born. The project has garnered the all-out buy-in of leaders and member volunteers.

“I think Zero is needed so those who are considering for the first time whether God can become part of their lives may understand right away that it’s possible,” said Marta Tejel, a church member volunteer. “We’d like them to start including a spiritual dimension in their lives in an easy, comfortable, and contemporary way.”

Leaders agreed. “Zero tries to share the gospel message in a clear, contemporary language, in a way that people not acquainted with God’s Word may find attractive and friendly,” they said. “The church plant strives to tear down walls, prejudice, and preconceived ideas and to rediscover the Jesus of the Bible.”

## An Action-Oriented Church

Contero explained that Zero is a call to service, fellowship, and preaching. “Our primary goal is growing up by making disciples who may choose to commit themselves to God,” he said. “Thus, every activity is geared toward a practical, action-based type of Christianity.”

The Madrid church plant has developed several projects of social support, which include assisting at-risk children and children who have chronic diseases, giving a hand to refugees, visiting the sick, helping the homeless, and organizing camps for children who have disabilities.

“In Zero we believe in outward service, in working to benefit others,” said Guillermo Carbonell, a church member. “It’s the reason we partner with associations working with children and refugees.”

“The goal of the Zero Church is to be out sharing hope and the good news,” said Stefan Ladovic, a young member. “At the same time, we want to find a way for people to feel part of our community.”

It’s an approach, Ladovic continued, that benefits not only community residents but volunteer members too. “From the very beginning, I found out that I could take on an active role,” he said. “It was the crucial motivating factor that prompted me to stay.”

Ladovic shared how in the past, he felt he had some talents he could use to benefit others, though he didn’t know how to use them. “At Zero, I found out that it was possible to use my talents for service,” he said, “and I would like others who may be feeling the same to give it a try.”

It is this nonthreatening approach that is drawing secular and religious people from various traditions to the Madrid church plant.

Take Esther Suárez, for instance, a nonmember volunteer.

“I discovered Zero at a children’s camp,” she said, explaining that at the beginning, she was wary and even scared of Adventists.

However, Suárez says she met “wonderful people” who were willing to give all they had in exchange for nothing. “And I saw children leave that place so happy that I felt compelled to become part of it.”

*Reprinted with permission from the Adventist Review. Special thanks to Hope Media Spain and Spanish Union News. Photos: Zero Church, Facebook.*

**Marcos Paseggi** is the senior news correspondent for *Adventist Review*.



## GLOBAL MISSION

Your donations to Global Mission and the Annual Sacrifice Offering support church planting projects around the world. To learn more about Global Mission, please visit [Global-Mission.org](http://Global-Mission.org).



## PALAU

**P**icture this. You're 20 years old in an unfamiliar country with absolutely no background in teaching, standing in front of a classroom of 28 first-graders. That was me on day one of being a student missionary.

The biggest challenge I faced during the next 10 months on the island of Palau was feeling completely and utterly unqualified for the privilege of teaching these precious kids. But God often calls the unqualified, right?

There were days when, after the children left the classroom, I would sink to the floor, holding

back tears because, let's face it, I wasn't fit to teach these six-year-olds. I would think to myself, *Am I teaching these kids anything at all? Are they receiving the education they deserve?*

Looking back now, I realize that when I volunteered to become a missionary, I thought I'd be the one doing all the teaching. In reality, the children ended up teaching me.

My first-graders taught me beautiful lessons on love. Every Tuesday and Thursday morning, I'd stand in front of my classroom, waiting for them to stream

through the door. They'd greet me as if they hadn't seen me in months. I would open my arms wide, and, one by one, receive the warmest hugs I'd ever felt. "Ms. Lysa, I missed you!" "Ms. Lysa, I made something for you!" "Ms. Lysa, he hit me!" "Ms. Lysa, she's lying!" "Ms. Lysa, can I play games today?" "Ms. Lysa, can I tell you a joke?" "Ms. Lysa! Ms. Lysa! Ms. Lysa..."

One day, I was losing my patience because it seemed like I'd repeated myself a hundred times, asking the children to sit down, be quiet, and behave. I wondered how many times I'd have to ask before they learned their lesson. When would they understand that I was simply trying to help them? When would they realize

# First-Grade Love





2



3



4

that I had nothing but their best interest in mind?

In that moment, I realized that I was exactly like my first-graders in my relationship with God. How many times does He have to repeat Himself before I learn that He's trying to help me? How often does He put His head down, thinking, *When will you understand that I have nothing but your best interest in mind?*

My students taught me so much more than I ever imagined they would. They taught me what true laughter is and how to see the bright side of everything. They taught me to enjoy the skies even when rain was falling and

the classroom floor was covered in mud. They taught me how to love God like a child and trust in Him, always.

There I stood, 20 years old in an unfamiliar country with an unfamiliar task, feeling completely unqualified but eternally grateful that God called me anyway.

Originally from the United States, **Elyssa Hinojosa** served as a volunteer computer teacher on the island of Palau. She is currently earning a degree in communication at La Sierra University in La Sierra, California.



