

# mission

FROM THE OFFICE  
OF ADVENTIST  
MISSION  
VOLUME 8  
NUMBER 3



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- 10 Something Worth Investing In
- 14 17,500 Times Over
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# EDITORIAL

**T**oday we face a massive mission challenge, hiding in plain sight. It's a challenge that has been growing steadily for more than 100 years.

If we look back to the year 1900, we see that the church had all of 75,000 members in its ranks. And despite that small number, it was being prodded by an outspoken messenger of God to reach the large cities of its day. The world, in 1900, already had 15 cities with more than a million residents each, and New York City alone had a population of nearly 3.5 million. The task must have seemed impossible for that small group, but as time passed, the messenger only became more vocal. Why was this issue so important?

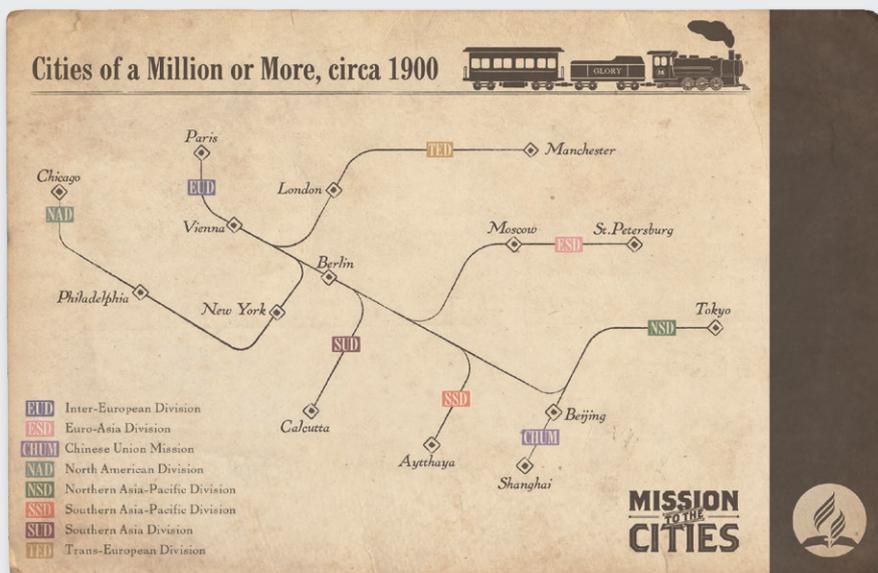
Imagine for a moment if the church of 1900 had laid out a map of the world's cities of a million or more and had given it to members as a reminder to pray. Might it have looked a little like this? Of course, the church of that time didn't yet have the divisions represented by the abbreviations in the tags shown in this map, but this gives us a picture of how many large cities were located in each of our current divisions.

Now, if you have not already done so, take a look at the 2020 urban prayer map poster inserted with this issue, and you'll find that the challenge has grown dramatically! Today, there are more than 585+ cities of a million or more worldwide. Thirty-seven of those cities have more than 10 million people each, and 5 have more than 30 million each!

Of course, God saw this coming more than 100 years ago, and through the messenger urged us to move forward quickly. He also gave us this insight: "When the cities are worked as God would have them, the result will be the setting in operation of a mighty movement."<sup>1</sup>

Don't we all long for this mighty movement? Will we, together, take up the call? Would you join us by putting up the prayer map poster and praying for one city each day? In these days of the pandemic, though you may not be able to board a plane, you can still say, "I will go" and pray your way around the world!

Hang up the prayer map in your house and pray for one city each day, checking them off as you go. Additionally, post it in your church or school and invite others to join you in praying for the cities of the world! Teaming up, praying city by city, your church or school could pray around the world in just a few months.



The world's greatest victories have begun with prayer. Your prayers matter! Will you seek God with us, asking Him to help us reach the world's largest cities?

1. Ellen G. White, *Ministry to the Cities* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald®, 2012), 28.

**Karen Suvankham**, communication specialist for the Global Mission Centers and Mission to the Cities



## 1900 MAP DATA SOURCES

- Chandler, Tertius. *Four Thousand Years of Urban Growth: An Historical Census*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1987.
- Rosenberg, Matt. "Largest Cities Throughout History." ThoughtCo., updated November 4, 2019. <https://www.thoughtco.com/largest-cities-throughout-history-4068071>.
- U.S. Bureau of the Census. "Table 13. Population of the 100 Largest Urban Places: 1900." Accessed May 10, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab13.txt>.

## Look for additional resources at [MissiontotheCities.org](https://www.MissiontotheCities.org):

- Files for printing additional copies of the map in various sizes
- Files for printing posters that share Ellen White quotes urging us to reach the cities
- Free downloadable copy of *Ministry to the Cities*
- Stories of schools whose students have teamed up to pray for the cities of the world
- Practical ideas for reaching out in your city

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## ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

PHOTO BY LAURIE FALVO

This little girl's rich chocolate-brown eyes and shy smile won my heart the moment I saw her! I met her at a Global Mission Urban Center of Influence that provides daycare for children. It's one of many veiled projects that you support, which we can't identify due to the sensitivity of doing mission work in its location. Please pray for all our veiled projects around the world as they continue to reach the unreached for Jesus.

From the Office of Adventist Mission

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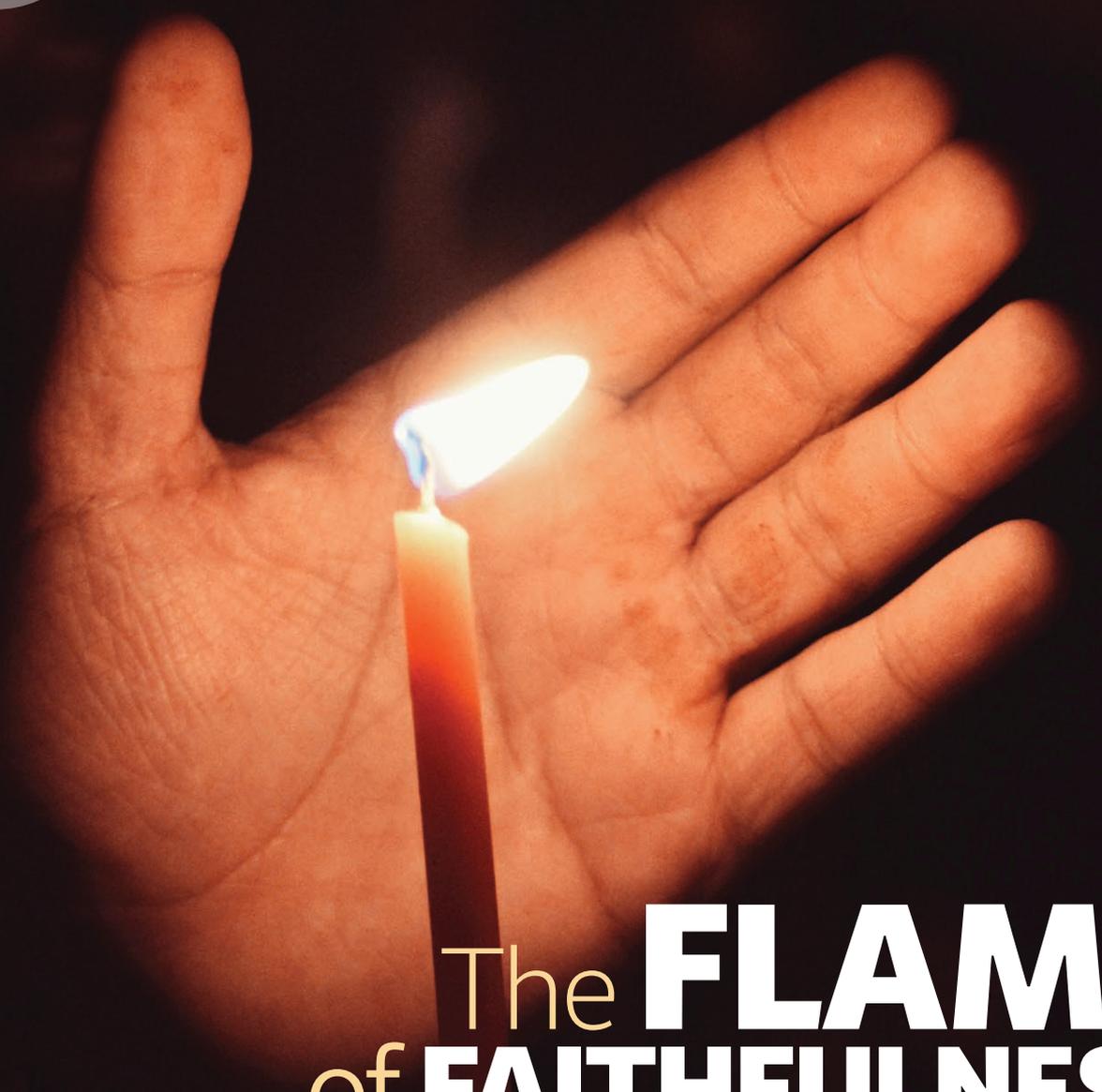
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Unless otherwise noted, Bible verses are quoted from the King James Version.



