

mission360

The official mission magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church VOLUME 6 • NUMBER 3



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EDITORIAL

In this issue of *Mission 360°*, you'll meet missionaries who are passionate about sharing Jesus, including Reno and Natalia, a young couple serving in the Brazilian Amazon region. They live on a floating church made possible by your support of the first quarter 2016 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Natalia wanted you to know that the floating church is making a tremendous impact on mission.

"Reno and I love our ministry on the floating church," she said. "You can tell readers of *Mission 360°* that it's a real boat that does real work and that there are very real results!"

Discover how Reno and Natalia are sharing the gospel, meeting needs, and establishing new congregations in Brazil on page 28 of this magazine.

Laurie Falvo
Editor



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ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

Photo by Ricky Oliveras

I was on a story-gathering trip when I met these children from all different countries playing together. When they saw my camera, they ran up to me and eagerly waited for me to take their picture.

mission 

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of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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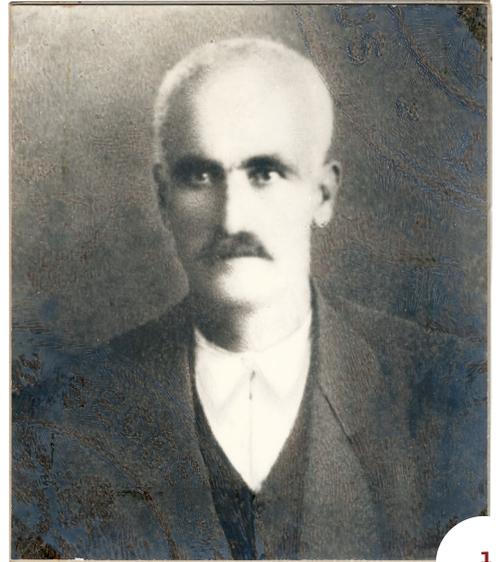
VOLUME 6, NUMBER 3

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



The Combmaker's Flight



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Sylva Keshishian,
Office of
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If you were able to travel back in time to the early 1900s and visit the villages in southern Turkey, you might have met a man slowly walking along the rocky roads, pulling his donkey behind him. He was a humble combmaker who made his wares from wood and camel bone. The hours he worked were long, and the few coins he earned were barely enough to feed his large family. He was my great-grandfather, Movses Boursalian, and this is the story of how God used the turmoil and displacement in his life to bring blessings to the lives of others.

One day, Movses noticed a tract lying on the ground that a passing missionary must have

dropped. Something about it caught his attention, and when he looked closer, he read a startling statement:

“The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord.” A devout Protestant, Movses was both puzzled and intrigued. *How can this be?* he mused. *Everyone knows that the first day of the week is the Sabbath!*

Movses didn't want to draw any conclusions before consulting the Holy Scriptures, so he fervently searched his family Bible to see what God's Word had to say. A careful study revealed that God's holy Sabbath was indeed the seventh day of the week. From that day forward, Movses and his

family determined to observe the biblical Sabbath no matter the cost. Immediately, their neighbors started mocking them with epithets such as “You Sabbathers!” But Movses was not perturbed.

The Boursalians lived in Yoğunoluk, a village nestled on the slopes of Musa Mountain in what is today known as Hatay Province in southern Turkey. Along with his devout Christian faith, Movses actively promoted the civil rights of the marginalized minority group of which he was a member. The authorities, however, didn't appreciate his political activism, and in the 1890s, Movses was arrested and imprisoned. Upon his release, he resumed his activism until he was arrested again, taken to the nearest castle, and thrown into a dungeon. Movses and other political prisoners weren't released until 1908.

For a short time, Armenians in southern Turkey lived in relative peace, but by 1912, the winds of war were starting to blow. Rumors began circulating that the Ottoman authorities were sending soldiers to outlying provinces to attack Armenian citizens. A kind Turkish neighbor approached Movses to warn him. “I am ashamed to tell you this, but things are about to get very bad for you Armenians,” he said. “You are too nice to be caught up in

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all this. Take your family and flee while you can.”

Movses gathered his wife, Marta, and his young children and fled his home under heavy rain. They took refuge in a nearby compound that belonged to foreign missionaries, knowing that those within its walls were not required to answer to Ottoman authority, at least for a time. When they stepped inside, they saw a muddy courtyard filled to capacity with other Armenians who had also been warned to flee.

The Boursalians managed to find a corner to themselves where they were safe at least for the moment. But they were also wet, cold, tired, and hungry. In their hurry to escape, they hadn't brought any food with them. Movses' children began to cry, which alarmed Marta. “Before we left, I was warming a big pot of rice and lentils,” she told her husband. “Would you go back to the house and bring us the food?” Movses recognized that this would be a risky undertaking because the militia was rumored to be approaching the area, but for the sake of his family, he dared to make the attempt.

Movses stepped out of the compound and quickly walked toward his home. He was about to enter the front door when he noticed it was ajar. Fear gripped his heart as he gingerly stepped inside. To his surprise, he found a group of vagrants helping themselves to his family's dinner. After shooing them away, he placed the pot inside a thick blanket and started carrying it toward the compound.

Suddenly, from a distance, he heard the unmistakable sound of galloping horses. Danger was imminent, but there was nowhere to hide! Quickly, he stepped into the nearest doorway and held his breath, praying to remain unseen.

The hoofbeats became louder, and then he saw the most petrifying sight in his life: men carrying

- 1 Movses Boursalian, circa 1912.
- 2 Some of the Seventh-day Adventist Church members in Nicosia, Cyprus, circa 1956. Two of Movses Boursalian's grandsons are pictured: Movses Elmadian, second from left, and my father, Garabed Keshishian, third from right.
- 3 The Boursalian family in Nicosia, Cyprus, circa 1918. Movses is seated in the middle. Marta is seated on the left, and my grandmother, Liya, is seated on the right. The other people are the Boursalian children, along with a son-in-law standing on the left in the back row.



rifles with fixed bayonets, and upon the bayonets were severed human heads! So intent were the men on parading through the streets with their gory trophies that they never noticed the lone Armenian standing motionless in the doorway. When the sound of hoofbeats receded, Movses resumed his journey back to the mission compound to feed his hungry family.

Movses and Marta knew that it was only a matter of time before the Ottoman authorities harassed those seeking asylum at the compound. After much prayer, they led their family through a mountain pass to the coast where they took a ship to Cyprus. They would never see their beloved homeland again, but their timely flight from Turkey allowed them to escape the sufferings of the Armenians between

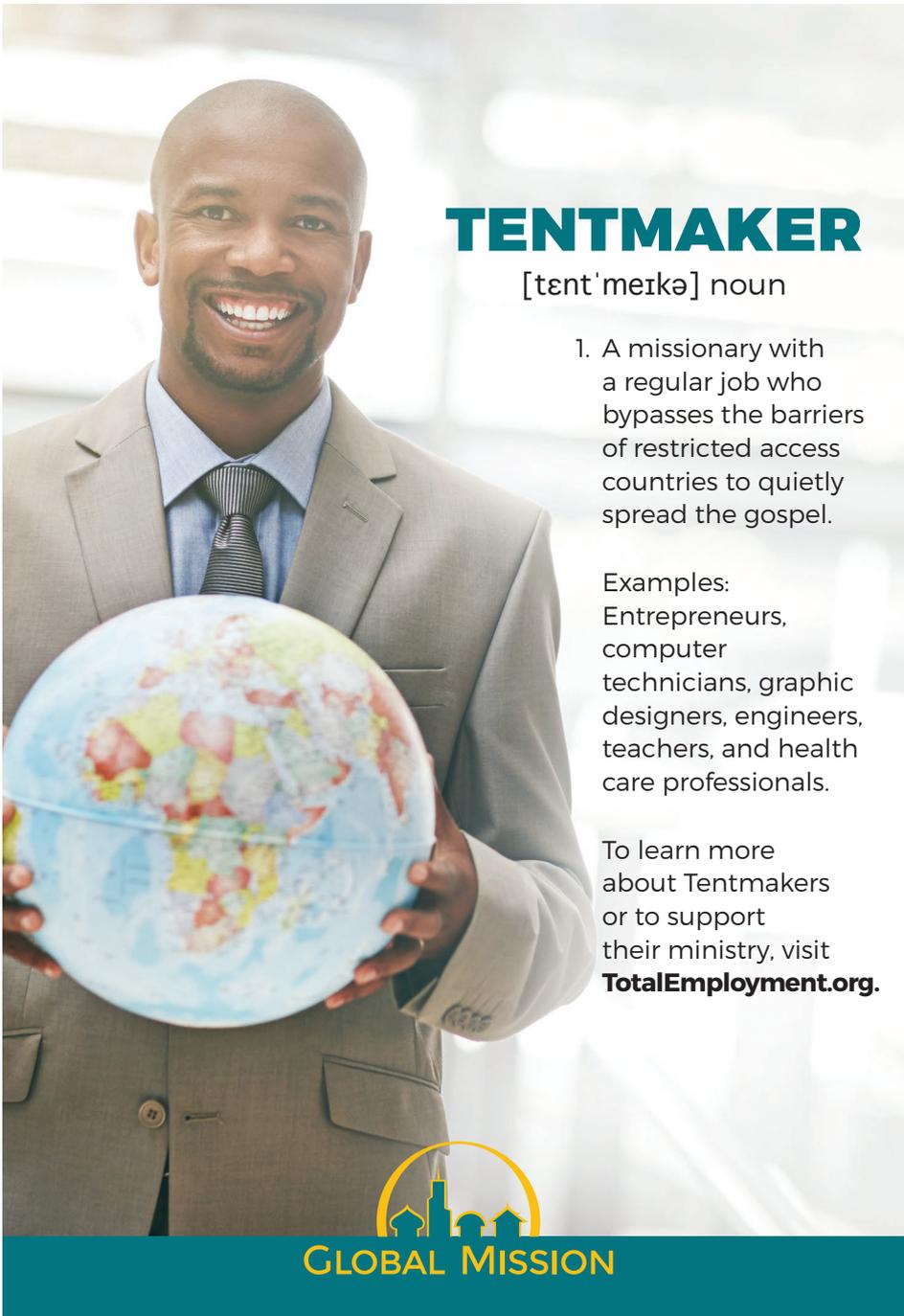
1915 and the end of World War I. The shock of the terrible things he witnessed caused Movses to suffer a stroke that left him with a permanent limp. His dark hair also turned rapidly and prematurely white. However, he did not allow his personal circumstances to cause him to despair or to give up the work that God had called him to do.