- 1 There was never a dull moment when I was hanging out with my seventh-grade boys.
- 2 My girls' basketball team took first place in their league.
- 3 My sixth-grade girls showing off their islander flare.
- 4 Shari was one of the biggest blessings in my first-grade class.



If you're interested in being a volunteer, please visit **AdventistVolunteers.org**.

## In the beginning . . .

Here's what I knew about the African continent before I arrived in Uganda with my family. I pictured a harsh, barren land (as depicted in some documentaries) and having to fetch water from some far away riverbed.

But when I looked out the plane window as we approached Entebbe Airport, I saw fertile land, lush trees, and rivers snaking out of Lake Victoria. It was gorgeous!

Now, imagine this with me. You step out of the plane and feel the gust of humid air. As you step down the runway, you hear loud calls of birds you've never heard before. You see grey-crowned cranes, hadada ibis, marabou storks, horses, bunnies, and, to your surprise, a camel. It's as if you've just entered a country-sized zoo! And that's just your first step; you're still at the airport!

While we drove toward Kampala, the capital and largest city in Uganda, we passed hundreds of roadside vendors

The compound is surrounded by people of different faiths. At precise times during the day, I hear the beautiful Muslim call to worship echo across the valley. Lively prayer and praise come from the Christian church, while catchy Ugandan dance tunes erupt from the market below.

We have jackfruit trees, avocado trees, guava trees (with two colorful parrots feeding off the juicy fruit), banana trees, and mango trees. Every day we check the trees for ripe fruit and enjoy freshly squeezed juice, smoothies, and fruit salad.

The rainy season has arrived in Kampala, and I love it! The rain goes sideways and comes with bright flashes of lightning and loud thunder, and most of the time, the roads in Kampala are flooded. When we first experienced an intense Ugandan rainstorm, my brother, Onyx, sister, Jaden, and dad were out playing in the rain and dancing to the beat of the thunder booms. They danced until the rain stopped.

as I try to be a blessing to others in this beautiful country.

## And then . . .

When my parents received the official call to become missionaries, my mind rapidly flew through images of me living in Africa—pumping water, owning animals, getting a nice tan, and helping people as much as I could through ADRA.

However, the transition from Canada to Uganda wasn't easy, especially for this 15-year-old. Had we made the transition without any help, I can tell you honestly that I would have persuaded my parents to send me back to British Columbia.

I missed my friends and school terribly. I love Vancouver because it's such a multicultural city. In Ugandan markets, sometimes children point at us or call us *Mzungus* (which means "foreigner" or "white skinned"). I felt different and out of place.

I thought my homesickness would fade with time, but I was

# My Roller Coaster Year

## Thoughts from a 15-year-old missionary

with colorful stone-and-dirt storefronts and homes painted with advertisements. The merchandise sold at these stores is quite varied—from fruits to dry goods to fresh meat.

Finally, we drove up the long hill to our new home at the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) compound. The compound sits on a hillside overlooking the city and beautiful Lake Victoria. The view is incredible, and every day, I get to see the sunrise from my bedroom window!

There is never a dull moment in our home. Whether the exciting moment is finding cute, cuddly kittens nearby, a new brightly colored bird, a huge cockroach sneaking up your leg, or a millipede hiding in your shoes, it's always lively here. This place is a riot to the senses—always something new to see, taste, smell, or hear.

I still can't believe I'm here in Uganda with my family. At times, I think it's just a dream. But the reality is, Uganda is my mission field for the next couple of years, and I pray that God will bless me

mistaken. I wanted to share my struggles with my friends back home, but I was afraid of seeming depressed or needy.

I started hiding my feelings and having troubling mood swings. It was at this low point that my family attended the General Conference Institute of World Mission (IWM) in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

At IWM I learned how to effectively deal with the challenges of adapting to new situations and living and working in a new culture.



1



2



3



4



5

I discovered that all the emotions I experienced were completely normal! My troubling mood swings were the “transition phase” in the life of a missionary.

IWM was such a God-given blessing. I felt understood. I felt empowered to do more for Jesus. I felt affirmed; I am part of God’s work in Africa.

**Now . . .**

I’m back in Uganda with my family. My dad just went up north to the refugee settlements where ADRA is working, my mom is in a planning session with the Uganda Union Health Department, and I’m with my two younger siblings,

trying to catch some grasshoppers to feed our five chameleons.

I can’t wait to see what God has prepared for me to accomplish in Uganda. Mukama Mulungi (God is Good)!

---

**Jewel** is the eldest child of Elizabeth and Pastor Charles Ed II Aguilar. The Aguilar are currently serving in Uganda with ADRA and the Uganda Union Health Department. Jewel loves to play her ukulele, enjoys speaking Luganda with her siblings, and is looking forward to the next International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



- 1 Me with Mrs. Andrews, one of our five chameleons.
- 2 My brother, Onyx, with mangoes he harvested from a tree in the ADRA compound.
- 3 Working on a makeshift swing from the mango tree.
- 4 The sunrise view from my window.
- 5 My family at the equator. From left: Elizabeth, Onyx, Jaden, me, and Pastor Charles Ed II.