# The **FLAME** of **FAITHFULNESS**



*Mission 360° on the issuu app. It's the perfect way to spend a Sabbath afternoon!*

**Michael Ryan** served as the director of Global Mission and as a vice-president of the General Conference. In his retirement, he is an assistant to the president of the General Conference.



**W**e were less than 100 miles from the equator, buried in dirt roads and washed-out bridges, deep on the frontier of mission. A small, over-worked air conditioner groaned and rattled a trickle of cool air into the dimly lit, one-star meeting room crammed with 22 Global Mission pioneers. I could taste, smell, and feel the excitement. Danger hung as a background. For the first time in the history of the church, 23 groups of believers were being planted in this strict territory of one of the world's largest non-Christian religions.

Tears of joy and sorrow sprinkled miraculous reports of God's leading. High emotions and humble prayers accented the deeply rooted conviction of 22 ambassadors of God's mission.

And then, like a slow-motion nightmare, the Global Mission leader began to unwrap the reason why only 22 Global Mission pioneers were present instead of 23. It was exactly what everyone feared.

I carefully watched the group. No one spoke, moved, or diverted their eyes. The leader spoke slowly and with precise articulation. As I remember it, he said, "There are 17 people who now study God's word and pray to Jesus as their Savior because of our brother. The radical fundamentalists discovered his work and have beaten him severely. Faith now thrives in this large northern city. And yet, as we meet, our brother lies in an intensive care unit with a concussion, broken bones, and dozens of stitches. I visited him two days ago. While weak, his faith is strong. Repeatedly, he had one question. Who will go and keep the flame?"

Rarely have I heard such fervent prayers. "Do not let evil gain victory. Humbly we ask for the life of your servant and that the flame will burn. Who will go?"

After group worship the next morning, the team was startled when a quiet young man dressed in an old, faded green shirt stood up. I remembered his thrilling report. Lifting his eyes from the ground, he hoarsely whispered, "I will go." It seemed the breath had been sucked out of the room. Not one person had even one question about the risk. Immediately, a kneeling prayer circle formed around the young man. The only thing I remember about the prayer session was how shallow my prayers seemed by comparison.

The meeting ended at noon. Farewells and goodbyes filled the air. God's speed, power, and keeping were gravely exchanged between these friends and ambassadors of the kingdom.

And then I saw the young man in the old, faded green shirt working alone under the shade of a

small tree. I watched him carefully. Using strips of cut inner tube, he strapped a ragged cardboard box onto his tired, old bicycle. Just as he was finishing, I spoke to him. "I suppose you will be going back to collect your things before going north?"

"No, this is everything I own," he pleasantly replied.

That torqued my conscience a bit. With that, I awkwardly positioned my next part of the conversation. "Well, you should know that I will be praying for your safety and success." Hearing that, he paused, staring just a little too long at the last tug he'd given the old strip of inner tube. Then, slowly, he turned toward me, quietly cleared his throat, and with soft kindness, said these words that I have never forgotten.

"Pastor, I must always keep in mind that the Lord has not asked me to be successful; he has asked me to be faithful."

My General Conference-doctoral degree-big shot faith instantly shrunk like a popped balloon. Here I stood looking at a young man whose old, faded green shirt and mismatched clothes would be judged inappropriate in most churches. With a well-marked, worn Bible and a small flip chart, he had raised up a church in a lion's den. And now, he was seconds from departing to pedal his old, tired bicycle many miles, with shoes that had holes in both toes, to carry the name of the precious Lord Jesus into another lion's den.

The flame of faithfulness! May God find it in my soul!

## VEILED COUNTRY

Here at Global Mission, our priority is starting new groups of believers among unreached people groups. Often, this means that Global Mission pioneers, tentmakers, and Urban Centers of Influence operate in challenging places. When we share a story from a sensitive area, you'll see it labeled as a "Veiled Country" or "Veiled City." Please pray for these special projects and support them by visiting [Global-Mission.org/giving](https://Global-Mission.org/giving) and selecting Veiled Projects, **FUND GM5040**.



# Cambodia Under Fire

In 1973, Pastor and Mrs. Ng, two young missionaries fresh out of college, arrived in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. It was to be their mission field for the next five years. Or so they thought. What happened next surpassed their worst nightmares as civil war wrenched the country apart. However, God never left their sides.

Last year, Pastor and Mrs. Ng accepted a request from Adventist Mission to film their story on location. “This was my first trip back to Phnom Penh since we left Cambodia in 1975 just before it fell to the Khmer Rouge regime,” Mrs. Ng said. “My husband had gone back once for some meetings, but this was our first time to revisit familiar places. Words can’t express how excited I was, yet at the same time, our return brought back some terrifying moments of the war closing in on the city.”

As the couple traveled from one significant site to another, a tsunami of memories engulfed them—especially when they revisited an old building that had once served as the SDA English Language Center where they worked.

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As they climbed the stairs, Pastor Ng described the layout of the language center. “The first floor was where most of the classrooms were and the second had a small church that had been started through the ministry of the language center.” Pastor and Mrs. Ng had come to Cambodia to shepherd this church.

“A lot of people in Phnom Penh wanted to learn English,” Pastor Ng continued. “Our center was one of the largest in the city with more than 450 students. Here,” he said, pausing at the third floor, “is where the five student missionaries from the United States lived who taught English.”

When they reached the fourth and final floor, Pastor and Mrs. Ng pointed out a small apartment where they had lived. It was surrounded by a large, open area enclosed by a fence. Above it stood a small balcony, which could be reached by a staircase.

“This fourth floor holds the most vivid memories for us,” Pastor Ng shared as he and his wife looked out upon the city. “We spent a lot of



This story is based on the videos “Cambodia Under Fire” and “Missionary Memories” by Rick Kajjura, communication director for Adventist Mission. To watch them, visit [m360.tv/s1934](http://m360.tv/s1934) and [m360.tv/s1935](http://m360.tv/s1935).



Originally from Singapore, Pastor and Mrs. Ng have served as missionaries in Cambodia, Thailand, Malaysia, Philippines, and the United States. Pastor Ng is the executive secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and Mrs. Ng is the Asian channels coordinator for Hope Channel.

time praying on the balcony during the frequent blackouts.” His voice was calm, belying the chaos that once raged around them when F-111 fighter planes and B-52s rained bombs and rockets on the city.

“We could have died a thousand times,” Pastor Ng said, a faraway look in his eyes. “Every day, we were prepared to die. We often pled for God’s protection on this balcony, and in His mercy, He spared our lives.”

Pastor and Mrs. Ng remembered one particularly harrowing night when they heard dozens of rockets hit the city. “We ran up to the balcony and saw the entire outskirts of the city engulfed in flames. We thought, *This is it! This is it!* Whichever direction we looked, there was fire.”

Nevertheless, God shielded the small group of missionaries. “I could see the mighty hand of God on every side, protecting us during these dangerous times,” Mrs. Ng said. “The precious promises of Psalm 91 had never been so dear to my heart as we claimed His living Word while missiles and rockets flew down all around us.”

Pastor and Mrs. Ng were evacuated to nearby Vietnam as they would be twice more in the future. Yet each time they escaped the carnage of war, the couple returned to continue sharing God’s love.

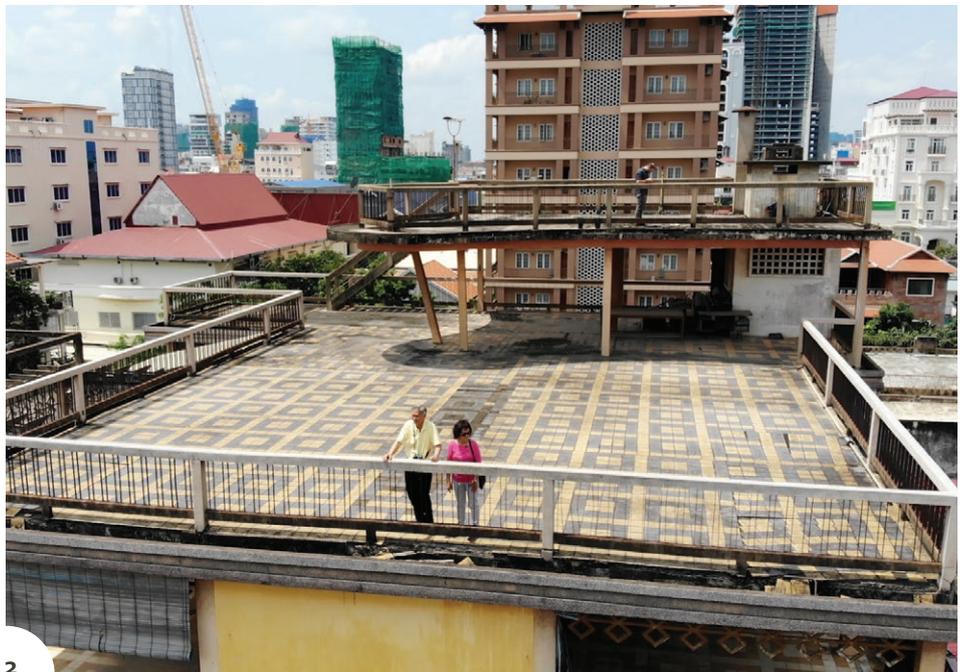
During their two years of service, Pastor and Mrs. Ng spent much time studying the Bible with the language students. There had been virtually no believers in Cambodia before the Ngs arrived, but soon 33 believers were worshipping with them each Sabbath.