Upon arriving in Cyprus, Movses began living a lifestyle similar to that of the apostle Paul. He supported his family with his combmaking trade, traveling from village to village to sell his wares while sharing the gospel.

Movses' reputation for being a God-fearing man was well known among his neighbors. One day, he was walking through a village when he saw a group of men sitting outside a house. They were playing a game in which they would ask spirits to answer puzzling questions about their lives. When Movses walked by to greet them, one of the neighbors begged him, "Movses, please go away. The spirits will not answer us when you are near."

In 1931, when Movses was about 76 years old, his family gathered around his bed as he breathed his last breath. They mourned the passing of this great patriarch, yet they knew he died with a deep love for God and a great hope in the resurrection.

The following year, Canadian missionaries Elder and Mrs. R. S. Greaves decided to retire to Cyprus and make it their mission field. Imagine their surprise upon arriving to discover a small company of 30 Christians who already kept the Sabbath! When the believers heard the Advent message, they readily accepted it and were baptized. Movses' eldest son, Hovanness, then became the island's first literature evangelist. Today, thanks to the faithful witness of Movses and his family and the ministry of Tentmakers, the little island of Cyprus has two Seventh-day Adventist churches and more than 90 members.



TENTMAKER
[tɛnt'meɪkə] noun

1. A missionary with a regular job who bypasses the barriers of restricted access countries to quietly spread the gospel.

Examples:
Entrepreneurs,
computer technicians, graphic designers, engineers, teachers, and health care professionals.

To learn more about Tentmakers or to support their ministry, visit **TotalEmployment.org**.



GLOBAL MISSION

PIONEER POSTCARD An unnamed country



The Incorrigeable Cao

Cao* had a reputation for being selfish, lazy, jobless, and thoroughly unlovable. To put it another way: he was just the type of person whom Jesus came to save.

While our Global Mission pioneer team was familiar with Cao's reputation, we never actually met him until some people asked us to use our positive influence to change him. So with their encouragement, we went to meet Cao and see whether he lived up to his reputation. Unfortunately, he did.

For two challenging years, we worked with Cao. Frustratingly, he was interested in our church activities only when they included meals. However, we knew that Jesus didn't come to the world just for the loveable and the rich. As hard as it was, we knew that we needed to be the light of the world to Cao, reflecting Jesus' teachings and the love-based principles of Christianity. So we welcomed Cao to our meals. We also told him that we had a weekly Bible study group with a meal! Cao happily joined.

Slowly but surely, we noticed a change in Cao's heart. He began focusing more on the message from the Bible than on the food. He started to help us clean dishes after meals, and he also found a job and started working. Finally, he gave his heart to Jesus and accepted the Adventist message!

One day, we asked our church members to try giving Bible studies to non-Christians. Brother Cao was the first one to raise his hand to volunteer. Because of his bad reputation, he had trouble reaching people at first. However, he apologized for his previous behavior and shared how Jesus had forgiven him. With this testimony, Brother Cao had a great impact on our community.

Recently, Brother Cao made three new friends and brought them to a Bible study group. He continues to share Jesus' stories and encouraging Bible messages with others in our community. Please pray that Jesus will fully use Brother Cao and our other church plant members to expand His kingdom.

* Name has been changed.



GLOBAL MISSION

Global Mission pioneers

Global Mission supports thousands of local people, called pioneers, in starting new groups of believers among people groups where there is no Adventist presence. Their ministry wouldn't be possible without your donations and prayers. Thank you for your support!

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Check out m360.tv/pioneers for more pioneer stories.

To learn more about Global Mission, please visit Global-Mission.org.

The Gospel in Work Clothes



Joy E. Hank is a volunteer missionary at Adventist University Zurcher in Madagascar. Previously, she taught English and religion in the Republic of Korea at the Seventh-day Adventist Language Institute.

As I sat on the beautiful Dreamliner jet flying from Germany to Canada, I looked out the window at the majestic Rocky Mountains and breathed a prayer of gratitude to God for His many blessings. Then I made a request. “Lord,” I prayed, “we’ve had a good rest since our last volunteer missionary assignment. Now we’re on our way to Canada where we’ll enjoy a good holiday. When it’s over, I think we’ll be ready for our next assignment, if You can still use us to Your honor and glory.”

Less than two weeks later, we received a call and committed to going to Madagascar as volunteers! I was asked to mentor and train the cafeteria staff at the Adventist University Zurcher (AUZ) while my husband would teach in the language school. God in His graciousness had heard and answered our request.

So five weeks after our return to South Africa from a very blessed 12-week vacation in Canada and the United States (US), we were winging our way to Madagascar, the fourth largest island in the world and one of the poorest countries.

In many ways, being in Madagascar is like stepping back in time, and yet, here at the university, we live in a kind of bubble. Situated in a pine forest on a mountain, we’re blessed with running water and electricity, which is lacking in the surrounding villages. We even have internet and an information technology department. However, the kitchen in which I work still uses a wood-burning stove and oven!

The beginning of the 2017/2018 school year was delayed due to the plague ravaging the country before our arrival. It was suggested to us that we postpone our coming until the plague had passed. However, I firmly believe that the safest place in the world is where God sends you. So we started the school year but with many precautions in place.

As soon as registration began, the first several students approached me to request financial help. Honore is a final year theology student who has been working his way through college. I had met him on my arrival because he works in the kitchen. I explained that the only way I’d be able to help is by trying to find him a sponsor. After we prayed about this, I put the request on Facebook, and we were so blessed. Not only did Honore get a sponsor but enough friends sent money that we were able to help students Dieu-Donne, Jean-Pierre, Safidy, Karina, and Nathalie.

And then there was Fabienne. The first in her family to finish high school, she arrived on campus with the dream of becoming a nurse. Before she came to AUZ, the district pastor had asked her what she wanted to do with her life. She told him of her dream of going to college, so he suggested that she come to AUZ and offered to find her a sponsor. He gave her taxi fare, and she took the nearly two-day journey from the northwest to the center of Madagascar, where the university is located. She passed the entrance exam but was informed that the pastor wouldn’t be able to help her. She was brought

to see me. Once again, Facebook and kind, generous friends ensured that Fabienne would be able to study and, God willing, become a nurse in His service!

Although sponsors help the students, the students are still required to work. So the 13 students whom we helped during our first five months in Madagascar work in the kitchen, the garden, the store, the library, and on the farm.

As part of the training and mentoring program, I’ve implemented a food handlers training course for the kitchen and cafeteria staff, and they’re looking forward to graduating with a certificate in the near future.

As a little girl in Sabbath School, I loved the mission stories, and I prayed that one day I could also be a missionary. Then I grew up and got caught up in life, but God never forgot that desire from a child’s pure heart. More than 40 years later, I found myself a missionary teacher in the Republic of Korea, and God reminded me of that prayer. It may have taken a long time, but I’m so thankful for the God of second chances. It’s such an honor and privilege to experience what the gospel looks like in work clothes!