Thank you for supporting ADRA through your mission offerings and World Mission Budget Offerings!

# A Reason to Live

**A**ung Ko might seem an unlikely worship leader. He's been blind since childhood and, by his own admission, has tried to commit suicide multiple times. But he's also a living testament to the power of Jesus: the power to find people at their weakest moment and lift them up from despair, the power to turn emptiness into purpose and joy, the power to use absolutely anyone to be a beacon of light to those around them.

Aung Ko was born to a Bhar-mar father and Shan mother and grew up with a younger sister and three younger brothers. They were a very devoted Buddhist family. When Aung Ko was seven years old, his carpenter father moved to a new town closer to the major city of Yangon. The rest of the family followed and settled with

him in Shwe Pyi Thar, where they still live today.

Soon Aung Ko began suffering from a disease in one of his eyes. Despite their heartbreak, his parents couldn't afford to take him to a clinic, and the disease spread to the other eye. Aung Ko's condition worsened until he went totally blind in his teens. He had finished grade seven in school but was unable to continue his studies.

Adrift and depressed, Aung Ko saw only emptiness ahead. Every day felt dreadfully long. Years passed, excruciatingly long. Without hope for a future, Aung Ko vaguely thought about taking his life. Over time, these thoughts solidified, and the day came when he acted on his desire to be free of the pain. But his attempt failed.

Nothing changed in his life, however, so Aung Ko tried again

... and again. Each time, he was unsuccessful.

One day, when Aung Ko was nearing his 30s, a Christian evangelist arrived in the village and began talking to people about Jesus.

"Because the man was from the Karen tribe, I assumed that Jesus was a Karen ethnic god," Aung Ko said. "But the evangelist explained that Jesus was God of all people and nationalities." As a result of the evangelist's messages, Aung Ko and his family were baptized into the Christian church.

Since Aung Ko couldn't learn more about Jesus through reading books, he searched for audio sources of information. This search was how he discovered Adventist World Radio (AWR).

"I soon grew to love these programs," Aung Ko shared. "Only the

radio could comfort me. I noted the broadcast time and would listen every day, which I still do. Before, I didn't know who God was, but I came to know everything through the radio."

Every topic captured Aung Ko's attention, from children's stories to Bible-based sermons and from health advice to nature talks. As his knowledge grew, he decided that he should share what he was hearing, so he called his neighbors and formed a small group, which faithfully began meeting every Sunday. Aung Ko focused on the radio programs even more intently, doing his best to capture every detail.

"I could manage to remember some of the programs," he said. "But I thought that there was perhaps a better way. So, I called the AWR office and asked whether they could send me the recordings."

The AWR producers and staff in Yangon are highly engaged with their listeners, so they went a step farther and visited Aung Ko in person. The technician, Saw Kapaw Moo, filled a USB thumb drive with MP3 files, which Aung Ko could listen to again and again.

In his quiet way, Aung Ko has become a popular speaker and respected leader. Every month, he is invited to preach at one of the churches nearby. He has also founded a community services

group—the Golden Eagle Handicap Foundation—which assists needy people in the community and surrounding area.

"I'm so happy that I've come to know God and learned about the true Sabbath," Aung Ko said firmly. "One day, before long, I know my family members and I will become Adventists. Without the radio message, my life would be meaningless, and I could not continue living."

**Shelley Nolan Freesland** is the communication director for Adventist World Radio.



Adventist World Radio is the international broadcast ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Programs are currently available in more than 100 languages, via shortwave, AM/FM, on demand, podcasts, Call-to-Listen service, and solar audio players. AWR's mission is to bring the gospel to the hardest-to-reach people of the world in their own languages. The "AWR360" approach to outreach encompasses the entire journey of listeners from broadcast to baptism.

**Thank you for supporting AWR through your mission offerings and World Mission Budget Offerings!**



- 1 AWR Myanmar technician Saw Kapaw Moo (left) makes a personal visit to Aung Ko to deliver a USB thumb drive filled with programs.
- 2 Once a week, Aung Ko's neighbors and family members gather to hear what he has learned on the radio.
- 3 Messages of Jesus' love, heard through a radio program or from a friend, have the power to brighten the lives of people in any culture.



# Li'l Willie

**C**. D. Brooks (1930 – 2016) was among the most successful evangelists in Seventh-day Adventist history. He ministered for seven decades and accumulated countless stories, but one of his most beloved tales occurred during the late 1950s.

He was a pastor for the Ephesus church in Columbus, Ohio, and was hosting his first evangelistic series just months after moving into the city. Every night an alcoholic named William Webster, known by all as Little Willie or Li'l Willie, wandered into the tent, disheveled and smelling of stale alcohol. Brooks had a general impatience with drunks, believing them to be insincere and

irresponsible. But Li'l Willie was persistent, the diminutive black man even staggering forward at the close of each meeting to shake Brooks' hand.

After eight weeks of preaching, "decision time" finally arrived. Willie was still coming, with probably the best attendance record even among the church members. One day Sister Bond, a diligent Bible instructor, asked to have a word with Brooks.