While in Cambodia last year, Pastor and Mrs. Ng also visited a large hotel that held many memories for them. It had served as a refugee center during the war, and they had been instrumental in helping to meet the refugees’ needs.

We often visited the refugees in their rooms,” Pastor Ng recalled. “The rooms were pitch-dark because there was no

electricity at the hotel, and as many as 17 women, men, and children would be crowded into one room.”

The situation in the city was dire. The Khmer Rouge had cut supplies from the outside world by blockading the Mekong River and the highways. Electricity in the city was in short supply, and fuel was rationed. They did their best to provide the refugees with clothing and rice, but the situation continued to worsen.



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The missionaries grabbed their few belongings and fled to the airport. “The airport was under constant attack to cut the city off from its last link to the outside world,” Pastor Ng said. “When we arrived, we saw black smoke billowing from rocket strikes, heard the screaming of sirens, and felt the concussion from the tremendous blasts. When we boarded the plane, we knew the city was doomed.”

Two weeks later, the Khmer Rouge marched in and took control of Phnom Penh and the rest of Cambodia.

“Almost all our church members perished during the Cambodia genocide that followed,” Pastor Ng shared. “Some walked all the way to the border with Thailand and survived. It’s been estimated that two million Cambodians were killed by this brutal regime.”

Several months after the fall of Cambodia, Pastor and Mrs. Ng received a letter from one of their church members who had managed to escape from Phnom Penh. In it, their friend wrote, “I’m praying day and night, not asking God to grant me any selfish request, but simply pleading with Him that somehow every single member in Cambodia may gather together.”

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By this time, two student missionaries had left the country, leaving a total of five serving in the besieged city. Every Sabbath after sundown, one of them would ride a bike to the central post office to get their mail. One Saturday evening, one of the teachers returned with a telegram from Bangkok. It read, “All five get out immediately.”

The telegram had been sent by the education director of the Southeast Asia Union Mission, Milton Thorman. “Pastor Thorman was visiting in Bangkok at the time and had felt impressed all day Sabbath that something ought to be done for the missionaries in Phnom Penh,” Pastor Ng explained. “So he sent a telegram ordering us to evacuate immediately. He did it on his own accord without committee authorization.”

“Unfortunately, my friend’s prayer wasn’t answered on this earth,” Pastor Ng said. “But soon it will be, and what a day of rejoicing it will be when Jesus comes again! We’ll be able to see all 33 of our members who were baptized and remained faithful to the Lord till the end.”

After the war, a large, church-planting program sponsored by Global Mission helped rebuild the church in Cambodia. Today we have some 3,000 members, seven churches, a mission school, and a new Urban Center of Influence that you helped fund with your donations to Global Mission.

However, much remains to be done to share the message of Jesus’ love and soon return with the people of Cambodia and of all Southeast Asia. Please continue to pray for and support Adventist mission work in this region of the world.

- 1 Pastor and Mrs. Ng in Phnom Penh in 1974.
- 2 Pastor and Mrs. Ng visited the balcony of the former English Language Center, where they often pled for God to spare their lives during the war.
- 2 Pastor Ng, *right*, and Helton Fisher, president of Cambodia District stationed in Saigon, helped unload bales of clothes donated by the Seventh-day Adventist World Service (SAWS), the forerunner of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.
- 4 Going down memory lane after 45 years!
- 5 Pastor Ng, *far left*, distributing rice and fish to refugees displaced by Khmer Rouge forces.
- 6 "This picture is most memorable," says Pastor Ng. "One day, the city was under siege with heavy bombardment, and we saw the edges of the city on fire. We thought the end was near and decided to spend the night on the ground floor with the other missionaries." Mrs. Ng is sitting on the far left, and Pastor Ng is beside her.

Population:  
**16,926,984**

## THE NEED IN CAMBODIA

Buddhist (official) **97.9%**

Muslim **1.1%**

Christian **0.5%**

Other **0.6%.\***

\* "East Asia/Southeast Asia: Cambodia," World Factbook, June 11, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cb.html>.

## How you can help

Please further Adventist mission work in Cambodia and Southeast Asia through your mission offerings ([adventistmission.org/donate](https://www.adventistmission.org/donate)) and by supporting Global Mission pioneers and Urban Centers of Influence in the 10/40 Window ([Global-Mission.org/giving](https://www.Global-Mission.org/giving)).

## Cambodia Fast Facts

- **1930:** The first Adventist missionary enters.
- **1962:** The first Adventist church building opens.
- **1975 to 1979:** The Khmer Rouge regime rules under the Marxist dictator Pol Pot.
- **1992:** Adventist missionaries reenter.
- **1993:** The Cambodian church receives official recognition from the government.





# Something Worth Investing In

**A**re my students really listening to me? Does what I say really make a difference? Perhaps it does in more ways than I even know.

I was scanning through Rami's\* homework, making a few small edits before I sent it back to him to correct. I was paying more attention to the essay's grammar and spelling than to its content until my eye caught a sentence, and my thoughts halted abruptly.

*Wait a minute, I thought. That's my class he's talking about. That's something I said. He was actually listening!*

Every time I teach, I start my class with worship. Most semesters, I've had the joy of teaching an 8:00 A.M. class. I'm not a morning person, so this has been a real challenge for me. This semester I was able to negotiate for a later start time. I was so thankful, but then my next thought was, *Oh no, I won't be able to do worship because they will*

*have worship in another class before mine.* I looked at the schedule again and breathed a sigh of relief. My class was their first class in the morning.

The new semester began. We met on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and rather than having students present worship for extra credit as I had done in the past, I decided to lead worship. I started by sharing some of our church's key beliefs along with a few interesting nuggets I'd unearthed in my personal devotions. Then I watched as worship morphed into something other than I'd imagined.

One morning, I handed out little squares of cream-colored paper to each student and asked them to write down any questions they would like to ask about life or the Bible. I collected the folded squares and tucked them away to read at a later time. I promised I would answer their questions during worship time.

The questions ranged from "Is God out there?" to "How do I start reading the Bible?" to "Why



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Maria, far right,  
with a group of  
English Language  
Institute students  
in Byblos,  
Lebanon.

don't we have women prophets?" to "How do you live a balanced emotional life?" They were thinkers, and they were asking tough questions.

Week by week, we worked through the questions. My format was simple. I found verses for each student to read about the topic, then I summarized the answer and talked about how to make it practical. One day, while correcting Ben's homework, I noticed some scribbles in the corner of his textbook. I looked more closely at the page and realized he had written down verses from a recent worship talk. I was humbled to realize someone had actually been paying attention in class and wanted to remember the verses for future reference.

Near the end of the semester came the question, "What is marriage?" Since most of my students were single, I decided to approach it from that perspective. We reviewed what qualities we should look for in a marriage partner from Proverbs 31 and 1 Timothy 3. In the Making It Practical section, I reminded them to

**Maria Shajiei**, a volunteer missionary in Lebanon, serves as the executive secretary to the president at Middle East University, where she also teaches in the English Language Institute. She grew up in the mission field and changes identity based on her mood, as she is Dutch-Mauritian by ethnicity, British by nationality, American and Middle Eastern by culture, and African by birthplace.



pray three times a day, ask wise counselors for advice, and look for someone who shared similar habits and life goals. I emphasized that love is a principle and not a Hollywood-style feeling.

Five days later, Rami's homework was sitting in front of me, and this sentence caught my eye: "I have learned in my English class that love is an action that we do, and most likely a decision that we make, which means it is something that we decide to do." He was working on a dorm worship thought, one of his writing projects for his Advanced Writing class that I was teaching. He incorporated into his talk what he had learned in his English class. My class. During worship time.

This past semester, I was struggling with the challenges of a coronavirus life and unsure about my missionary-wife role. My husband was busy studying theology and teaching Bible studies every day. I could see the visible results of ministry in his life. While I enjoyed teaching one class in the language institute each semester, the rest of my time was filled with mundane tasks such as printing letters and scheduling appointments. I didn't know whether I was making a meaningful difference in anyone else's life.

Then I saw Rami's homework, and I realized there was something worth holding on to. Something worth investing in. Each student who came into my class was a life I could influence. It could be something as seemingly insignificant as a five-minute worship talk, and I might never know its value until heaven. I encourage you to never grow tired of sharing Jesus in any way and any place because someone, somewhere, is listening, and that's worth it all.

\*All names have been changed



Would you like to help make a positive impact in the lives of others? If so, please consider volunteering through Adventist Volunteer Service which facilitates church members' volunteer service 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**.



# Mission Changed Us



**Ricky Oliveras,**  
Office of  
Adventist  
Mission

**W**hen God called Delmar, Nati, and three-year-old Clara to serve in Albania, the missionary family packed their bags and prepared for a new adventure!

“We’re both from Brazil,” Nati said, “and I think God put a desire in our hearts to serve in a different place. . . . A place where we wouldn’t be comfortable. Somewhere that would challenge both of our ministries.”

Delmar and Nati learned quickly that there would be plenty of challenges to sharing the gospel in this 10/40 Window country.

For years, Albania was a communist territory, banning religion and declaring itself the world’s first and only atheist state. Communism collapsed



1

in 1990 but, even today, religion doesn’t seem to be a priority for most people.

