

mission



STORIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

PRODUCED BY
THE OFFICE OF
ADVENTIST MISSION
VOLUME 11
NUMBER 3

- 
- 4 The Crazy Commute
 - 16 Forgiveness for the Unknown Man
 - 22 Global Mission and the Drug Trade
 - 24 ADRA's Dramatic Rescue
 - 26 The Tip of My Finger Was All God Needed

EDITORIAL

Recently, I traveled from California to Mexico to attend a mission festival at Montemorelos University.

As I boarded the plane, I had just one concern: to be able to finish preparing some urgent material on my laptop without being bothered by anyone.

I found my seat and began working, hoping the seat next to me would remain empty. Unfortunately, my hope was short-lived; a man came and said, "Excuse me, this is my seat."

Without much enthusiasm, I said, "Welcome," and quickly returned to my work. But the man wanted to talk.

"Where are you from?" he asked.

"From Washington, DC," I replied while I continued to type.

Over the next several minutes, he continued to ask questions, and I continued to respond with short sentences. Finally, he left me alone.

As we approached our destination, he started asking questions again. "Are you a Christian?"

Surprised, I responded: "Yes, I'm a Seventh-day Adventist pastor. But . . . how did you know?"

"I just noticed some of the things you were writing," he said.

"Really? Well, I'm a Christian pastor, and I was just preparing some material to be used by the church." Now I started to ask questions too. "Where are you from?" I asked.

He told me that he was from a country in the Middle East, and then quickly added that he now lived in Texas.

My reluctance to talk gave way to curiosity. "So, what do you do in Texas?"

"I'm a university professor," he said.

Because he had asked about my religion, I asked about his. Without hesitation, he responded, "I'm a Christian too."

Then he asked me a pointed question: "Are you on a mission?"

"Yes," I said. "I'm traveling to an Adventist university in Mexico for a mission festival. Are you on a mission?"

"Yes, I'm on a mission too," he replied enthusiastically.

"What mission?" I asked.

"I'll give classes at a university in Monterrey," he replied.

"Classes? What will be the specific mission that you will do during these days?"

"I'll give classes at the university. This will be my mission."

What he said next greatly impacted me and sounded like something I would hear in a missiology class.

"The university classes will be my mission because 'Christians are always in mission.'"

That day, I learned a valuable lesson that can guide us as we prayerfully move forward with Mission Refocus. In every time, in every place, Christians are *always* in mission.

Erton C. Kohler

Executive Secretary of the General Conference



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

CONTENTS

- 4 **The Crazy Commute**
- 6 **Answered Prayers in Tokyo**
- 8 **Amazon Life Saver**
- 10 **God at the Intersection**
- 12 **Growing a Healthy Church**
- 14 **Doing the Next Right Thing**
- 16 **Forgiveness for the Unknown Man**
- 18 **Hey, That's My Island!**
- 20 **Project Joseph**
- 22 **Global Mission and the Drug Trade**
- 24 **ADRA's Dramatic Rescue**
- 26 **The Tip of My Finger Was All God Needed**
- 28 **The Most Important Teaching**
- 30 **Storytime with Aunt Marita**

ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

PHOTO BY CALEB HAAKENSON

Outdoor food markets are popular in the West African country of Ghana. These markets draw hundreds of people bringing homegrown goods to sell every week. While filming at the market in Ghana for Mission Spotlight, I met this young man. He brought a truckful of yams, one of Ghana's most popular foods.

Chairman: Erton Köhler

Editor: Laurie Falvo

Consulting Editor: Gary Krause

Editorial Assistant: Marietta Fowler

Contributing Editors: Rick Kajjura, Elbert Kuhn, Andrew McChesney, Hensley Mooroooven, Teen Nielsen, Ricky Oliveras, Karen J. Porter, Claude Richli, Gerson Santos, Karilyn Suvankham, David Trim

Editorial Advisors: Petras Bahadur, Jose Cortes, Jr., Kleber Gonçalves, Daniel Jiao, Sun Hwan Kim, Wayne Krause, Bledi Leno, Silas Muabsa, Paul Muasya, Umesh Nag, Josiah Nwarungwa, Joni Oliveira, Bill Quispe, Florian Ristea, Clifmond Shameerudeen, Reinaldo Siqueira, Daniel Stojanovic, Jean Taranyuk, Samuel Telemaque, Anthony WagenerSmith, Gregory Whitsett

Design: 316 Creative

Mission 360 is a quarterly magazine produced and copyrighted ©2023 by the General Conference Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists. All rights reserved. The contents may not be reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the publisher.