"Pastor, Willie Webster wants to be baptized."

"Li'l Willie?" Brooks replied incredulously. "He's drunk most of the time. He doesn't know, doesn't understand, what I'm preaching."

"He says he's understood and wants to be baptized."

"No. I will not burden the church records with Willie's name. He's not ready and not sincere."

"At least go visit him, Pastor," she pleaded. So, Brooks drove to

inner-city Columbus to see Li'l Willie.

Li'l Willie lived in a house in which the front door was always open. All kinds of people wandered in and out in a never-ending stream. Brooks and Sister Bond attempted to knock, but when no answer was forthcoming, they just walked in. A motley assortment of people milled about in the foyer and living room. When Brooks asked for Li'l Willie, someone disappeared to fetch him. Moments later, he descended the stairs, and Brooks motioned him over to the far corner of the living room where they could have a little privacy.

"Willie," Brooks began rather sternly, "I understand from Sister Bond that you wish to be baptized."

"Yes, sir."

"Do you understand the things I've been preaching all these weeks?"

“Yes, sir.”

Brooks began to drill him on the doctrines he had presented, and as he suspected, Willie’s answers were woefully inadequate. But when Brooks corrected him, the man nodded his head humbly in agreement.

“Do you believe this truth?” Brooks finally asked.

“Yes, sir.”

At that, Brooks bore down hard. “Willie, I know you drink. In our church, we do not drink. Do you understand that?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Now, if I catch you drinking, I will counsel you and pray with you. But if you continue, I will drop you from the church’s membership. Do you understand?”

“Yes, sir.”

On that baptismal Sabbath, the Ephesus sanctuary was packed. Brooks was at his happiest, this being prime time for

# He was fully suited, liquor free, dignified, diligent, faithful, and matured in the faith. God had turned his life completely around!

an evangelist. God had blessed his efforts immensely, he mused, and now . . . But his musings were interrupted when he spotted Li’l Willie in a white baptismal robe with the 124 other candidates. Brooks beckoned to him, and the little man stepped into the pool.

“This candidate really needs your prayers,” Brooks announced to the congregation. When he baptized Willie, he thought, *Here goes a waste of time.*

Brooks held a series of meetings after the baptisms, and Willie was always found sitting dutifully on the front row. Despite himself Brooks had to admit that he was a pleasant fellow with a ready smile. Yet he was sure Willie would drop out soon.

But Li’l Willie didn’t. A week after his baptism, he wore a tie—the knot was loose, Brooks noted, but it was a tie nevertheless. As the days went by, he observed that the tie tightened, moving into place. Then one night, Li’l Willie entered the tent in a suit—a used suit—but a suit nevertheless. Brooks began to feel a little ashamed of himself.

Calvin Peterson, one of Brooks’ parishioners, was head of plant services for Channel 6 TV. One Sunday, Brooks went to visit him at his job to see how he was faring. As soon as he saw his pastor, Peterson said excitedly, “Pastor, guess who’s working for me?”

“Who?”

“Li’l Willie!”

Nonplussed, Brooks asked, “Where is he?”

Peterson hurriedly led him up a flight of stairs. At the top the

two found Li’l Willie vigorously sweeping the hall, oblivious to everything but finishing the task.

Brooks dashed to him and grasped him excitedly.

“Willie, I’m sorry for not believing in you! I just . . .” Brooks broke into tears. “Forgive me, brother!”

“Pastor Brooks,” Willie began, tears streaming down his face, too. “I can’t begin to tell you what Jesus has done for me. I don’t drink anymore. I’ve got the first job I’ve had in 20 years. I’m going to save up, get me a car, and bring others to church!”

Twenty years later when Brooks’ daughter, Diedre, graduated with her master’s degree from Ohio State University, Brooks and his wife, Walterene, attended the festivities. They attended Ephesus church on Sabbath, and guess who the first elder was? Li’l Willie! He was fully suited, liquor free, dignified, diligent, faithful, and matured in the faith. God had turned his life completely around!

Brooks shared his Li’l Willie story across the globe, inspiring thousands by God’s power to transform a life. William Webster now sleeps in Jesus, but those who have been blessed by Brooks’ testimony expect to see Li’l Willie “in the morning.”

**Benjamin Baker** is the managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* project for the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.



1 Brooks, far left, with the recently baptized at Ephesus Church, 1958.

2 C. D. Brooks about 1960.





# Showers of BLESSING?

“There shall be showers of blessing;  
This is the promise of love;  
There shall be seasons refreshing,  
Sent from the Savior above.

“Showers of blessing.  
Showers of blessing we need;  
Mercy drops round us are falling,  
But for the showers we plead.”<sup>1</sup>

I tried to sing, but the words stuck in my throat. We'd just been told in staff worship that Pawpaw, the three-year-old son of one of our nurses, had died Saturday evening. The disconnect I felt between the song's lyrics and the loss of this precious child rendered me silent.

I'd examined Pawpaw the previous Thursday afternoon when his mom brought him to my office. "He hasn't urinated since Monday," she said anxiously.