Delmar, Nati, and Clara were assigned to serve in the city of Korçe, at the first Adventist church built in the country in 1994. Their first year was especially difficult. Despite their efforts, there wasn’t a single baptism or even anyone interested in Bible studies.

“I was very discouraged,” Delmar shared. “I couldn’t see anything big happening in the church. I couldn’t even see anything changing in the church. We associate big things with big numbers. . . . I was trying to do my best . . . to do something big or important according to my understanding.”

At the peak of his frustration, Delmar received a call to pastor a large church in Brazil. The offer seemed to come at the perfect time.

Delmar told his wife, “We’ve got a call to go back to Brazil. We’re not doing anything here anyway. So, why don’t we just leave?”

“Do you think we did everything we could in Albania?” she replied. “Do you really think it’s time for us to leave? I personally think we should stay. The Lord has something prepared for us here. Maybe He wants to teach us something and still wants to use us.”

Delmar and Nati decided to decline the opportunity in Brazil. Instead, they prayed about how God could use them in this challenging part of the world. Then they noticed that there were many children in their neighborhood. Maybe this was a good place to start!

The couple prepared a place to play volleyball and invited the kids to play. “This just happened naturally,” Delmar explained. “They started coming two times a week. In a few weeks, they knew me as a pastor; they knew Nati; they knew Clara very well. Then the kids started coming to church. We were so excited because the church was full!”

Angela, one of the church members, brought her friend Fatjon to church with her every few



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months, and soon Fatjon and Delmar became friends. They started talking about God and studying the Bible together, and Delmar invited Fatjon to be part of the group.

“He was really excited and engaged with us,” Delmar recalled. “He told me, ‘I want to help these kids, I want to serve this community.’” In just a few weeks, Fatjon was helping Delmar and Nati with the kids, and the kids loved him. “All these activities brought us together, and I had the privilege to baptize Fatjon as my first baptism in Albania,” Delmar said. “I was so happy to see the Lord answering our prayers!”

The love of Jesus touched Fatjon’s heart, and he now shares this with others. “When we follow Christ’s method, others can see it,” Fatjon observed. “I pray for the hearts of the people in the community to warm up and for them to follow Jesus.”

Now the church members in Korce are connecting with their community through a Global Mission Urban Center of Influence. Nati teaches music lessons, while others teach language classes. There’s even a health club. All of this has led to new faces at church on Sabbath morning.

“When you try something new and you see it working, it gives you hope,” Nati said. “This motivated us to try different things.”

Things are changing in Korce and not just at the church. “When we were called to come as missionaries, I thought I was ready to change the world,” Delmar shared. “But it took me maybe one year to realize that before I did anything, the Lord was trying to change me.”

Please pray for this ministry as it continues to grow and integrate into the community. And pray for missionary families such as Delmar, Nati, and Clara, who are serving on the front lines of mission.

Thank you for supporting the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church!

\* All names have been changed.

## The Need

Albania is in the 10/40 Window, a region of the world where most of the people have never heard the name of Jesus.

## 10/40 Window Fast Facts

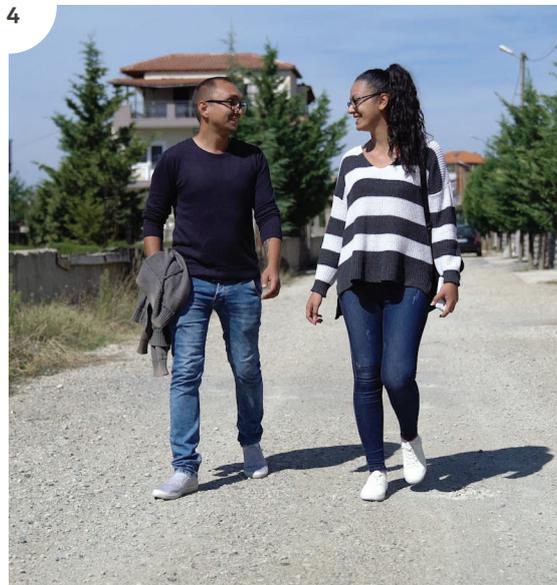
- Stretches from North Africa through the Middle East and into Asia
- Is where two-thirds of the world’s population live
- Is home to most of the world’s major religions
- Has the globe’s largest cities and poorest people.
- Has more than 5,800 unreached people groups among roughly 3 billion people

## How can you help?

Please pray for and support missionaries through your mission offerings at Sabbath School and online at [adventistmission.org/donate](https://adventistmission.org/donate).

Please pray for our Global Mission pioneers and Urban Centers of Influence and support them at [Global-Mission.org/giving](https://Global-Mission.org/giving).

- 1 Missionaries Delmar, Nati, and Clara.
- 2 Young people playing volleyball on the court that Delmar and Nati created.
- 3 Nati teaching violin lessons at the Urban Center of Influence she and Delmar started.
- 4 Angela and her friend Fatjon.
- 5 Delmar studying the Bible with Fatjon.



# 17,500 Times Over

## Quiz time!

See if you can answer these three questions:

- 1 What was the name of the city that God called “that great city?”
- 2 What was the population of that city?
- 3 What is the population of the world’s largest city today?

(Note: There are hints in the graphic on the opposite page and on the prayer map poster that you received with this magazine. Answers are at the bottom of the page.)

Now that you’ve passed that quiz, you have, no doubt, already done the mental math and are chewing on the fact that the world’s largest city in 2020 is a whopping 337 times the size of Jonah’s Nineveh. Tokyo<sup>1</sup> is so large that last year alone, just its population *increase* came to 148,783 people<sup>2</sup>—which is like transporting the entire city of Nineveh, and some of its neighbors, to Japan’s capital!

Today, as this article is being written, 585+ cities around the world have a million or more inhabitants each.<sup>3,4</sup> Check them out on the prayer map poster found on pages 16 and 17 and inside the envelope in which you received this magazine. Together, these cities are equal in size to 17,500 Ninevehs!<sup>5</sup> Of course, just one Nineveh captured God’s attention.

Jonah 4:11 tells us that God had concern about,<sup>6</sup> cared about,<sup>7</sup> or had compassion on<sup>8</sup> Nineveh. With that heart for the city, what did God do? He spoke to a prophet and called for action.

Does God still have the same heart for the cities today as he did for Nineveh? Take a look, to the right, at just a few of the calls to action that came through his messenger, Ellen White, not so many years ago.

God called Jonah to reach that great city of Nineveh. We all know how he responded. Today, 17,500 times over, the call is ours.

**Karen Suvankham**, Communication Specialist for the Global Mission Centers and Mission to the Cities



## MISSION to the CITIES

Download poster files for these quotes and the prayer map at [MissionToTheCities.org/resources!](https://MissionToTheCities.org/resources!)

**Answers:** 1. Nineveh 2. 120,000 3. 40,400,000



1. There are many ways to rank city size. While Guangzhou is reported by Brinkhoff (see below) as the world’s largest agglomeration, most sources count Tokyo as the largest city or metropolitan area.
2. Capital Gains: People Across Japan Keep Moving to Tokyo. (2020, February 25). Nippon.com. Retrieved July 16, 2020. <https://www.nippon.com/en/japan-data/h00643/capital-gains-people-across-japan-keep-moving-to-tokyo.html>
3. Brinkhoff, T. (2020, February 10). *Major Agglomerations of the World*. Retrieved July 16, 2020. <https://www.citypopulation.de/en/world/agglomerations/>
4. Many cities today have grown far beyond their original boundaries, and population counts such as those reported by Brinkhoff often include the broader metropolitan area, including smaller surrounding cities.
5. The total of the 585 agglomeration populations listed by Brinkhoff comes to 2,100,015,000. Dividing this by Nineveh’s population of 120,000 brings us to 17,500.
6. NIV
7. Berean
8. NASB

NIGHT AFTER NIGHT  
I am unable to sleep  
because of this...  
THE UNWARNED CITIES  
P.47

Oh THAT MIGHT  
WE MIGHT  
SEE THE NEEDS OF THESE CITIES  
as GOD sees them  
P.25

CHRIST'S METHOD  
• ALONE •  
GIVES TRUE SUCCESS...