So trust me, if He can find a place in His work for me, He can definitely use you too.

- 1 Me riding in a pousse-pousse, one of the interesting modes of transport in Madagascar.
- 2 The cafeteria, right, and the kitchen, left, with the dish washing room in the foreground.
- 3 The wood-burning oven in which the bread for the cafeteria is baked. The temperature can’t be regulated.
- 4 Dino cooking lunch for the dormitory students.
- 5 Honore, a final year theology student, hopes to graduate this year.
- 6 Fabienne, 22, dreams of becoming a nurse.
- 7 Me helping the kitchen staff train for a Food Handlers’ Training certificate.



Adventist Volunteer Service facilitates church members’ volunteer missionary service 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, visit AdventistVolunteers.org.



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Juice Bar Offers Fresh Concept of Mission



Beth Thomas is a freelance writer and editor living with her husband and two children in Maryland.

Ryan Hablitzel is passionate about millennials, mission, Jesus, and juice. Why juice? Because he's been forced to step outside his comfort zone and pursue the unknown, and it's resulted in something transformational.

Ryan is a pastor in Utah, located in the western United States (US). In 2015, he invited a Seventh-day Adventist organization called Thrive to begin working with his church in Ogden. Thrive is a group of young volunteers who train local church members in Bible work, literature evangelism, medical missionary work, and lifestyle coaching over a nine-month period.

Ryan noticed something interesting. Thrive drew young people



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to the church: millennials who had left began attending again. *Hmmm*, he thought. *We have something here!* He considered Thrive's emphasis on holistic health in their ministry. *What type of ministry could be self-sustaining, promote a healthy lifestyle, and give young people mission experience?* he mused. *A juice bar. Everyone loves juice! This is something everyone can get behind!*

He approached Thrive directors Westney White and Jo Cadiz with a juice bar concept that could function as an Urban Center of Influence (UCI) and provide income for mission-minded young people. Ryan said, "What emerged wasn't simply a cold-pressed juice bar business but a plan for a new type of church that provided sustainable employment for young people and engaged communities with street-level, hands-on ministry."

Miles away from Utah, in the US state of Georgia, two young Adventist entrepreneurs, Jared Thurmon and Jason Churchwell, had opened a cold-pressed juice bar in 2013 with the mission to help others live healthier lives. The company was so successful that it soon became well-known in Atlanta for its organic, cold-pressed juice.

Ryan and Jason knew each other from briefly working together at a boarding academy in southeastern Utah. When Ryan mentioned something about his

juice bar idea on social media, Jason responded that "he knew a little something about juice." Originally, Ryan had planned to build the business from the ground up, but after talking with Jason, Ryan believed that this might be an opportunity to take their mission to the next level.

Jared and Jason already had a quality product established that would take the guesswork out of the juicing side of the operation. Ryan presented the opportunity to make the business openly Seventh-day Adventist. After prayer and patient deliberation, Jared and Jason sold their concept to the Nevada-Utah Conference with Ryan as the principal developer.

According to Ryan's proposed business plan, US\$98,000 was needed to launch a pilot location in a prime downtown Ogden neighborhood. Since this project is considered an urban church plant, the company applied for and received funds from the North American Division's (NAD) Plant 1000 initiative in 2016. Additional funding was provided by the Pacific Union Conference's Creative Evangelism Fund and through your sacrificial giving to the General Conference's Global Mission UCI Fund.

The juice bar opened its doors in April 2018. Ryan says that they've received nothing but positive feedback from the community. Everyone he's spoken to is excited

Urban Centers of Influence (UCIs)

Adventist Mission supports holistic mission to the cities. This includes a rapidly growing number of UCIs that serve as platforms for putting Christ's method of ministry into practice and as ideal opportunities for Total Member Involvement in outreach that suits each person's spiritual gifts and passions.

To learn more about UCIs or to support their ministry, visit MissionToTheCities.org.



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to try the cold-pressed juices!

Ryan plans to refine his business model after one year in Ogden and, when he feels comfortable with their operating system, will try to create a prototype that can be easily replicated globally. He would like to see this concept in every major city around the world, giving young people a righteous purpose: to be sold out to love and sold out to Jesus.

When asked whether they'll host programs in the store, Ryan emphasizes that it's not about programs. He says, "We don't do programs. We do community. There's a difference. Think of us as a 'missional community.' This will



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the hub for a church network of people." At the core of his model is in-home small group ministry. Juice bar staff are currently being taught how to form and lead small groups.

Ryan believes that young people, especially millennials, want to be a part of a transformational,

- 1 A group of Thrive volunteers who train church members in Bible work and literature evangelism ministry.
- 2 This storefront is home to a fresh idea in urban ministry: a juice bar.
- 3 Many local young adults are attracted to the UCI.
- 4 Customers enjoy reading material and smoothies in a relaxing environment.
- 5 Smoothies from the juice bar: (clockwise from top left) Iron Man, El Greengo, Tropical Gold, and Summer Berry.

Photos courtesy of Jo Cadiz (Thrive Ministry) and Caressa Rogers Photography.

exciting future with others. This juice bar offers them the keys to rediscover Christianity with their peers in an open and welcoming environment.

"One of our main goals is to present Adventism to our communities in a very positive light," Ryan says. "Ideally, we want people to know that Seventh-day Adventists are the most compassionate, caring people they've ever met."

Join Ryan and his team in praying that God will guide them in implementing the right methods to effectively reach millennials and the secular community. Pray also that they can create an economically sustainable model that anyone, anywhere, can reproduce.

VERTICAL VILLAGES



Rick Kajjura,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

Every day, people begin to leave their homes in the morning. They crowd the streets. Cars, trucks, pedestrians, and even bicycles and other modes of transportation begin the journey to somewhere. Do you ever look at the people around you and wonder, *How many of them know Jesus?*

Today, about 7.6 billion people live on this planet. Christians make up one-third of that number, which means that at least two-thirds of the world's population, or about 5 billion people, don't know Jesus as their Savior.

For some time, many Christian denominations have talked about the 10/40 Window, an imaginary rectangle drawn on the world to show the area that is least reached by the gospel. If you imagine a world map, the 10/40 Window extends from 10 to 40 degrees north latitude and stretches from northern Africa to Asia. It includes the Middle East, India, and South-east Asia.

Although geographically it's a relatively small part of the entire world, this area is densely populated: nearly 60 percent of the world's population lives here.

It's home to most of the major world religions, including Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, whose followers make up most of the population. There are also many people who don't follow any religion.

Within the 10/40 Window are more than 5,800 unreached people groups or roughly 3 billion people.*

The 10/40 Window is also home to some of the world's fastest growing cities. People are flooding into major cities such as Mumbai, Tokyo, Jakarta, Casablanca, and Beirut, seeking work and opportunities. As they grow, these cities are improving their infrastructure, education, and economic development, but



People still live in rural villages, but as **the villages have**

there are still areas where people struggle to make a living.

When most people think of mission work, they often think of remote villages. People still live in rural villages, but as more flock to the cities, you could say the villages have become vertical. These vertical villages are also known as high-rise apartments. The number of people in one high-rise building is equal to more than the number of people in many of those small villages.

And whether they recognize it or not, today's high-rises are starting to accept their role as villages. Many modern apartment complexes have one or two floors, usually near the ground level, which feature shops and restaurants—sort of like a village center. So people who live

in these buildings become part of an apartment community and rarely have to leave their “village” except to go to work.