Our diagnostic and treatment options are limited at Waterloo Adventist Hospital in Sierra Leone, so I conducted the tests I could, hoping there'd be something I could do to help. I suspected renal failure, but I had no way to prove it, and, in any case, no way to cure it.

Pawpaw lay listlessly on the table while I performed an ultrasound. That was bad sign number one. Normal three-year-olds don't lay still on an exam table; they kick and scream. Bad signs numbers two, three, and four were the lack of urine in his bladder, his huge kidneys, and the fluid in his abdomen. All together, they told me this child was in big trouble.

When we received the results of our studies, we realized there was nothing we could do to help. We decided to have Pawpaw transferred to a pediatrician in nearby Freetown, afraid he'd be as helpless as we were.

Things looked up Friday when Pawpaw urinated. He was taken to Freetown Saturday morning. He died Saturday evening.

This afternoon, my wife, Bekki, and I attended Pawpaw's funeral, our first funeral in Africa. There were heartfelt prayers, inspiring songs, encouraging words about God's love and care, and a lot of crying. The hardest part

was seeing the boy's five-year-old cousin screaming "Cousin, come back! Cousin, come back!" when he first saw the casket.

A few months ago, the wife of our cashier was brought in unconscious after delivering her baby at home. We don't have an obstetrics unit yet at the hospital, so the family chose traditional care instead of taking the woman to the government maternity center. She died shortly after arriving at Waterloo, leaving our cashier a widower with three children, including a newborn.

We have a hospital staff of 45 employees, and two of them have lost young family members in the past two months. I don't know anybody who would equate these losses with showers of blessing.

Recently, I've been studying the book of Job and the question of human suffering. The conclusion I've come to is that there is no good answer for it. There's nothing you can say to a mother who's lost her only child or a husband who finds himself alone with a newborn. There is no explanation, no "greater good," no "cosmic purpose." As one author put it, "Sin is an intruder, for whose presence no reason can be given. . . . Could excuse for it be found, or cause be shown for its existence, it would cease to be sin."<sup>2</sup>

During Pawpaw's funeral, someone mentioned that the apostle Paul admonishes us to "In everything give thanks." Really? I'd never heard that text used at a funeral before. How do you give thanks for the death of a three-year-old?

I don't think you do. I think we give thanks that this isn't all there is—that Jesus loves us and died for us and is coming back to restore everything in this world. I think we give thanks that He conquered death and sickness



Scott and Bekki Gardner

and is coming soon to raise our dead loved ones and take us home to live with Him forever.

These are the showers of blessing that fall around us constantly while our hearts are breaking from the evil and death we see in this world. "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

1. Daniel W. Whittle, "Showers of Blessing."
2. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1911), p. 493.

Originally from the United States, **Scott Gardner** is the medical director at Waterloo Hospital in Sierra Leone, where his wife, **Bekki**, serves as the clinical supervisor.

Your weekly mission offerings and World Mission Budget Offerings help support the ministry of more than 400 missionary families around the world.



# The Mediterranean— A Taste of Sunshine

With the utmost respect, Mediterranean cuisine is sometimes described as peasant food. The sunny climate provides a long growing season, making it possible to enjoy a bounty of fresh fruits and vegetables. Even the simplest meal is likely to be full of vibrant color.

## ITALY

### Roasted Bell Pepper Antipasto

(Serves 6-8)

The Italian word *antipasto* simply means “before the meal.” It could be hot or cold, an appetizer, or cheese—anything that might be served before the actual meal begins. This roasted bell pepper salad, with its riot of color and flavor, is bold enough to take center stage on any table.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 3 red bell peppers
- 2 yellow bell peppers
- 1 orange bell pepper
- 1 green bell pepper
- ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes in oil, drained and sliced into strips
- 8-10 artichoke quarters, canned and drained
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- ½ teaspoon sea salt

#### PREPARATION

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly oil a large baking pan, and place the whole peppers in the pan. Bake for 45 minutes until the peppers begin to char. Remove from the oven, cover with a clean dish towel, and let cool for 5 minutes.
2. Remove the core and seeds from the peppers. Peel away the skin that comes off easily; don't worry about skin that sticks to the peppers. Slice each pepper into thick strips. Place in a large bowl.
3. Add the sun-dried tomatoes, artichokes, and garlic.
4. Whisk together the lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Drizzle over the vegetables and gently combine.
5. Serve chilled or at room temperature.



## MOROCCO

### Date, Orange, and Carrot Salad

(Serves 4-6)

This surprising combination of simple ingredients results in a truly elegant salad.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 head of Boston or romaine lettuce
- 3 medium carrots, finely grated
- 4 oranges, skin cut off with a knife (not peeled) to remove membrane and sliced
- 4-6 fresh dates, pitted and cut into eighths lengthwise
- ¼ cup sliced almonds
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt

#### PREPARATION

1. Separate the lettuce leaves and arrange them in a wide, shallow bowl. Place the grated carrots in a mound on top of the lettuce.
2. Cut the orange slices into halves or quarters and arrange the pieces around the carrots.
3. Scatter the date pieces and almonds on top. Chill until ready to serve.
4. Combine the lemon juice, orange juice, sugar, and salt. Sprinkle over the salad just before serving.