- The Savior
- mingled with men
  - showed sympathy
  - ministered to needs
  - won confidence
  - bade them  
"Follow Me". P.59

WHEN HE SAW THE CROWDS | MATT. 9:36  
He had Compassion on them | NIV

WORK THE CITIES  
without delay  
FOR TIME IS SHORT  
P.26

SHOULD I NOT BE  
Concerned about  
THAT GREAT CITY  
JONAH 4:11 NIV 1984

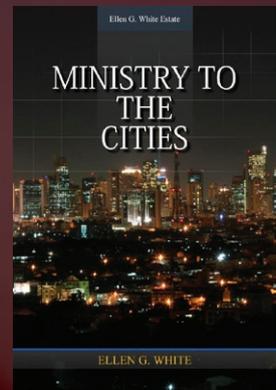
THE WORK IN THE CITIES  
is the  
ESSENTIAL WORK  
FOR THIS TIME P.28

WHEN THE CITIES ARE WORKED  
as GOD would have them,  
THE RESULT WILL BE  
THE SETTING IN OPERATION OF A  
Mighty Movement... P.28

TAKE UP THE  
long-neglected  
WORK IN THE CITIES  
P.53



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Ministry to the Cities  
at MISSION TO THE CITIES.ORG



# Pray Your Way Around the World!

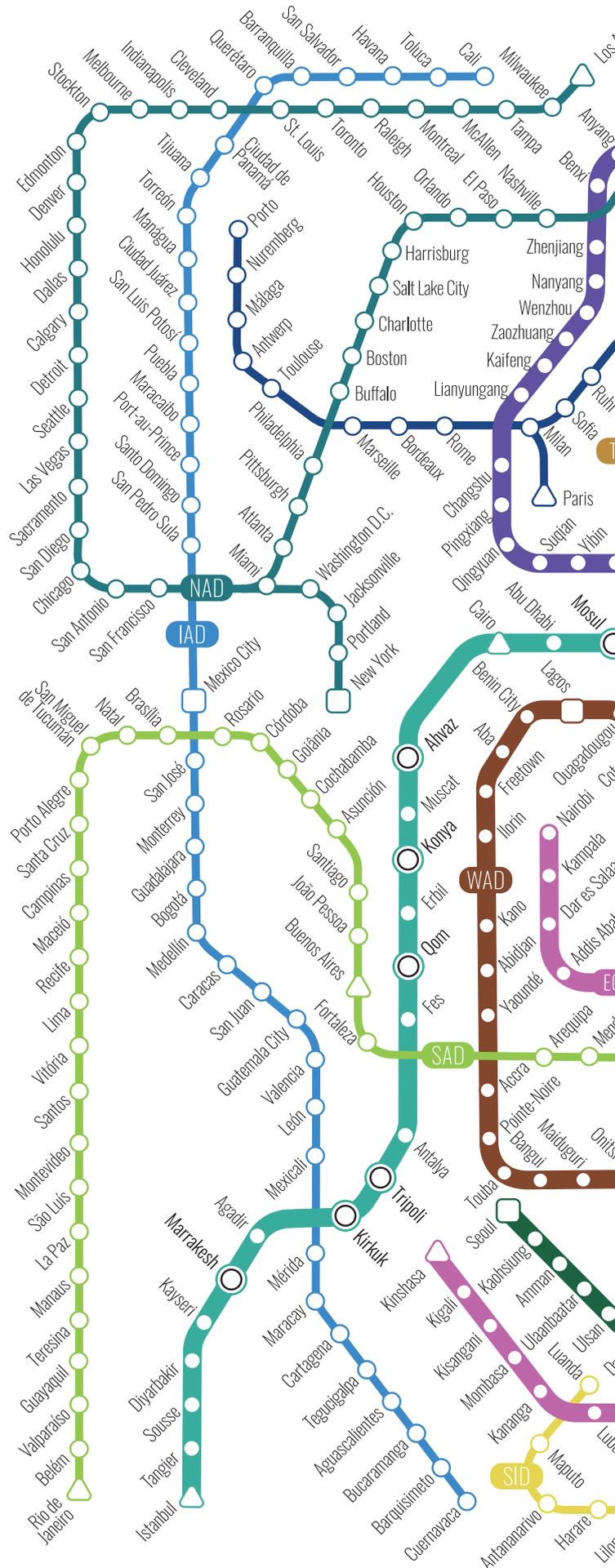
There are 580+ cities of a million or more worldwide. They've been laid out here to look like a subway map. The subway lines of varying colors represent the regions of the world church. The stops, or dots, on each line are the cities of a million or more within each region. Please pray for one city each day and check them off as you go! ✓

## LEGEND

- Cities with 1,000,000+
- Cities with 10,000,000+
- Cities with 20,000,000+
- Cities with 30,000,000+
- Cities with 40,000,000+
- Outside 10/40 Window
- Inside 10/40 Window
- Prayer-focus Cities

## REGIONS OF THE ADVENTIST CHURCH

- ECD East-Central Africa Division
- ESD Euro-Asia Division
- CHUM Chinese Union Mission
- EUD Inter-European Division
- IAD Inter-American Division
- IF Israel Field
- MENA Middle East & N. Africa Union Mission
- NAD North American Division
- NSD Northern Asia-Pacific Division
- SAD South American Division
- SID Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Div.
- SPD South Pacific Division
- SSD Southern Asia-Pacific Division
- SUD Southern Asia Division
- TED Trans-European Division
- WAD West-Central Africa Division



[MissionToTheCities.org](http://MissionToTheCities.org)



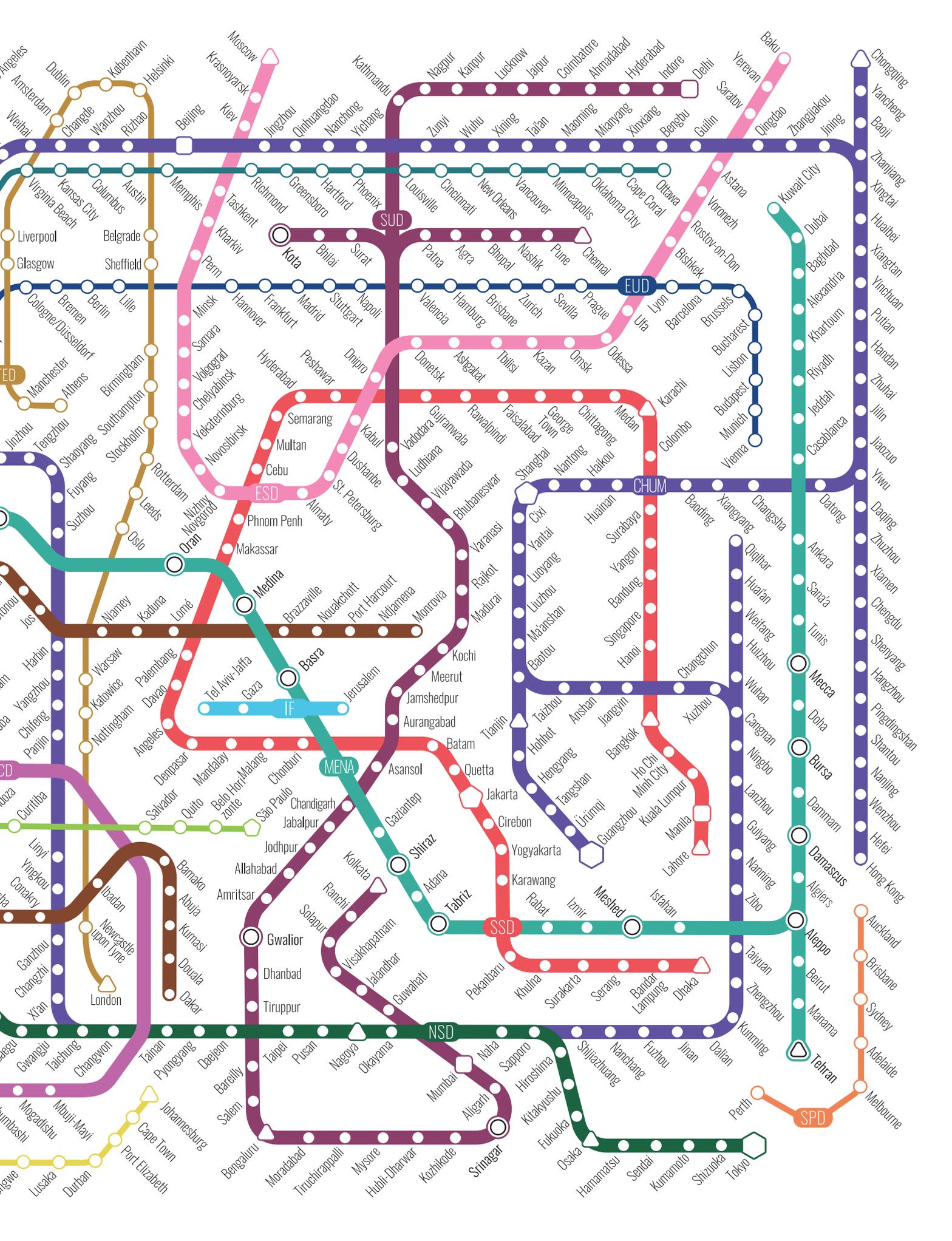
Scan here to find ways to pray for the cities!



**Adventist Mission**  
[AdventistMission.org](http://AdventistMission.org)

Please share your story of you, your church or your school praying for the cities, and send a picture of you with your completed map! Contact us at: [missiontothecities@adventistmission.org](mailto:missiontothecities@adventistmission.org)

This map is based on data compiled by Thomas Brinkhoff (citypopulation.de) and other sources. The Brinkhoff list focuses on agglomerations, so smaller cities on the periphery of larger cities are absorbed into the total population of the larger cities, even in cases where the smaller city has a population of over one million. For this reason, Brinkhoff's data for CHUM's 117 agglomerations represent more than 300 cities of one million+ within that field. (Thomas Brinkhoff: Major Agglomerations of the World, <https://www.citypopulation.de/world/Agglomerations.html>. Accessed Sept 2019)





*Global Mission is all about reaching the unreached for Jesus. We do this in a variety of ways, including the ministry of Global Mission pioneers, Urban Centers of Influence, “Waldensian Students,” and tentmakers. The following story was written by the wife of a tentmaker when he worked in the Middle East North Africa region. We’ve withheld their identities to protect them and the Adventist work there.*

# A Tentmaker Observed

I love observing how God is using my husband in exciting ways as a tentmaker.