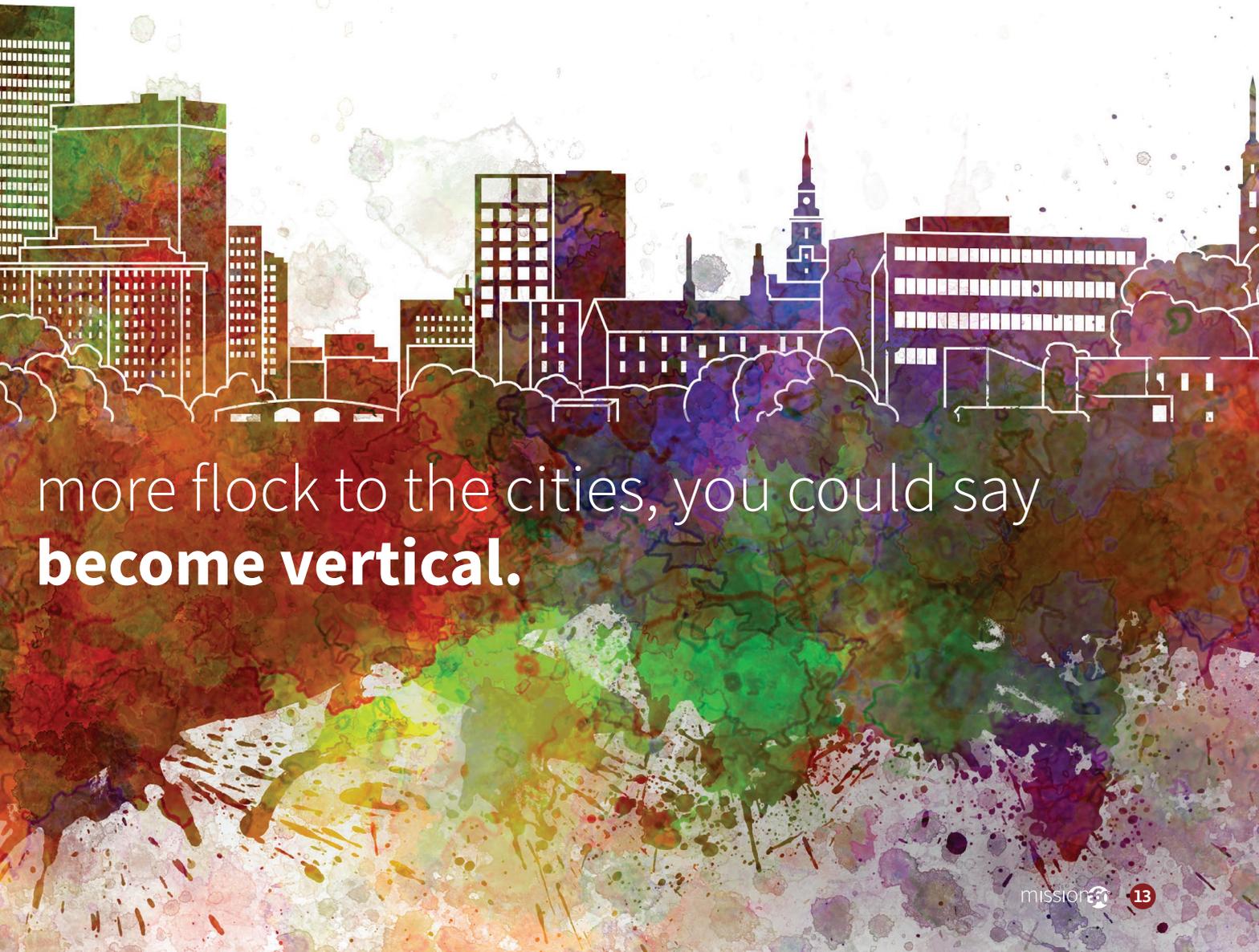
In countries such as Indonesia, church members are starting new church plants in these vertical villages. Some have even started small Urban Centers of Influence to offer a connection point for Adventists and the people in these communities.

Please pray for the people of the 10/40 Window, especially for the vertical villages there, and pray for mission in this challenging frontier. Thank you for your mission offerings and Global Mission donations that are helping to touch lives and start new groups of believers in the 10/40 Window.

* The figure for people groups is by country, which means “counting every group once for each country in which they reside.” So, for example, a single people group whose population is in both Libya and Algeria would be counted as two people groups. “Global Statistics: People Groups: The 10/40 Window,” Joshua Project, accessed March 15, 2018, https://joshuaproject.net/people_groups/statistics.

You Can Reach Vertical Villages

Please help us reach the millions of people in the 10/40 Window who don't know Jesus. Visit Global-Mission.org/giving, and select the project “Pioneers to the 10/40 Window.”



more flock to the cities, you could say
become vertical.



Enough Already!

1



From Alaska, United States, **Ellie Butikofer** serves as a volunteer first-grade teacher on the island of Weno in Chuuk, Micronesia.

Have you ever woken up one day and wondered, *How did I get here*, perhaps considering how completely different your life was just a short time before? That’s how I feel every day. I expected to be attending college this year, not working as a first-grade teacher on a tiny speck of island in the South Pacific!

For one thing, I didn’t feel ready to be a teacher. I’d only completed a year and a half of college and didn’t feel educated or “good enough” for this position. But God set this opportunity before me with such undeniable clarity that I couldn’t deny His leading.

It all started last summer at camp meeting in my home state of Alaska. I was catching a quick nap between meetings when I received a text message from a

friend. “How would you like to be a volunteer teacher in Chuuk this school year?” she asked. Still groggy, I misread her message. *Who is Chuck, and why do I need to teach him?* I wondered, very confused. Seconds later, I caught the gist of what she was saying and realized its possible implications. *Work as a volunteer this year? Is that even possible?*

I made some calls and discovered that Chuuk Seventh-day Adventist School had 150 students enrolled and only six teachers available, including the principal.

They desperately needed more help. I prayed for guidance, filled out an application, and a few weeks later boarded a plane to begin my new adventure.

Although Chuuk seemed relatively modern to me at first glance, I didn’t have to look far to see that traditional spiritual beliefs still clutched people in their fearful grasp. A conversation I had while teaching a fourth-grade Bible class solidified this observation. We were studying the story of King Saul and the witch of Endor when one of my students related an



Hear from other volunteers at m360.tv/avs.

interesting story. She said that her neighbor's son had become possessed by a demon at a picnic and that now he stares into space, not acknowledging anyone.

Chuuk's tropical climate, palm-tree-riddled beaches, and fantastic World War II shipwreck diving are big draws, but they pale compared to the immeasurable needs of the island people—a people desperate for truth in a sun-drenched yet spiritually dark world. With most of its students from non-Adventist families, our Chuuk school is truly a mission school, and I really believe that I'm making a difference in both the lives of the students and of the community.

I love my students; each of them is beautiful and interesting in their own way. Somehow,

when I'm with them, I don't feel quite so far from home, at least most of the time. One day, one of them asked, "Teacher, why do you speak English if you're from Alaska?" I guess I still have a bit more teaching to do!

As I write this story in my apartment, the air conditioner going strong in an attempt to combat the invasive tropical heat and surrounded by papers that need grading, I'm amazed at how far I've come in this incredible journey called faith.

Some days my best hardly feels good enough, but I believe that God put me here for a reason and gives me the strength I need to serve Him. Through this experience, I've come to understand that sometimes the success of our

Christian walk isn't measured by our own "goodness" or capability but rather by how good we are at listening to and obeying God's voice.



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



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- 1 I often find brilliant blue starfish when I swim at the beaches of Chuuk.
- 2 Me with several of my first-graders.
- 3 Me, second from left, participating in a staff-led branch Sabbath School with a nearby mountain community.
- 4 My arrival in Chuuk.
- 5 Me, third from left, enjoying fresh coconuts with the Chuuk Seventh-day Adventist School staff.



The Gods Must Not Sleep



Jonathon, Allie, and James Thorp have been serving in Nepal since March 2017. Jonathon and Allie welcomed their second child in July 2018.

The gods must not sleep. If a god falls asleep, it's because no one was there to pay him homage, and that makes him angry. An angry god won't keep you safe.

So all night long, people must keep bells ringing to prevent the gods from falling asleep. These bells are placed strategically at every street corner so that passing travelers can easily access them as they walk by. When we first arrived in Nepal, the constant ringing used to keep my husband Jonathon and me (not to mention the “gods”!) awake at night, but now we don't even notice the sound. Now that we've been here more than a year, it's become as familiar as a distant siren or a police car passing down the highway.

As night fades into morning and the bells become less discernible among the other noises of the street, streams of people pass the hospital as they travel up the valley to the Chandeshwori temple. Some of the women carry golden platters with offerings of food draped in a red cloth. This daily offering, called a *puja*, is another ritual intended to keep the Hindu gods happy and peaceful. These and many other cultural practices surprised us when we first arrived in Nepal early in 2017.

In the summer of 2016, we received a call from the General Conference to work at Scheer Memorial Adventist Hospital

(SMAH) in Nepal, and we were excited! It took nearly six months of paperwork, phone calls, packing, and preparation before we were ready to leave. Gathering up our two cats and two-month-old son James, we boarded a plane headed for Kathmandu, Nepal.

We finally arrived in Banepa. Stepping into our new home, an unheated block house, we glanced at the thermometer hanging by the kitchen sink. It read 60 °F (16 °C)! Leaving on our coats and scarves, we explored our new surroundings—the shops, the street markets, the landscape. We became more and more fascinated by the culture and lifestyle of the people we had come to live among.

Our first year in Nepal passed quickly. Jonathon works as both the chief operating officer and internist. I work part time in the antenatal clinic of the obstetrics/gynecology department as well as raising our son. We never lack things to keep us busy!