## FRANCE

### Ratatouille Stew

(Serves 6-8)

A rustic and traditional dish, ratatouille is highly versatile because the quantity and types of vegetables can vary greatly. To a large extent, ratatouille depends on the produce in the cook's refrigerator. It works as a one-dish meal, but it is often served with eggs or pasta.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 medium onions, cut in half, thinly sliced
- 2 medium carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 medium eggplant, cut into chunks
- 1 medium yellow squash, cut into ½-inch slices
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into ½-inch slices
- 1 cup sweet peas, frozen and thawed
- 6 cups diced tomatoes, canned or fresh (do not drain)
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon salt

#### PREPARATION

1. Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy pan. Add the onions and sauté for 5 minutes. Add the carrots and eggplant and sauté for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the yellow squash and zucchini and sauté for 3 or 4 minutes. (If needed, add a little more oil or some water to prevent sticking to the pan.)
2. Add the peas, tomatoes, garlic, bay leaves, thyme, and salt. Cook gently for 15-20 minutes or until the stew is fairly pulpy.
3. Remove bay leaves and discard. Serve warm.



Recently retired, Nancy Kyte served for 10 years as the marketing director of the Office of Adventist Mission.





# Adopted by ORPHANS

**E**ight months ago, I was forever away from returning home. Lufthansa flight 758 had just made its midnight landing in Chennai, Tamil-Nadu, India. I hopped off the plane, feeling completely alone. For the first time in my life, I felt orphaned. All that I'd ever known was a world away.

Standing in crowded customs queues, where the only people who looked like me were off to five-star hotels or business

meetings, I wondered if I'd made a bad choice. The thought *I don't belong here* ran through my head repeatedly.

After getting my passport stamped, I headed down the escalator and waited for my bags. *Starting my immersion experience off right*, I thought when they showed up an hour later. I hauled my stuff outside the air-conditioned terminal and stepped out into the suffocating heat. *Here we go.*

I made my way through the crowd and found the only thing that looked familiar, my *Anna* (Tamil for elder brother), also known as Israel. He put flowers around my neck and gave me a hug that made me feel, if only for two seconds, like I was back with my family in America. "Welcome back," he said.

I put my things in the trunk of a taxi and crammed my knees into the passenger seat. We pulled into Israel's driveway around three A.M., and for the next few hours I attempted to sleep. Later that day, we took the all-night train to go to my pseudo home for the next eight months—an orphanage. A fitting place for my brand-new life without a family.

The next morning came a few hundred kilometers down the train tracks, and I've never been the same since. I reunited with





2



3

the kids I'd met a half year before, and we quickly became family. For months before leaving for India, I'd stressed about leaving home, but when I found those kids, that anxiety faded away. For the first time, I felt like I belonged where God had put me. I was home.

The following months were nothing short of completely nuts. I got to try my luck at being a traveling journalist, a preacher, an architect, a tour guide, and a host of other things I wasn't qualified for. Those days away from the orphanage were full of adventure, but they in no way compared to what it's like to be with my new family.

These 13 kids are the greatest thing that's ever happened to me. Even though it's 90 degrees Fahrenheit at night and no one understands what I mean by Olive Garden breadsticks, I count myself among the luckiest people in the world. If God calls me to be a stay-at-home dad in India for the rest of my life, I'll happily accept (and maybe throw in a request for an air conditioner).

People have asked me a lot how this year has changed me. I'd been sort of disappointed that it hasn't been the life-altering quest that I'd dreamed it might be. I'd hoped to have one of those "radically changed" life stories to tell when I got home.

I asked God why I didn't feel extraordinarily different, and His response was daunting. "Did you come here to change your own

life, or did you come to change the lives of others?" Ouch.

I immediately recognized that I'd been looking at this whole experience from a me-centered perspective and determined to end such selfishness. I threw away my list of goals for myself and started focusing on the kids. What followed was a far more fulfilling mission experience because it no longer had to be about me.

In just three weeks, I'll be back on that plane headed in the opposite direction. I'm sure there'll be a few tears. Unlike the trip from America to India, this time I won't know my return date, which won't make for an easy goodbye. Nevertheless, I'm grateful to have had such an opportunity. I started my journey as a temporary orphan trying to help permanent ones, and now the word *orphan* never crosses my mind. None of us are orphans because I've adopted them, they've adopted me, and God has adopted all of us.

What began as a project has given me so much purpose and fulfillment. I've tasted the joy that only sacrifice can bring, and I'm content to never taste anything else. Even though the looming goodbye is going to be awful, I wouldn't trade this year or this family for the world. I'm not an orphan anymore, and I have only my heavenly Father to thank.

We have withheld the identity of this author to protect his ministry.



4

- 1 Our entire family.
- 2 Rosie, a nine-year-old daughter of God.
- 3 Home to incredible wealth, such as the Taj Mahal, India is also home to extreme poverty and millions of orphans.
- 4 Sack races at the orphanage on Christmas day.



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).