I believe I live for God, as my husband does. But I’m not the teacher “out there,” patiently mentoring students, constantly searching for bridges of understanding, and carefully interacting with colleagues in a multicultural environment—every day, all day.

I’m not the one who made that first, startling declaration: “I want to be a tentmaker!”

I didn’t have to write a resume or search the Internet for teaching jobs across the Middle East North Africa region where we felt called to serve. But I did pray as he wrote a cover letter to his applications stating that as a creationist, he needed the freedom to be able to teach intelligent design in his classes. I knew it would severely limit our opportunities.

I watched for weeks as his applications received no responses and wondered whether this was

God’s will for us. We prayed and prayed for God’s direction. Then God opened two doors in the same country. One was working at a school that provided a generous salary that impressed us both; we could travel, save, live on one income. The contingencies were unnerving, though; he would be required to teach evolution as a scientific fact. The other was at a school that appeared perfectly comfortable—even pleased—at his desire to teach creation. They would give him the freedom to present God as the Creator of our world! At one-third the salary. I noticed how quickly he made the decision.

Now my husband is happily teaching intelligent design in his science classes. And just yesterday, God gave me an opportunity to observe my husband in his element. I had to wait at his school for most of the day because our car was having problems. I realized then that he had a specific reason for becoming a tentmaker: to share hope and encouragement.



## GLOBAL MISSION

The students came into his class with a wave of stories after a long weekend. He listened to each one, thoroughly involved with what was happening in their lives.

A parent-teacher conference with a mother and an energetic seventh-grader who was struggling with his grades brought on stories of my husband's own troubled year in seventh grade. At the end of the conference, he looked directly at the discouraged kid and assured him that God could help him focus his abundant energy in a positive direction. A few minutes later, a student intern stepped into the classroom. After listening to some of the challenges the intern was experiencing, I overheard my husband encourage him that God would help him. Then there was a quiet conversation in which a young, fellow teacher was reminded that God has special, hope-filled plans for his life. Before the day ended, another colleague stopped in for advice. He left with the assurance that someone was praying for him. And as a stack of papers was being stuffed into a bulging backpack, I noticed worksheets for the NEWSTART health curriculum that had been adapted for a restless group of eighth-graders.

But this tentmaking thing doesn't stop at the school door. It goes to the organic garden plot behind our house, where spinach and other produce are flourishing. Neighbors, hired garden workers, and colleagues receive bagfuls of delicious greens. Of course, I hear them asking questions about health along the way. And the old farmer, harvesting his wheat alone down the road, is delighted to get the helping hand and company of the spinach grower.

Tentmaking embraces everything I see happening around me. The Arabic guitar teacher needs encouragement for his dialysis treatments and learns more ways to fight his battle with diabetes. The guard who manages the property we rent is encouraged to leave the chores around our house for another day because Sabbath is a beautiful time of rest. And the colleague who delivers the message that our repaired car will be ready late Friday night returns to the mechanic with an explanation of our Sabbath day. The car is ready Friday afternoon. The messenger quietly asks if we could visit and explain the Sabbath to him.

I'm not able to see all the ways that God is using my husband—especially the most important things God is doing in the hearts of people. But what I *can* see reminds me that through the Holy Spirit, my tentmaker husband's witness can be constant, purposeful, and genuine.

I may not be a tentmaker, but my life has been deeply enriched as I've observed one.

### Tentmakers

Our church faces tremendous challenges in sharing Jesus in closed countries, countries that have shut their borders to organized churches and traditional missionaries. But a tentmaker can bypass these barriers! Total Employment is the Global Mission tentmaker program.

A tentmaker is an Adventist professional who chooses to follow the example of the Apostle Paul. Paul supported himself financially with his tentmaking trade, and as he talked with his customers, he looked for opportunities to lend a listening ear, meet a need, and share the good news of the gospel.

Like Paul, tentmakers mingle with people in the secular workplace while engaging in intentional, personal outreach. They form long-lasting relationships that enable them to touch hearts for Christ in ways they never could if they were official church workers.

Your donations to Global Mission help encourage and equip tentmakers by providing them with much-needed coaching, training, and spiritual support.

Tentmakers are making a difference for Jesus, but they need your help. Please support their ministry with your prayers and donations.

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Silver Spring, MD 20904-6601

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Oshawa, ON L1H 1H8

### Is God calling you to be a tentmaker?

Hundreds of Adventist professionals of all types are needed. To learn more, please visit [TotalEmployment.org](https://TotalEmployment.org).



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12

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## BRAZIL



# God's Mysterious Ways

**O**ne of the first converts to Adventism in Brazil accepted the Sabbath truth through the actions of a criminal and a drunk.

The story begins in Europe. While studying the Bible in his youth, the German-speaking Guilherme Belz discovered that God made only the seventh day holy. This discovery surprised him because his family observed Sunday. Guilherme asked his mother about it, and she took him to a pastor. But his answer that Christ had changed the day of rest wasn't very convincing.<sup>1</sup> Guilherme set aside the subject.

However, he encountered the Bible's teaching on the Sabbath again years later in a distant land.<sup>2</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, Guilherme emigrated from Pomerania (a region in present-day Germany and Poland) to Brazil. He settled in the German colony now called Gaspar Alto, located near Brusque,<sup>3</sup> and married Johanna, with whom he had six children.<sup>4</sup> Here the curious story of his conversion unfolded.

Around 1878, a man named Borchardt committed a crime. He ran away from Brusque and began working on a ship that sailed between Europe

and South America. In his travels, Borchardt met Adventist missionaries who asked him for an address to send literature to.<sup>5</sup> He gave them the address of Carlos Dreefke, his stepfather, who lived in Brusque.<sup>6</sup>

In 1880, a package containing 10 copies of *Stimme der Wahrheit* (the herald of truth), addressed to Carlos Dreefke, arrived at Davi Hort's grocery store, where all mail was delivered.<sup>7</sup> At first, Dreefke didn't want it because he thought he would have to pay for it. However, Hort encouraged him to open it to see what it was about.

Finding magazines in the package, Dreefke distributed them to nine people who were interested in the subject, and they received each new issue that came. Before long, Dreefke wished to stop receiving these deliveries. A teacher named Chikiwidowsky took

responsibility for the magazines and any costs. Later, Chikiwidowsky passed the responsibility to Dressler, a drunk in the area. This man, seeking money to buy drinks, requested more literature.<sup>8</sup> Dressler sold some of it to traders, who used the paper to wrap goods. This is how the Adventist publications reached Guilherme Belz.

After shopping in Brusque, Guilherme noticed that the wrapping papers for his purchased goods bore German printing. He read it and pondered the information for several weeks. After a while, he came across the book *Gedanken über das Buch Daniel*, a German translation of Uriah Smith's book *Thoughts on Daniel*, which dealt with the same subject on the wrapping paper. A chapter title caught Guilherme's attention: "The Papacy Changes the Day of Rest." Comparing the content of the materials to the Bible, he concluded that Sunday observance was a human tradition, and the seventh day is God's Sabbath.<sup>9</sup>

On the Saturday after coming to this realization, Guilherme couldn't eat his breakfast because he didn't feel comfortable going to work that day. When Johanna asked him what was wrong, Guilherme explained about the Sabbath. He decided not to go to work and invited his wife and his younger children to join him in honoring God. Although they didn't accept it immediately because they did not understand the matter, they observed the first Sabbath soon after, around 1890. His older married children didn't accept it easily—"Emília, the oldest, never accepted" the Adventist message. However, the Adventist community records the

Belz family as the first Sabbath keepers in Brazil—before any Adventist missionaries arrived!<sup>10</sup>

Through the testimony of the Belz family, their neighbors began to keep the Sabbath.<sup>11</sup> Around 1894 these Sabbath keepers were discovered by Albert Bachmeyer, a canvasser.

Albert shared his discovery with the missionary W. H. Thurston, who had recently arrived in Rio de Janeiro. Thurston contacted Frank Westphal, the first ordained pastor designated to work in South America, who was in Argentina at that time. Westphal arrived in Brusque on May 30, 1895, and baptized the converts, who formed the first Seventh-day Adventist church in Brazil.<sup>12</sup>

God had His way to lead a seeker to the truth. Through unusual instruments, He provided means for the gospel to come to hearts that craved more light.

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This article was prepared for the new online **Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists** (ESDA) by the Brazilian White Center—UNASP, a team of teachers and students at the Brazilian Ellen G. White Research Center at the Brazilian Adventist University. The team was supervised by Drs. Adolfo Semo Suárez, Renato Stencel, and Carlos Flávio Teixeira.