Though Nepal has many highly qualified physicians, there is still a large disparity in healthcare due to extreme poverty found in many areas. This level of poverty contributes to a high nationwide incidence of suicide. The Kavre district in which SMAH is located has the highest rate of suicide in the country. Most of the suicide attempts are from the ingestion of a readily available plant fertilizer/

- 1 Hindu holy men at a temple bless arriving worshipers.
- 2 Baby James enjoys his new home in Nepal.
- 3 One of many local mothers who bring their babies to Scheer Memorial Adventist Hospital for checkups.
- 4 Jonathon, James, and me at a rest stop while trekking the Poon Hill route in Pokhara.

insecticide containing a compound known as organophosphate. Because of the high cost of treating these patients, our hospital is the only one that will care for these cases, often free of charge. We've lost count of the number of nights Jonathon has been in the ICU, desperately struggling to save someone's life.

We've asked ourselves many questions over the past year in Nepal. Are we making a difference? Is there some way to open the hearts of these people to the Savior's love? Can we break the cycle of ceaseless *pujas* and replace it with the calm assurance found in Jesus? We can't help but be reminded of Psalm 121:2–4: “My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”

While the bells ring ceaselessly and the worshipers journey past the hospital on their daily procession to the temple, we pray that we can continue to be a light to this community. We're so thankful we serve a God who doesn't sleep, not because we keep Him awake with a bell but because He's tenderly watching over each person He created. We hope that each day we'll have the opportunity to touch one more life and show one more soul the loving face of Jesus.



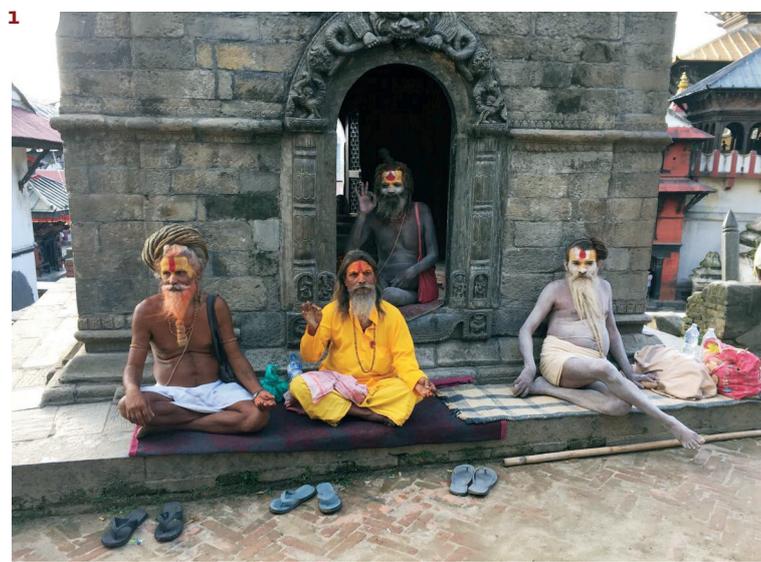
POPULATION
29 million

Unreached population: **97.1%**

PEOPLE GROUPS
275

Unreached: **266**

* "Nepal," The Joshua Project, accessed May 10, 2018, <https://joshuaproject.net/countries/NP>.





Worth a Thousand Words



Ashlee Chism
is the assistant
archivist of
the Office
of Archives,
Statistics, and
Research.

In my work for the church's Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research, I find and share stories about people just like you and me. The stories come from books, letters, pamphlets, and diaries. In fact, a diary entry is where this particular story begins.

On September 29, 1885, Jennie Thayer, a missionary stationed in England, wrote in her diary: "Quite windy. Last meeting of Council at 5:30 a.m. They took a photo of the mission house, workers, and delegates after the meeting. Quite a party of us went in town this p.m. It is rainy tonight when we start on our journey home. How many good byes have to be said! Wrote in Miss Dahl's, Jean's and Lenna's autographs just before leaving."

Two weeks earlier, the European Missionary Council had begun

its third session. Those serving in Adventist missions across Europe came to Basel, Switzerland, to discuss how best to spread God's present truth to the people of Europe. Even Ellen White and her son, W. C. White, had come! The 35 delegates, including Jennie, worshiped and trained together, heard mission reports from fellow missionaries, and made plans and resolutions for further work in their stations.*

The Ellen G. White Estate has the photo of the third European Missionary Council you see here, partially because Ellen White is in it. But she is not the only Adventist in the photo with a story to be told.

Let me briefly tell you the stories of three other Adventist missionaries in the photo. The 32-year-old Jennie stands next

to Esther and Buell Whitney, parents of Jean and Lenna, who sit at their parents' feet and in whose autograph books Jennie wrote. In 1885, Esther and Buell were both nearly 40, Jean was 13, and Lenna, 12. Both girls would also be missionaries when they were grown.

Jean Whitney was born in 1872 in the state of New York. When she was 16, her father fell ill, and she accompanied him from Switzerland to the Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan, caring for him until her mother and sister arrived. Jean trained at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, graduating in 1897 with a medical degree. For a while, she worked as a doctor at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. In 1906, she married fellow doctor John F. Morse, and after four years of marriage, the couple traveled

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to Europe for further studies in the field of medicine. Afterward, they practiced medical missionary work wherever they lived—Puerto Rico, Illinois, and Iowa. Dr. Jean died in 1940.

Lenna Whitney's mission work was not medical in nature. She was born in 1873, also in New York State, and trained as a teacher. In 1896, she graduated from the literary course at Battle Creek College, training also as a nurse at Battle Creek Sanitarium. In 1899, she and Homer R. Salisbury were married; several years later, they were called to England and established Duncombe Hall College, a forerunner of today's Newbold College. From there, the Salisburys moved to Takoma Park, Maryland, and lent their expertise in leading the Washington Foreign Mission Seminary (today's Washington

Adventist University). In 1913, they were sent as missionaries to India. In 1915, Homer was killed when his ship was torpedoed en route to India, leaving Lenna a widow at 42. For a year, Lenna refused to leave the work in India until her failing health forced her to return to the United States. In 1921, after she recovered, she traveled to France to work for what is now the Adventist University of France in Collonges-sous-Salève. She continued to work there until she died in 1923.

Neither girl knew what they'd do as missionaries when Jennie Thayer signed their autograph books in 1885, and neither did Jennie. The daughter of two Millerites who became Sabbath-keepers and then Seventh-day Adventists, Jennie was born in 1853. She attended Battle Creek College as part of one of the school's earliest classes and then began working for the church. While her job titles varied, Jennie's work almost always was connected to the church's publishing work, whether as an assistant secretary of the International Tract and Missionary Society or as the first editor of the *Atlantic Union Gleaner*, which is still published today. Jennie died in 1940; several decades later, her great-niece donated some of her diaries to the General Conference archives, which is how I was able to transcribe her entry from September 29, 1885.

Medical work, educational work, publishing work—three branches of Adventist mission work represented in just three people from one photograph! How many more stories of Adventist mission—and of Adventist missionaries—are out there waiting to be researched and shared. I'd best get back to it.

* The minutes of the third European Missionary Council can be read on pages 92–98 in the 1886 Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook at <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Yearbooks/YB1886.pdf>.

1 The third session of the European Council of Seventh-day Adventists, Basel, Switzerland, 1885. Buell and Esther Whitney stand at the right end of the second row with their children, Jean and Lenna, sitting at their feet. Jennie is on Esther's right. Ellen White is in the third row, fourth from the left, and W. C. White stands by the post of the stairs on the far left.

2 Jennie Thayer, 1885.

3 Lenna Salisbury, circa 1910.

4 The Whitney family, circa 1886: from left, Buell, Esther, Lenna, and Jean.

5 B. L. Whitney, late 1870s or early 1880s.

Photos courtesy of the Ellen G. White Estate; the Center for Adventist Research; and the Office of Archives, Statistics, and Research.

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PIONEER POSTCARD

The Middle East and North Africa Union Mission

When One Door Closed



Melanie Wixwat

the daughter of missionary parents, grew up in India and then settled in Canada. She is a news writer for the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission in Beirut, Lebanon.

If you visit a certain neighborhood in a large city in the Middle East, you'll find 22-year-old Alyah* surrounded by children listening to her tell them Bible stories. They love this friendly, cheerful young woman with a big personality and look forward to seeing her every day.

Alyah had just become a Global Mission pioneer and had been assigned to a city with half a million refugees. She hadn't been assigned a specific area and wasn't sure of the best way to help. The only thing she was sure of was that she wanted to be a medical missionary like the ones who had come to her home country when she was growing up. For now, however, she was faced with what seemed like an impossible task: finding a community in a huge city where she could make a positive impact.

Alyah's new home was close to an area where many refugee families lived. She came up with a plan to develop a health survey and then spend the next several months visiting the different neighborhoods. She thought that this was a good way to enter the refugees' homes, get to know the families, and then determine the needs of the community. However, God had a different thought. After praying a lot for His direction, she felt impressed one morning to visit a particular neighborhood.