In 1803 United States President Thomas Jefferson asked Captain Meriwether Lewis and his friend Second Lieutenant William Clark to travel across the western part of the country to explore and map the newly acquired Louisiana territory. They were also to seek out the best route for traveling to that side of the continent in order to establish the United States' claim to the area. Lewis and Clark accepted the assignment.

Unfortunately, they began receiving e-mails from people and organizations asking whether they could carry some mail to people along the way. Others asked them to bring back video footage of the pretty landscapes. Others asked whether they could help build a bridge across the Mississippi

We were yielding to the tendency to concentrate our best efforts on maintaining the institution rather than on furthering the mission.

River, since they needed to cross anyway. Still others asked whether they could do a special study of the life cycle of mosquitos.

Because they wanted to help everyone, Lewis and Clark did all they could to assist everyone else's mission. The result was that they never managed to complete their exploring, which is why you have never heard of these gentlemen. Wait, that's wrong.

Even if Lewis and Clark were tempted to take up other missions, they refused them in order to accomplish the mission that Jefferson gave them. Sticking to their mission is why more than two hundred years later Lewis and Clark remain household names in the United States.

It can be difficult to stick to your mission when you're continually distracted by requests from

# FIXED ON



others who want you to fulfill theirs. This is a problem that Global Mission struggles with continually.

Not too long after Lewis and Clark completed their expedition, the Adventist movement began, and even the children supported the extreme efforts of the Adventist pioneers to press into the unreached places and people groups so that everyone could hear the great news of Jesus' soon return. As a result, we rocked the world. Seventh-day Adventism spread at an incredible rate, considering the times.

As it grew, the Adventist movement eventually had to organize. Organization is necessary and good, but it brings with it a real temptation to look more toward the organized institution than

toward the organized mission. This is a temptation to which every organization will gravitate unless it is actively recognized and resisted. Even then we drift.

### **Enter Global Mission**

In 1990 Adventist leaders recognized and decided to do something about the fact that we were not pressing into the frontiers of mission the way that we used to. We were yielding to the tendency to concentrate our best efforts on maintaining the institution rather than on furthering the mission. We have been given the mandate to go to every nation, tribe, language, and people bearing the gospel of Jesus Christ. But this mandate does not drive us the way it once did.

Whereas this mission used to fill every waking thought, now mission might get mentioned at church. Or it might not. Whereas mission used to be a major theme in our Sabbath Schools, now it is relegated to passing around an offering envelope, into which a couple of dollar bills might be slipped. Or maybe not.

This is why the office of Global Mission was established. Global Mission is the Seventh-day Adventist response to the realization that we were maintaining more than we were going. Global Mission is the Seventh-day Adventist version of Lewis and Clark. Its mission is to launch us out of an institutional mindset so that we can continue to press into new territories, new languages, and

# MISSION





new people groups with the gospel message.

The way Global Mission was to accomplish this work was, and still is, through church planting using local volunteer missionaries called Global Mission pioneers. In addition, recognizing that Global Mission pioneers have extreme challenges reaching certain people

groups, church leaders established the Global Mission Centers with the sole purpose of exploring methods for working effectively among Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Jews as well as secular and urban groups. Today these centers are actively involved in research, training, and creating models for evangelism to non-Christians.

## Avoiding distractions

Soon after Global Mission was established, requests began pouring in, but not necessarily for church planting among unentered groups: While you're at it, can Global Mission help us build a church building? Can Global Mission help us build a school? Can Global Mission help us renovate our conference office? Can Global Mission help with our evangelistic series?

All of these requests are for worthy projects. But if Global Mission involved itself in all of them, the Seventh-day Adventist

Church would still be neglecting the frontiers of mission, overlooking the people who are not hearing from us at all. So Global Mission consciously chooses to focus on just one thing, and that is the people who have never heard of Jesus. Global Mission responds specifically to their cry to the Adventist Church to "come, tell us the story of Jesus!"

The fact that Global Mission strongly maintains this specific focus means that often we must turn down fantastic project proposals. But if we are going to find ways to reach those whom we as a church are currently unable or unwilling to reach, Global Mission has no choice but to stay true to the task of sending pioneers to unreached peoples, nations, and languages to do the difficult and often dangerous work of raising up new Adventist churches where there currently are none.

---

**Jeff Scoggins**, Office of Adventist Mission.



## GLOBAL MISSION

### You Are Global Mission

If you are someone who recognizes the necessity of what Global Mission is trying to accomplish, you are invited to become part of the family. Together we are funding thousands of Global Mission pioneers in nearly every country of the world who have one task and one task only: to plant a new group of Seventh-day Adventist believers where there isn't one right now. Why do these pioneers do it? Why do they go through the hardship, the inconvenience, the self-sacrifice required to press into the difficult places? Just one reason: we want Jesus to come back.

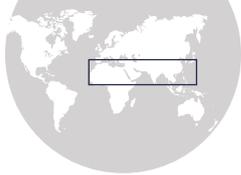
Do you want that too? Great! Join us!