- 1 Michelson Borges, *A chegada do Adventismo ao Brasil* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2000), 59.
- 2 Henry Francisco Westphal, *Pionero em Sudamérica* (Libertador San Martín, ER: Universidad Adventista del Plata, 1997), 23.
- 3 Michelson Borges, "O pioneiro do Brasil," *Revista Adventista*, November 2005, 9.
- 4 Borges, *A chegada do Adventismo ao Brasil*, 59–61.
- 5 Germano Streithorst, "O início de nossa Obra," *Revista Adventista*, March 1958, 29, 30; E. H. Meyers, "Uma Recapitulação dos Começos na América do Sul," *Revista Mensal*, October 1928, 4, 5.
- 6 Meyers, "Uma Recapitulação dos Começos na América do Sul," 4, 5; Floyd Greenleaf, *Terra de Esperança: O Crescimento da Igreja Adventista na América do Sul* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 2011), 25.
- 7 Meyers, "Uma Recapitulação dos Começos na América do Sul," 4, 5.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 L. H. Olson, "Progressos da Obra na América do Sul," *Revista Adventista*, September 1956, 3, 4; G. Streithorst, "Santa Catharina," *Revista Adventista*, December 1924, 10; Greenleaf, *Terra de Esperança*, 25; Borges, *A chegada do Adventismo ao Brasil*, 59–61.
- 10 Borges, *A chegada do Adventismo ao Brasil*, 59–61; Henry Francisco Westphal, *Pionero em Sudamérica* (Libertador San Martín, ER: Universidad Adventista del Plata, 1997), 23.
- 11 Isolina A. Waldvogel, *História de nossa Igreja* (Tatuí, SP: Casa Publicadora Brasileira, 1965), 308.
- 12 Meyers, "Uma Recapitulação dos Começos na América do Sul," 4, 5; Rubens S. Lessa, "Nossa Trajetória," *Revista Adventista*, August 2009, 23.

A brand-new online Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) is now available at **encyclopedia.adventist.org**. Launched July 1 by the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference, the ESDA features over 2,200 articles on the history and structure, culture, theology, and more of the Adventist Church around the world. The content includes more than 4,000 photographs and other historically significant documents. Hundreds of new articles and photographs will be added to the encyclopedia in the upcoming weeks, months, and years. The ESDA draws on the expertise of hundreds of authors and editors worldwide from many cultures and ethnicities. It is a great tool, not only for those seeking to learn more about the Adventist Church but also for those looking to witness to others. The above story is based on a longer article from the encyclopedia.



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# Praying for Our Cities



**Charlyn Marsh** has taught and volunteered at Hillside Christian School for 30 years.

**D**id you know there are 580 cities in the world with a population of more than one million people? Did you know that in 45 of these cities there are less than 10 Adventists? Did you know that 43 of these cities have no Adventist congregations? Clearly, there is a great work to be done, and students at Hillside Christian School in Wausau, Wisconsin, are doing their part.

Every morning Hillside students pray for a specific city in the North American Division that has a population of one million or more.

It all began when Paula Sachse, a member of the Shepherd's House Seventh-day Adventist Church, talked to Charlyn Marsh, a teacher at Hillside Christian School, about a program she had heard about at Wisconsin Camp Meeting called "The Mission to the Cities Prayer Map." Paula was excited! She explained the program to Charlyn, that it was a part of the General Conference's "Reach the World" initiative. Paula then asked Charlyn if she was interested in the school participating. She was interested, so Paula volunteered to come to school and explain it to the students.

The heart of the program is a map that looks like a subway system map. On the map, each line represents a world division of the church. The stations on each line are the cities in that world division that have a population of more than one million. The goal is for volunteers to pray for cities on the map.

Paula gave each student a map, and they were excited when they saw it.

"This map looks cool. What is it?"

"There are this many big cities in the world?!"

"My parents would like to see this."

"Can we have extra maps to take home to our families?"

At the beginning of the year, the students and teacher discussed what line to start with. They voted to start praying for cities on the North American Division line. "We are almost done with the North American Division line," said seventh-grader Carson Sajdak. "I can't wait to start a new line."

For more information about Hillside Christian School, visit [wausauwi.adventistschoolconnect.org](http://wausauwi.adventistschoolconnect.org).

For more information about the Mission to the Cities Prayer Map, visit [MissionToTheCities.org/resources](http://MissionToTheCities.org/resources).

The map has caused a lot of enthusiasm and curiosity. At prayer time each morning, you might hear students muse "I wonder what city we are praying for today?" as they eagerly take the map out of their desks.

"Melbourne is the next station on the line," said one student. "Melbourne is not in the NAD. It's in Australia. Everyone knows that."

"There must be another Melbourne. Let's find out where it is," Charlyn replied and then led them in a discussion of where the city is and what they know about it. Students then look it up to see how far it is from Wausau and learn more about the city. "It's a great discussion starter," Charlyn said.

"There are a lot of big cities in North America I had never heard of," said seventh-grader Carlos Torres.

Questions on the back of the map have helped focus student prayers on others and has enriched prayer time at school. Instead of each student praying a variation of "Bless the people of Indianapolis," each student prays for a different aspect of the city for that day. One student will pray specifically for the leaders of that city. Another prays for the missionaries to that city. Another prays for the families and marriages in that city. Another prays for the health of the city's residents. Another prays for the education of the city's residents. Another prays for the homeless of the city. Another prays that everyone in the city will come to know Jesus.

"It's nice to have something specific to pray for," fourth-grader Ayden Martinez-Sanchez said.

"I like that we are all praying for the different things, but for the same place," said seventh-grader Emy Ruehl.

This prayer ministry has helped Hillside students look beyond their own little world. It can be quite shocking for an elementary student in a small, mostly Christian town to learn that there are billions of people in the world who need to know Jesus. "I had no idea there were so many people who haven't heard about Jesus," second-grader Riley Fisher said.

When they pray for the homeless and marriages and families of the city, they realize

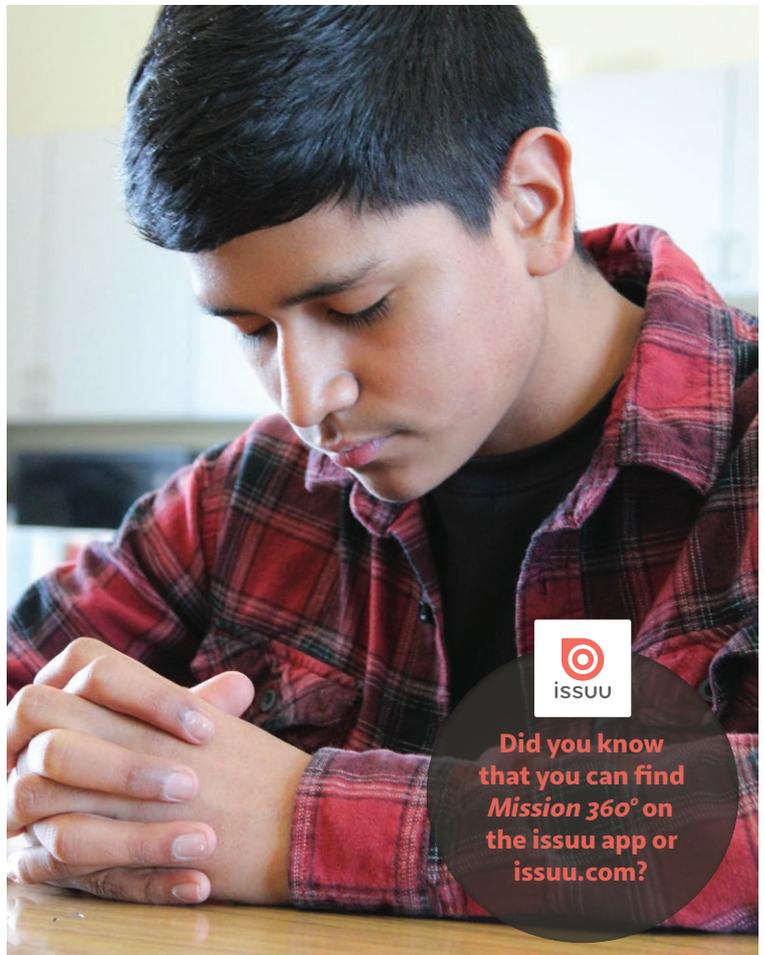
how blessed they are to have a home and family. "I am grateful for my parents and all they do for me," said seventh-grader Grace Hixon.

Hillside Christian School is a one-room school that has served Wausau, Wisconsin, for almost 70 years. Its mission is to develop leaders today who will walk with Jesus into eternity.

The Mission to the Cities Prayer Map has helped Hillside implement its mission by helping students see the needs of others and develop a more focused prayer experience and a deeper prayer life.

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Adapted with permission from the Lake Union *Herald*.





# LUALINDA'S GIFT

1



From Panama, Jasiel Ordóñez earned a nursing degree from Southwestern Adventist University and volunteered as a medical missionary in Nicaragua.

**T**he first time I saw her, she was walking through the village under the scorching mid-afternoon sun. Her body was heavily tilted to the right to balance out the burden on her left side. As she walked, she radiated a sense of determination and responsibility that made her look more like an adult than a child.

She was holding a toddler on her left hip and a vaccination record in her right hand. She was barefooted. The only piece of clothing that the little boy wore was a small T-shirt that barely covered his very swollen, parasite-infested abdomen. She was just a little girl who didn't look a day older than nine. Her name was Lualinda.

The one thing, however, that caught my attention the most about this little Miskito girl was her smile. As she hastily made her way through the village, she would often turn around and smile at me. So, I smiled back and caught up with her.

When I got closer, I noticed that her bottom teeth were full of stains and cavities. But that didn't stop Lualinda from smiling.