12501 Old Columbia Pike

Silver Spring, MD 20904-6601, USA

Telephone: (301) 680-6005

Questions? Comments? Email us at Questions@adventistmission.org.

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 3

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

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

FOLLOW US ON





The Crazy Commute

It's always an adventure getting to Bere Adventist Hospital, where my wife, Audrey, and I occasionally volunteer. This time, our trip went like this:

We left our Oregon home on a Tuesday evening and stayed overnight in a hotel near the airport to catch a 5 am flight the next day. Wednesday morning, we flew to Seattle, Washington, where, after a 12-hour layover, we had a 9-hour flight to Türkiye. Next was an 8-hour flight to N'Djamena, Chad, where we arrived at 2:00 am. After going through immigration and customs, we had to make a choice: should we catch a couple of hours of much-needed sleep or head to the station to catch the 5 am flight to Kelo? We decided to keep moving.

As the bus headed south, it made several stops to exchange passengers. At Bongor, Audrey and I got out to stretch our legs. We walked among vendors selling potatoes, taro, beef, lamb, goat, chicken, apples, bananas, mangos, watermelon, carrots, lettuce, and some veggies I didn't recognize. My favorite thing to see was the huge piles of fried grasshoppers!

We arrived in Kelo a little after noon, anticipating that Charles, a missionary from Bere, would pick us up. He wasn't there. About 30 minutes later, he called to explain that his engine had died while driving through a flooded area. The car was being towed back to Bere by the only tractor in the region, and he was trying to make other arrangements to get us. An hour later, Charles told us he'd hired two motorcycle taxis. We waited an hour and a half. They didn't show up.

During our journey, I had noticed that the sole of one of my sandals was starting to fall off. I now asked around around for a cobbler and was directed to a man sitting under an umbrella fixing shoes. In a few minutes, I had a repaired sole for a small price.

At about 4 pm, I started to worry. If we got started too late, darkness would increase the cost of the ride and our chances of a fall on the flooded, muddy roads.

Finally, the drivers arrived. They strapped our four plastic luggage boxes on one motorcycle, leaving the driver sitting on the gas tank, and Audrey and I climbed on the back of the other. Both bikes were overloaded.

Now the fun began. After riding through Kelo, the drivers diverted onto a footpath barely wide

enough for the bikes. I guessed they were trying to avoid the flooded conditions of the main road. We wound through small villages and stretches of farmland and plowed through puddles that reached our feet. Each rotation of the tires resulted in a strong clicking sound. I wondered whether we were going to break down.

About an hour into the trip, we reconnected to the main road. It was getting dark, and we were going through deeper water and getting stuck in the mud. I had to push the bike several times in this area, and we nearly fell over a few times.

When it was completely dark, we reached a larger section of water. We rode about 100 feet and hit a rock or log that stopped us abruptly. I jumped off to push again, this time in water up to my knees. The drivers told us they would push the bikes on a different route and join us farther down the road.

To our surprise, Audrey and I were joined by Charles, who had walked about four miles to help us navigate this deep section of water. We walked more than a mile through water that varied from ankle deep to the level of Audrey's waist. How thankful I was that my sandal was repaired! After about an hour, we arrived at dry ground and met the drivers. Charles insisted on walking back.

After completing the last few miles, we finally arrived at Bere Adventist Hospital. We were so happy to see our friends and grateful for a shower and bed. We left home Tuesday evening and arrived in Bere Friday night. Soon we would start our long days of surgery. But now, all I could think about was how good it felt to be clean and able to drift off to sleep. Thank you, God, for helping us get here safely and giving us rest!



From the United States, Doctors **Greg and Audrey Shank** served five years at Koza Adventist Hospital in Cameroon, West Africa.

Your generous and systematic mission offerings help support the ministry of hundreds of missionaries. Please give at AdventistMission.org/donate.



Discover the difference missionaries are making at m360.tv/missionary.



Take **Mission 360** with you wherever you go! Download the **issuu** app.