When Alyah got off the bus, she found herself on a street filled with very poor refugee children playing. She wondered why they weren't in school. *Perhaps this community needs a school for refugee kids*, she thought. She began knocking on doors.

At first, the families were reluctant to speak with Alyah. When they discovered, however, that she didn't have any type of survey, they opened up their homes and allowed her to come in.

Over the next few weeks, word spread that Alyah was to be trusted. One little boy offered to take

her to meet all his friends. "He would bring candy with him, and when he knocked on his friends' doors, he would give them the candy first. That made it easier for me to meet them," Alyah says. More and more families invited her into their homes, engaged in discussions, shared their challenges and problems, and proposed ideas that could be helpful for the community. Some families even allowed Alyah to pray with them.

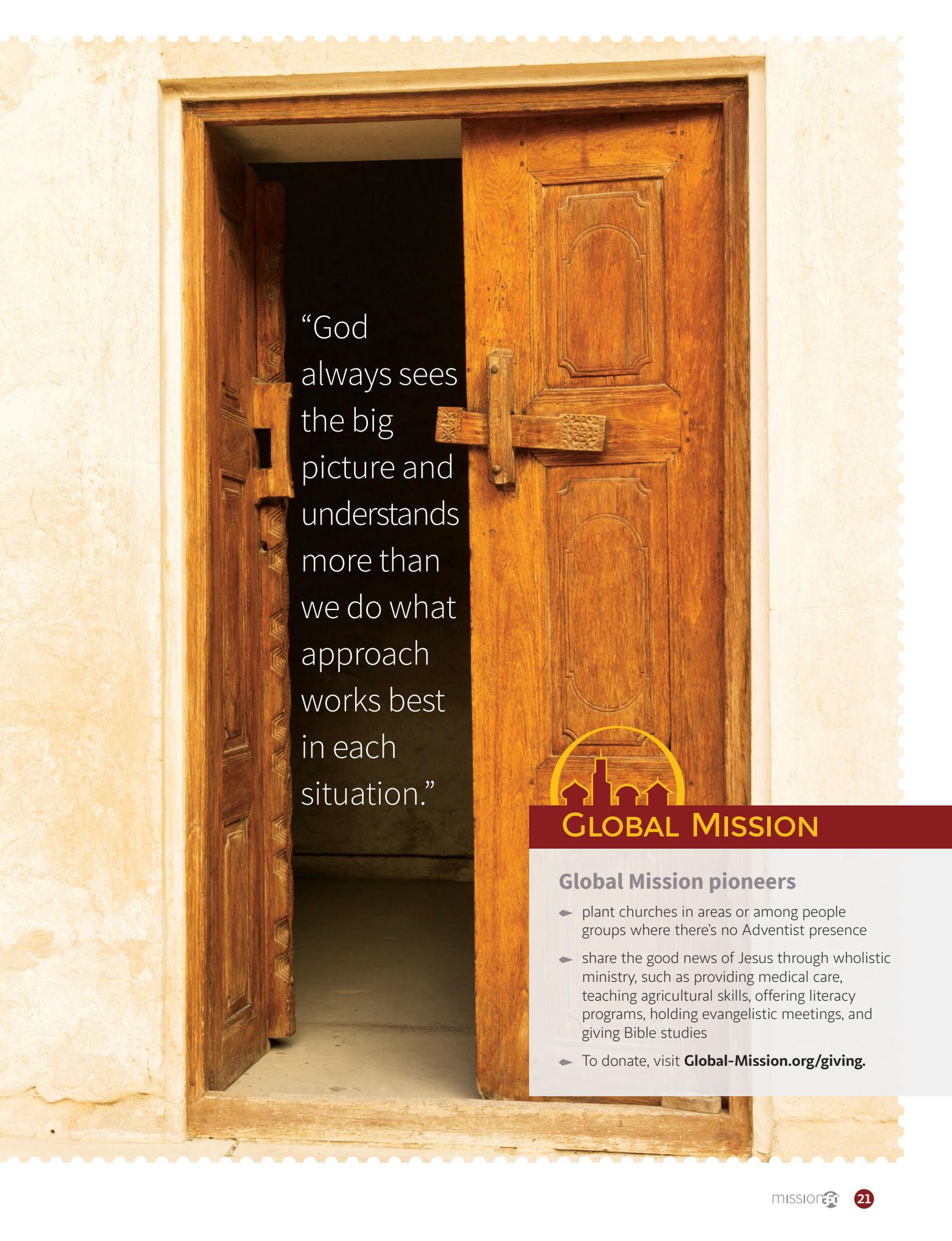
Alyah's days weren't without fear. Living and working in a country where Christianity isn't accepted, she never knew what her fate would be. However, every day, God put someone in her life who helped her connect with the community. She understands now why God didn't allow her to pursue her health survey idea. "God always sees the big picture and understands more than we do what approach works best in each situation," she says. "Intervening in my plans, God opened up doors in a way that would never have happened had I conducted the health surveys."

Alyah asks that we pray for the work she has begun in that one small neighborhood in a very large city. She understands that the challenges are huge, but she knows that nothing is impossible for God.

* Name has been changed.



To see what's happening in mission in the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission, visit m360.tv/middleeast.



“God
always sees
the big
picture and
understands
more than
we do what
approach
works best
in each
situation.”



GLOBAL MISSION

Global Mission pioneers

- ▶ plant churches in areas or among people groups where there's no Adventist presence
- ▶ 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
- ▶ To donate, visit Global-Mission.org/giving.

Jesus and the Cycle of Samsara



Gregory Whitsett

is the director of the Global Mission Center for East Asian Religions.

When I am reborn in the next life, I plan to be a Christian again.” Khun Yai’s expression of devotion was unlike any I had ever heard, and I struggled to wrap my mind around it.

The buildup to that declaration was this precious church member’s testimony, which she had delivered with a gleam in her eye. “Jesus is everything to me, and I tell everyone about Him.” She had gone on fervently, saying, “In fact, my family is sick and tired of me talking about Jesus. But I don’t care. Everyone needs to know Jesus.”

I knew Khun Yai’s faith was genuine. She had come through many moving experiences, including freedom from spirits, and had studied the Bible at length with a pastor. Yet seeing her still obviously confused about truth, I recognized that I was witnessing, once again, a phenomenon that is far too common. Gospel workers—whether they be pastors, Global Mission pioneers, foreign missionaries, or local members—so often teach our Adventist beliefs from the Bible without fully understanding the power of worldview assumptions.

Worldview isn’t a belief; it’s that which we know from experience without needing to take the time to think about it. For example, whether we know the word for it or not, we all know the

reality of gravity. In the presence of gravity, we’ve learned how to walk. But do we take time to think about gravity? No.

Like gravity, worldview assumptions are things that we just know from the collective experience of our society and our own private lives. Khun Yai “knew” that samsara—the cycle of life, death, and rebirth—is the natural order of things. She had simply placed Jesus within her worldview.

While those of us who know her have no doubt that Khun Yai is loyal to Jesus, we must understand her worldview as well as help her discern the Christian worldview by reinterpreting her experiences of life through the lens of Bible truth. To do this, we must be patient and work over a longer period of time than would be needed to simply review a baptismal pledge card.

The Center for East Asian Religions (CEAR) exists to help gospel workers understand these problems and to coach them through the process of bringing people to the point of full conversion. The more our gospel workers use the tools we provide, the more our new disciples will enjoy a rich walk with Jesus and will understand how to cooperate with Him in their daily lives.

For access to books, prayer resources, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and other training materials, visit CEAR.GlobalMissionCenters.org.



When I was a kid, I probably was quite bored and restless on driving trips. I don't remember that, but I do remember Mom and Dad thinking up all kinds of games to keep my brothers and me occupied. One was to assign each of us a different color and have us keep track of how many cars we saw of that color. I had no idea there were so many red cars (or blue or yellow) until I started looking for them.

Do you know who lives around you? Have you gotten into a rut of seeing only those who look like you? Or maybe not seeing anybody because your mind is on the many things you need to do for the day? It happens to me too—a lot!

So let's try a little experiment tomorrow. Take a piece of paper and a pen (or your smart phone), and from the time you get up till the time you go to bed, try to keep track of what nationalities you see around you. Think about your neighbors. Watch the taxi drivers. See who is on the metro with you. Observe the servers when you have lunch. Listen to the cashiers at the grocery store on the way home.

You might be surprised by how many people groups live and work around you. Then you might want to look at the Global Mission Center websites, found at **GlobalMissionCenters.org**, for some guidance on how you can understand these people and become a part of their lives.



Homer Trecartin

is the director of the Global Mission centers and the Tentmaker initiative for the Office of Adventist Mission.



Rise and Shine!