I had recently arrived to fulfill my missionary assignment at the Tasba Raya Adventist Mission located in the small Miskito community of Francia Sirpi on the Northern Atlantic coast of Nicaragua. It was vaccination week, and Lualinda was taking herself and her little brother to the clinic to get their shots. We were both headed toward the clinic, she as a patient and I as a nurse.

Lualinda didn't speak Spanish, and I knew very few words in Miskito, but that didn't stop her from making me feel welcomed.



2

As we walked in silence next to each other, my mind dwelt upon the story from John chapter 6 of the little boy with the two fish and the five loaves of bread. Like him, Lualinda didn't have many material things to offer. However, just like him, she didn't hesitate to offer what she did have: her smile and her friendship.

This is exactly why Jesus said that to enter the kingdom of heaven, we must all be like little children: pure in our motives, always ready to forgive, and never hesitant to give.

Lualinda's life is difficult, as are the lives of the other children who attend the Tasba Raya Adventist School. Most of them struggle to have shoes, clothes, appropriate healthcare, balanced nutrition, and school supplies.

From Lualinda I learned that it doesn't matter how much you have but what you choose to do with it. Whether it be time, resources, or talents, we all have something to offer others. No contribution to the well-being of someone else is ever too small or insignificant. Remember, even two fish and five loaves can go a long way when put in the hands of the Master.

- 1 Lualinda, *right*, and her siblings at school.
- 2 Lualinda and her brother at their home.
- 3 Tasba Raya Adventist Mission.
- 4 Neonatal follow-up.



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

Watch video stories about Adventist Volunteer Service missionaries at [m360.tv/avs](http://m360.tv/avs).



3

4



Did you know that you can find *Mission 360°* on the issuu app or [issuu.com](http://issuu.com)?



# FOUND IN TRANSLATION



**Duane McKey** is the president of Adventist World Radio.

**L**ily grew up in a country that continues to be, in her words, “a dark place of idolatry.” Christianity is, at best, barely tolerated, and many Christians find themselves facing jail or death.

Born into a non-Christian family, Lily was only five when both of her parents died. She and her four siblings were brought up as orphans. As a teenager, she met Norbu, a man 27 years her senior. He paid for her schooling, and they married.

Her husband came from a Christian background, and Lily desperately wanted to know more about Bible truth. She begged Norbu to let her take Bible studies, but he denied her request, saying

that only church leaders needed to read the Bible. She said, “I kept quiet and obeyed him, but I was not satisfied to just go to church on Sunday and only listen to the leaders.”

Twenty years went by, and Lily felt she still knew nothing about the Bible. One day, she met an Adventist woman named Kiba, and they became fast friends. Kiba introduced Lily to Tim Saxton—Adventist World Radio’s contact in that country—who was looking to have Adventist World Radio Bible lessons translated into the local language.

Lily accepted the translation job, in part because she needed the money for her son’s schooling. She was given a Bible and a set of lessons. Her

first challenge was that she had no idea how to use a keyboard for that language. Although she knew how to speak it, she hadn't learned to type it, but within a week she was fluent.

The first topic she had to translate was "Daniel's Prophecies." And from the outset, she felt conflicted. She wanted to do a good job, but what she was reading from the Bible contradicted many of her religious traditions.

As she continued to read, she was overcome by a high fever. As she lay in bed, she felt like evil spirits were whispering in her ear, saying, "Do not open the Bible; you will die!" She wouldn't listen to them and instead opened her Bible to find words that would make the spirits go away—so that she "would not die but have everlasting life in Christ." As she read, it felt like someone was punching her in the back, but she did not give up. Four days later, with her friend Kiba praying fervently by her side, her fever broke.

Lily continued to feel confused by what she was learning, so Adventist World Radio volunteered to send someone to help her with the translation. Selma arrived soon after and started studying the Bible with her. They would stay up until one o'clock in the morning, and Lily finally got the Bible studies she had hoped for all her life. It was transformative. "As I translated word by word, line by line, I was converted," Lily said.

She wanted to get baptized, but her husband was not on board. He would drink until late at night, and Lily would spend hours praying that he would stop drinking and come to the truth.

Around this time, an Adventist veterinarian named Ken moved his family into the area, and he asked Lily if she could help teach them the local language. Norbu greatly respected the veterinarian, so Lily asked Ken if he would speak with her husband and encourage him to stop drinking and attend church.

Even though Norbu wouldn't listen to his wife when she tried to talk to him about spiritual things, Lily could tell Ken what her husband would most benefit from hearing each week. Little by little, Norbu came to the truth as well. Their entire family started studying the Bible together. In 2019, Lily, Norbu, and their son were baptized in a remote location of this veiled country.

Since then, Lily has seen a complete change in her husband. He no longer drinks. It still means so much to her that they were baptized together. She



After Lily made a decision for baptism, she burned the remnants of her former spiritual practice.

said, "One stick can break more easily, but since there are three of us—three sticks—we are strong, and no one can break us."

Lily sends her heartfelt thanks to all who support Adventist World Radio projects in countries like hers. Now her life's work is to reach others in this veiled country. "Jerusalem is done. Now I want to go to Judea. Then Samaria. I just want to reach as far as I can with the Bible truth I have learned, which has changed my life!"



Adventist World Radio (AWR) is the international radio ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. AWR's mission is to bring the gospel to the hardest-to-reach people of the world in their own languages. To watch incredible stories just like Lily's, visit Adventist World Radio at [awr.org/video](http://awr.org/video).

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# HOSPITALITY RIGHT ON TIME



From Argentina, **Elias Orlando** and his wife, **Melina Schimpf**, serve as missionaries in Cyprus.

If I've learned anything in life, it's that if you take care of God's business, He'll take care of yours. He'll sustain you, and open doors that you would never have imagined!

My wife Melina and I were stranded in London with 200 pounds (90 kilograms) of luggage. Our final destination was Cyprus, where we would serve as volunteer missionaries, shepherding a small Adventist community in the city of Larnaca.

When we started our journey, we were still missing some important documents that we'd need to get into Cyprus. However, we had been assured they'd be ready to pick up in London.

Little did we imagine the documents would take four weeks to arrive. We had planned to stay for only seven days! If you've been to London, you know how expensive things are there. We didn't know anyone in the area and had no idea what to do. So we prayed a lot and waited for God to reveal a plan. And He had one!

I've learned that when I don't understand what's happening in my life, I can choose to put myself in God's hands. In time, He'll decipher the mystery. He'll connect me with people who will bless me, and He'll help me realize that His plan was the best thing that could have happened to me.

And so it was. In this cloud of uncertainty, the Lord put us in the path of a special person. Her name was Rocio. We met her the first Friday night we spent in London, just before we preached at a local church. Without knowing us or our need, she invited us to stay in her home for as long as we needed to. Incredible! For us, that gesture was like a cold glass of water in the middle of the desert! We gratefully accepted her offer.

I asked Rocio why she did this, and I'll never forget her response. "Elias, I always dreamed of having a room to receive people who need help, just like the Shunammite woman in the Bible who hosted the prophet Elisha. I asked God for a room,

and He gave me one. I've hosted many people. I'm very happy doing this, and God has blessed me.”

Rocio's testimony captivated me. She taught me so much about hospitality and self-denial. When we settled in the room at her apartment, we realized it wasn't a guest room but her own room. She had chosen to sleep with her daughter so that we would feel more welcome.

A few weeks later, we finally arrived in Larnaca. The local church leaders had rented us an apartment for a week to give us time to look for long-term accommodations. But as soon as we started looking, we realized how difficult finding something was going to be. Because it was springtime, Cyprus was filled with tourists. Most of the rentals we found were available for only one week and very expensive.

Soon, we had only one day left before we needed to move. We spent most of it with the pastor searching for a home, but we found nothing. Facing uncertainty again, we chose to trust God.

That afternoon, we received an unexpected call. It was from Ina, an Adventist church member from London, calling from her apartment on the outskirts of Larnaca. We didn't know her, but she asked us to come to visit. We were hesitant at first because we didn't have a moment to lose, but she was so insistent, we finally agreed.

When we arrived, Ina greeted us with great affection. After a brief conversation, she invited us to tour the apartment. We didn't understand why, but we graciously agreed. At the end of the tour, she said, “I'm leaving in a few hours for my home in London. If you want, you can stay here as long as you need to. The house will be empty for several months, and you don't need to pay me anything.”

We were stunned.

“Is this a joke?” the pastor asked.

“Not at all,” she replied with a smile.

“Why?” the pastor continued. “Wouldn't it be better for you to rent it for income?”

“Perhaps,” Ina replied, “but God is very good to me, and I feel that helping the mission at Larnaca is the least I can do for Him. Besides, I've seen that everything I give God, He returns to me with interest.”

Ina's words reminded me of Rocio. The two women had giving hearts, and as a consequence, they saw the hand of God working in their lives.

We stayed in Ina's apartment for a month, and it was a tremendous blessing. I'd like to publicly thank Ina and Rocio for their practical Christian spirit, for showing me how to give without expecting anything in return. We can trust in God, who always provides!

## We didn't know anyone in the area and had no idea what to do. So we prayed a lot and waited for God to reveal a plan. And He had one!



Rocio, left, with her daughter Carolina.



Ina and her husband, Igor.



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

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