There are two primary ways that you can be involved in Global Mission. First, you can be a pioneer who is involved in planting a church in your area. You do this by working with your local conference. Once you and your conference

have a plan for planting a church, your conference can apply for Global Mission funding to help pay for that project.

The second way you can be involved is by supporting other pioneers. Since hundreds of church planting fund requests come to Global Mission every year, Global Mission lives and dies by the freewill offerings of God's mission-minded people. Freewill donations, even small ones, are the lifeblood of what we do. And the little gifts count in major ways. Ellen White wrote, "The small sums saved by deeds of sacrifice will do more for the upbuilding of the cause of God than larger gifts will accomplish that have not called for denial of self," (*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 9 [Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press®, 1909] pp. 157, 158). So even your small gifts, given with a heart for mission, God will use in astonishing ways, the stories of which you will hear one day in heaven.

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



# The Strange Dentist



**T**he couple was arguing so much that they decided to get a divorce.

After setting a date for the pretrial, the wife got a toothache. She went to a dentist and heard Christian music in the background. She asked the dentist to explain the lyrics, so he told her about sin and salvation.

Intrigued, she asked the dentist for a Bible, and he said, "I will give you one when you come back next week to finish the procedure." She eagerly returned a week later—for the Bible and to get the tooth finished. The dentist gave her a Bible and told her a pastor would come to visit her.

The woman agreed, and a few days later the pastor came. They had barely gotten started in the Bible study that first day when she blurted out, "What does the Bible say about divorce?"

The pastor swallowed, whispered a prayer for guidance, and tried to steer the discussion back to a more general topic. But the woman wouldn't be turned aside

from the one thing that was burning in her heart.

Finally, the pastor told her what Jesus said about divorce. She was furious. "That just isn't possible in today's world," she shouted.

The pastor nodded understandingly but encouraged her to keep reading her Bible and to start praying for her husband and her marriage. At first, she was upset, but she didn't stop the studies.

Day after day, they studied other things Jesus said and did. And each time the woman came back to arguing about why you couldn't follow what Jesus said about divorce. But on her own she quietly began to pray, and something began to happen inside her.

The night before the pretrial, she told her husband she had changed her mind and didn't want a divorce. He was stunned and suspicious. When he asked her why, she said simply, "I have accepted Jesus as my Savior, and divorce is against His will." He didn't say anything, and she couldn't tell how he was feeling.

The next day she told the judge that she no longer wanted a divorce. She waited, expecting her husband to say he still did. But he looked long at her and then turned to the judge and said, "Neither do I."

The husband was curious about the change he had seen coming over his wife. He wanted to know more about the Bible and the Jesus she spoke of. So, she gave him her

Bible, and he began reading it. Soon he started coming to church and attending Bible studies. His life began to change too. And when she was baptized, you could see the joy on his face as he watched.

Today this woman says that Jesus is in her life because of a dentist who shared the gospel quietly through his work.

There are many parts of the world where traditional church workers have a hard (or impossible) time getting visas and work permits. But dentists, engineers, teachers, accountants, nurses, marketing specialists, and other professionals can often take a job in those countries and begin to quietly live their lives as followers of Jesus. We call them tentmakers since their ministry is patterned after the apostle Paul's.

If you would like more information on being a tentmaker, please visit [te.adventistmission.org](http://te.adventistmission.org). And please enter your professional information into the Adventist Professionals' Network ([apn.adventist.org](http://apn.adventist.org)), a secure database set up by the General Conference and regularly searched by the General Conference and its institutions when we are looking for a worker or a tentmaker.

May God help us find and place dedicated Adventists in every city, community, and business who can do as this dentist did—quietly live their life as a follower of Jesus.

## The 10/40 Window

The 10/40 Window, stretching from northern Africa into the Middle East and Asia, 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. Please support Global Mission pioneers in the 10/40 Window, by visiting [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org).



**Chanmin Chung** is the communication coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission.



**Homer Trecartin** is the director of the Global Mission Centers and Tentmakers for the Office of Adventist Mission.



MARK THE DATE  
SEPTEMBER

9

UNUSUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFERING

**NINA, AGE 78, IS EXCITED THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF HER CHURCH'S NEW OUTREACH CENTER IS COMPLETE. NOW SHE CAN START TEACHING HER LOCAL COMMUNITY HOW TO COOK HEALTHY FOOD!**



Did you know that from time to time God creates mission opportunities to which we can respond quickly if funds are available? These opportunities might disappear if we have to wait for months or years to raise funds.

The Unusual Opportunities Offering is reserved for these unique situations to meet people's needs and introduce them to our loving Savior. In recent years, your support has helped fund projects such as Nina's outreach center in Russia, television stations in Norway, and Ebola education in Africa.

In 2017, funds from last year's offering helped support a comprehensive health outreach program in Sweden, aimed specifically at secular communities. The Swedish Adventist membership was small and couldn't fund the outreach alone, so the Unusual Opportunities Offering contributed to its success.

**Unusual opportunities require a rapid response from God's people. Will you do your part to speed up the work of Adventist Mission by giving generously? Mark your tithe envelope "Unusual Opportunities Offering" on Sabbath, September 9.**