Easy ways to make breakfast the tastiest meal of the day

AFRICA AND ASIA

Slow Cooked Creamy Millet With Apples

(Serves 6 to 8)

Many countries depend heavily on millet for their daily nourishment. It may be cooked as a simple meal by itself or added to thicken soups and stews.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup millet
- 4 cups rice milk, almond milk, or soy milk (or water for a non-creamy version)
- 3 to 4 apples, peeled, cored, and chopped
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

PREPARATION

1. In a medium-size slow cooker, combine millet, milk, apples, cinnamon, and salt.
2. Cover and cook on high for 4 hours or on low for 8 hours or overnight.
3. Stir well before serving.

SERVING VARIATIONS

- Sprinkle with chopped dates, cranberries, or other dried fruit.
- Add fresh berries or sliced fruit.
- Top with chopped nuts.



SWITZERLAND

Yogurt and Hazelnut Muesli

(Serves 4 to 6)

Enjoy this smooth and creamy muesli to jumpstart your day or to refuel after a busy schedule.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rolled oats
- 1 1/2 cups milk (can use grain or nut milks)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 to 2 apples, peeled, cored, and grated
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/3 cup chopped hazelnuts
- 1 1/2 cups plain low-fat yogurt
- 1/3 cup raisins

PREPARATION

1. Combine oats, milk, and honey. Refrigerate for 6 hours or overnight.
2. Add apples, lemon juice, hazelnuts, yogurt, and raisins. Stir well.
3. Store in refrigerator, and serve chilled. Keeps well for 3 to 4 days.



INDONESIA



Vegetable Fried Rice

(Serves 3 to 4)

In some countries, a meal isn't complete unless rice is served. Many variations of fried rice exist, so use your imagination to create your own version of this delicious dish.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon fresh ginger, finely grated
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1/4 teaspoon cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder
- 2 medium carrots, grated
- 4 cups cooked white or brown rice, cooled to room temperature
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime or lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 medium cucumber, chopped
- 1 to 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 2 eggs (optional)

PREPARATION

1. In a large skillet, heat the oil and lightly sauté the onions about 4 minutes until tender.
2. Add the garlic, ginger, turmeric, cumin, and chili powder, stirring quickly to evenly combine the spices with the onions and garlic.
3. Stir in the carrots, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes. Add the rice, breaking up any clumps.
4. When the rice is hot, add the lime or lemon juice, soy sauce, and cilantro.
5. Remove from heat.
6. Just before serving, top with cucumbers and tomatoes and optional egg garnish.

GARNISH (OPTIONAL)

- In a small bowl, whisk two eggs together.
- Coat the bottom of a small skillet with a little oil, and then pour in the eggs.
- Lightly fry the eggs over medium heat until the eggs are cooked through to make an omelet.
- Cut the omelet into strips, and sprinkle over the fried rice and vegetables.



Build your recipe repertoire at m360.tv/recipes.

UNITED STATES

Peanut Butter Granola

(Yields 11 cups)

Begin the day with tasty peanut butter granola topped with your favorite fruit. This treat also makes a delightful homemade gift from your kitchen—a thoughtful way to surprise a friend.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups quick or old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup wheat germ (or oat bran)
- 1 cup sesame seeds
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, pecans, or sliced almonds
- 1/2 cup brown sugar or honey
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1 cup peanut butter, crunchy or creamy

PREPARATION

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl, mixing with your hands until crumbly.
2. Bake in a large baking or roasting pan at 225 °F for 2 hours.
3. Cool completely before storing.
4. Top with a sliced banana or your favorite fruit before serving.



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





In It for the Long Hall

HONORING
THE CHURCH'S
LONGEST
SERVING,
OLDEST ACTIVE
VOLUNTEER

Each year, hundreds of Adventist young people step away from their studies or work to volunteer full time, for up to two years, around the world through the church's Adventist Volunteer Service (AVS) program. Among them, Helen Margaret Hall is unique. She is both the longest serving and oldest active AVS missionary for the Adventist Church. Helen, who turned 80 on February 16, has served for 36 years as an AVS missionary on the Myanmar-Thailand border.

During a leadership conference in Bangkok, Thailand, in January

2018, Helen was recognized for these milestones by leaders from two Adventist Church divisions and from the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Kevin Costello, AVS director for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD), commended Helen for her service both to the Karen people in Myanmar and in the Mae La refugee camp in Thailand.

Helen was awarded special plaques from her home division by Glenn Townend, president of the South Pacific Division; her current division by Samuel Saw,

president of SSD; and the General Conference Adventist Volunteer Service department by vice president Ella Simmons on behalf of director John Thomas.

Helen's service includes years as an educator in four countries. A native of Australia, she first worked as a teacher and women's dean at Kabiufa Adventist College (now Kabiufa Adventist Secondary School) in Papua New Guinea. She returned to Australia and served for 22 years in the Victorian Conference.

During a bus trip from Nepal to London, England, Helen saw

Helen Hall with several students at Eden Valley Academy in Thailand.



the great needs of the Nepalese and other Asian children. As a result, she requested a one-year leave to teach Karen children in Thailand. That 1 year turned into 36 and counting. She shares, "I came here first for one year in 1982 and never went back to work in Australia again."

Helen energetically worked as an AVS teacher along the Myanmar-Thailand border. During a time of turmoil within Myanmar, she soon found herself and her school in the middle of a war. She shared that more than once the

Teresa Costello is a content creator for the Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) communication department.



Kevin Costello is the SSD Adventist Volunteer Service director. They have served as missionaries in the Philippines, in the Marshall Islands, and in Guam.

town where her school was located came under gunfire.

In another instance, Helen and the children had to hide in large, open pits while war planes stormed overhead, firing down on the very land where they had been. Later, when she and the students had to flee to Thailand, they were fired upon as they crossed the river by boat. By God's grace, they made it safely.

As a result of the war, a number of refugee camps were established for the Karen people on the Thailand side of the border, including the large Mae La refugee camp. Although Helen wasn't permitted to live inside the camp, she made her way inside daily to see and work with her students. Soon she established a new school inside the camp.

The school, which was named Eden Valley Academy (EVA), started with approximately 80 students. Helen, who has served as the school's founder and leader for more than three decades, reports that it wasn't long before the school grew to more than 1,000 students and more than 150 teachers. Over the years, thousands of young people have enrolled in this refugee camp school, and more than 1,500 have been baptized. EVA has become a home to the students, and many graduates have continued on as staff. In addition to EVA, Helen helped establish the Karen Adventist Academy in Myanmar.

Through the years, Helen has received numerous awards, including a General Conference Award of Excellence in 1999, a Woman of the Year award from the Association of Adventist Women in 2005, and a Medal of the Order of Australia from the Australian government in 2006. In 2010, Helen was awarded an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Andrews University for her lifelong commitment to the service of God.

During the leadership conference in Thailand, several leaders commented on Helen's service. For Saw, the president of SSD who is from Myanmar, her service has special significance.

"We deeply appreciate the determination, courage, and commitment that Helen has had for so many years for the displaced people of the border," Saw said. "Today, many of the refugees now live in the United States and around the world and are doing very well because of the education they received at Eden Valley. They do not face the struggles and challenges of illiteracy that so many other refugees who did not have the advantage of this Christian education face today. Helen has dedicated her life to changing the lives of others, and many will be in the kingdom because of her efforts."

Please pray for Helen Hall and the students who attend EVA. For more information about EVA and how you can be part of its ministry, visit [Facebook.com/EdenValleyAcademy](https://www.facebook.com/EdenValleyAcademy).



Get a glimpse of Helen Hall's ministry at [m360.tv/s1312](https://www.m360.tv/s1312).



YOUR MISSION OFFERINGS AT WORK

The Floating Church

1



Laurie Falvo,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

Along the Brazilian Amazon floats a church made possible by your support of the first quarter 2016 Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Called *The Hope of the Amazon*, this 88-foot-long craft was specially designed to house several missionary couples and an auditorium for evangelistic meetings that seats 100 people.

I wanted to see the impact the floating church was making and was delighted when Brad Mills offered to take me to the town of Democracia where it was docked. Brad is the director of the Institute of Missions for the Northwest Brazil Union.

As our car ground through deep, claylike mud, he explained how the floating church is part of the union's integrated approach to sharing Jesus with thousands of people living along the river.

The Institute of Missions hosts mission groups that provide villagers with medical and dental care.

Then, when the people's physical needs have been met and their hearts are open to being ministered to spiritually, church planters called Global Mission pioneers move into the settlements to share Jesus. Soon a new group of believers is worshiping together!

This is when the floating church team comes in. They host evangelistic meetings and baptize those who have accepted Christ. During their ministry, the local conference builds a church for the new members. When the floating church team leaves for their next destination, the pioneers stay on to disciple the church plant and train its new leaders.

When we reached the floating church, I met missionary couple Reno and Natalia Guerra. Reno is a nurse and pastor, and Natalia is a lawyer and Bible worker. Warm and enthusiastic, they opened up about the joys and struggles of their ministry.

"This boat is such an answer to prayer!" Reno exclaimed. "There are thousands here who have fallen through the cracks and have no one to care for their needs. There's so much poverty and addiction, and the people have no hope."

Reno believes that one of the villagers' greatest needs is to be loved. "When we arrive in a community, we spend a lot of time listening to people, trying to understand what they've been through and the difficulties they face. We ask about their needs and how we can help."

Reno and Natalia had been in Democracia for 10 days after helping to establish two churches in previous locations. "Those were such rewarding experiences," Reno said. "We had 96 baptisms in one area and 140 in the other. It was beautiful because you could almost touch the transformation God was making in the people's lives."

“You can tell them it’s a real boat that does real work and that there are very real results!”

—Natalia, missionary on *The Hope of the Amazon*

The union’s plan was for the floating church to visit communities only after mission teams and pioneers had paved the way for their ministry. But difficulties during the boat’s construction significantly delayed its launch. By that time, the river was too low for them to get to the areas where preliminary work had been done. So they ended up coming to Democracia instead.

“We were afraid to come where no opening work had been done,” said Reno, “so we quickly organized a mission team to hold a two-day health clinic two weeks before we brought the boat. But even so, this has been our hardest challenge so far.”

The villagers gave the team a warm reception, but when Reno and Natalia arrived in the floating church, they felt the villagers’ hearts close.

“There was already a church in the community,” Natalia explained, “and the leaders felt that a church of a different faith would cause divisiveness. There’s been some hostility toward us, so we’ve been praying a lot.”

“When we knocked on the people’s doors, some of them didn’t want to let us in,” added Reno. “There’s a saying in this area, ‘If somebody is knocking at the door and it isn’t somebody selling something, it’s a missionary trying to convert you!’”

Reno and Natalia’s first breakthrough came the day before I arrived, when they had invited the community leaders to join them on the boat for lunch. They had an opportunity to explain who they were and how they could

benefit the villagers, and the leaders told them they were welcome.

“When I saw how closed the people were,” Natalie confided, “I thought, *This is impossible; they’ll never accept Jesus*. One night, I was feeling very sad about this, and I told God, ‘This is so hard, and I’m so tired. I don’t want to stay here anymore.’ As I sat in the stillness, He gave me a special Bible text, the one in Galatians 6:9 that says, ‘Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.’ That text renewed my energy, my hope, and my sense of commitment. I thought, *I can’t quit now; I have to receive the fruit God has promised!*”

“Two days later, a woman told me that she had been watching Hope Channel television for four years and considered it to be her church,” Natalia continued. “She shared that when she saw the Hope Channel logo on our invitations to the meetings,



2

1 Missionaries aboard the floating church rejoice in reaping God’s harvest.

2 Reno and Natalia making friends in the community. Natalia stands on the left behind Reno, wearing a hat.

3 Reno and Natalia Guerra are passionate about sharing Jesus!

4 The church being built for new believers in Democracia.

5 Reno and Natalia prepare cassava flour with the villagers. Reno is peeling the roots from the cassava shrub, and Natalia is roasting the flour.

3





4

she thought, *This is the church I want to go to because they will preach the very same message!* This was the first encouragement we'd received, and we were overjoyed."

Reno and Natalia realized that God's Spirit had gone before them to prepare the way. "It was a strong reminder that this isn't our work," said Reno. "It's God's work, and He's not limited by our limitations. We saw that it was His plan for us to come here all along!"

I asked Reno and Natalia if there was anything they would like the world church to pray for. "The union has a motto that says everything we do is for love, love, love," said Reno. "Please ask them to join us in praying that the Holy Spirit will fill our lives and teach us to love like Jesus loves."

"And please thank everyone who helped make the floating church possible," Natalia added, "because the work here *is* happening! I've been giving to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering for so long, and I've never actually seen what happens with it. But now I can see. You can tell them it's a real boat that does real work and that there are very real results!"

Author's note: Since writing this story, I learned that 50 people in Democracia gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized!



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THE NEED

In the Brazilian Amazon, there are

6,000
communities with no Protestant churches

600,000
people who have never heard of Jesus

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Please support church planting in South America. Visit Global-Mission.org/giving.SAD.



CHILDREN'S STORY

God's Talent Show



Andrew McChesney
Office of
Adventist
Mission

When Sarah started third grade, the teacher told her that she had to attend classes every weekday and on Saturdays.

Sarah had never gone to school on Saturday in her home country. So she asked the teacher to be excused from Saturday classes.

"Why do you need Saturday off?" the teacher asked.

"I need to go to church," Sarah replied.

The teacher didn't believe in God, and she refused to excuse Sarah from Saturday classes. But Sarah decided it was more important to obey God than her teacher, so she went to church on Saturdays.

The teacher began to make fun of Sarah in front of the other children. "How dare you go to a horrible place like church," the teacher said.

Sarah told her mother about the teacher's unkind words, and her mother spoke with the teacher. But the teacher still criticized Sarah's faith in God. She didn't say Sarah's name, but all the children knew that she was talking about Sarah because Sarah was the only Christian in the school.

"Smart people don't go to church," the teacher said. "Church is a terrible place."

Sarah had to listen to the teacher's unkind words for three years. Then Sarah got a new teacher in the seventh grade, and the new teacher gave Sarah

permission to miss classes on Saturdays. The new teacher respected Christians because he believed they were honest and trustworthy, and he praised Sarah in front of her classmates.

"Sarah is a Christian, and because she is a Christian, she is a wonderful person," he said. "She has integrity."

His kind words sounded so sweet after three years of criticism from the other teacher.

When Sarah was 15, the students began to prepare for the annual talent show. The talent show, which was held outdoors, was one of the school's biggest events of the year. Sarah's teacher asked her to lead her class in the talent show.

Students often sang or danced in the talent show, but Sarah didn't know any typical songs or dances.

"Everything I know, I know from church," she told the teacher.

"That's fine," the teacher said. "Go for it."

So Sarah chose one of her favorite Christian songs, and she choreographed a performance so her classmates could perform to the music. The students liked Sarah's plan, and they raised money to buy special costumes for the performance.

Two days before the talent show, the school announced that it would be held on Saturday.

Sarah was very disappointed, and she told her classmates that she would not attend. Her classmates were disappointed, too. Without Sarah, they would not be able to perform.

"You're very good at taking off Saturdays from school," a classmate told Sarah. "Why can't you just take off a Saturday morning from church?"

Another classmate said, "Are you really going to disappoint us by not leading us at the talent show?"

Sarah didn't know what to say. "Why don't you pray for me so I can join you?" she said.

Sarah didn't expect her classmates to pray for her. But the next day—just one day before the talent show—her classmates came up to her and said, "We have prayed for you, so we hope you can come tomorrow."

As Sarah left her last class that afternoon, a voice rumbled over the school's public address system. "We have to postpone the talent show because of bad weather," the voice said. "The talent show will now be held on Sunday."

Sarah's classmates had given up hope about participating in the talent show, so they were shocked and excited when they heard the announcement. "Wow!" they said. "Your God is really amazing! Now you can come to the talent show!"

The performance was a big hit on Sunday, and it won first prize. Many students asked Sarah's classmates, "Where did you find this music? It is so beautiful. We have never heard it before." The classmates replied, "The music is from Sarah's church."

The students asked Sarah to share the music with them. "We want to learn it," they said.

This was the first time Sarah realized that she could witness to others accidentally. All she had to do was obey God.

Today, Sarah is helping grow God's kingdom with another young woman. Twenty people attend her church every Sabbath, and Sarah preaches to them about Jesus and His love.

This story and others like it can be found in the *Children's Mission* magazine at AdventistMission.org/mission-quarterlies.

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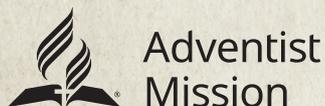
8



Following a massive, nationwide evangelistic campaign in Rwanda, more than 110,000 people responded to God's message of love by being baptized. But church leaders didn't have enough churches to house the new believers or the money to supply the need!

When God presents unexpected mission opportunities such as Rwanda's unprecedented response to the gospel, the church must act quickly to meet the need. The Unusual Opportunities Fund was established to respond rapidly to these unique situations. Because members like you gave generously to this fund, work started on 1,000 new church buildings just one month after the meetings ended!

Unusual opportunities require a rapid and generous response from God's people. Help us prepare for our next unexpected chance to share Jesus by giving to the Unusual Opportunities Fund. Mark your tithe envelope "General Conference Unusual Opportunities Fund" on Sabbath, September 8 or call 1-800-648-5824 today!



Giving.AdventistMission.org