TOKYO



1

Answered Prayers in Tokyo

Meet Saori, the first person baptized from the Mission Unusual—Tokyo! initiative



Joshua Sagala
Office of
Adventist
Mission

For nearly 50 years, Terumi has been Kaoru's best friend. They met in academy and have remained close ever since. Terumi is a volunteer who has served with her husband on Mission Unusual—Tokyo! projects for about a year.¹

Kaoru had always hoped that Saori, her eldest daughter, would accept Jesus and be baptized, but the young woman showed no interest.

Kaoru was hospitalized in 2021 with a potentially crippling brain disease.

"At that time, the doctor told me she had a chance to live," Kaoru's husband said. "However, the chances of her regaining consciousness were very small. It was difficult for me to accept this reality."

Terumi was shocked by the news. She quickly arranged for her academy friends to lift Kaoru in prayer. "With the power of prayer and God's grace, the prayer was answered," Terumi said. "Kaoru woke up from her state of unconsciousness!"

When Saori saw how Terumi and her friends had come together to pray for her mother and that her mother was healed, she felt more aware of God's existence. She looked for her Bible and started to read it.

As she read, Saori remembered that her mother's great hope was to see her get baptized. She started looking for an Adventist church nearby, but because of COVID-19 restrictions, most congregations were closed.

Fortunately, Saori found an Adventist church that was still open. "I contacted the pastor and told him that I wanted to be baptized on my birthday," Saori said.

Excited about the change in Saori's life, Terumi connected her with the church planting team of Mission Unusual—Tokyo! Since then, Saori has created strong ties with the team's volunteer workers.

Saori joined their small group online meeting every Friday night. "We grow spiritually with each other by sharing and praying together every single week," a volunteer named Chizu said. It's so encouraging to see some good things happening to Saori."

Chizu became a mentor to Saori and gave her personal, wholistic support. A small discipleship team formed as she, Saori, and a volunteer named Ivy participated in NEWSTART, a health program based on eight key lifestyle principles.

"We spent time together experiencing all eight parts of it," Ivy said, "walking . . . eating healthy, drinking enough water, and worshiping God together in my apartment."

Saori said, “The way of life of the Adventists around me boosted my confidence toward baptism. I saw genuine love, care, and support from this group. I am happy I can meet with these people. God is real!”

Love can break through the hardest things. This includes peoples’ hearts and steel and concrete cities, such as Tokyo, Japan.

Please pray for Saori, the first person baptized from the Mission Unusual—Tokyo! initiative. And please pray for the missionaries, the Global Mission pioneers, and the volunteers. We believe God has big plans for Tokyo!



2

- 1 Terumi, right, and Kaoru
- 2 Saori with her parents
- 3 Saori being baptized by Pastor Obara, associate program director of Mission Unusual—Tokyo!

1 To reach people in this city, church leaders in Japan invited the General Conference and the Northern Asia-Pacific Division to partner with them to create Mission Unusual—Tokyo!, a comprehensive church-planting and disciple-making movement. Tokyo is the largest city in the world, making it a focus for Mission to the Cities and Global Mission. Mission Unusual—Tokyo! involves a team of missionaries, Global Mission pioneers, urban centers of influence, Global Mission Centers, volunteers, and tentmakers in a concerted effort to reach the entire city for Jesus.



3

Please pray!

Yure Gramacho, program director for Mission Unusual—Tokyo! requests that you pray that:

- the new disciples in Tokyo will experience a deepening of their faith and a growing relationship with God
- a nurturing Christian community will form around the new disciples
- a strong discipleship framework to support and guide the new believers will be established and that they receive guidance from experienced individuals who can help them navigate their faith journey effectively
- a new urban center of influence, scheduled to start its activities soon, becomes a place of belonging for the local community and fosters a sense of connection and mutual love among the residents of the area
- the newly trained, equipped, and deployed local church planters effectively bless their neighborhood, make

disciples within their communities, and initiate home worship gatherings

- the mission work in Tokyo will continue making a meaningful impact on the lives of individuals and the broader community. We ask God for guidance and opportunities to share the message of His love, reaching hearts and transforming lives

If God is moving on your heart to support this unprecedented program, please give at Global-Mission.org/giving.



Watch “Answered Prayers in Tokyo” at m360.tv/s2324.



Amazon Life Saver



Flavio Ferraz is a TV host and writer for Hope Channel Brazil.

never intended to study medicine just for the sake of money, to have a good life,” Conceição said. “Since I was a kid, I dreamed of going to medical school to care for lives, to care for people.” Conceição is a doctor who volunteers aboard one of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency’s (ADRA’s) mission boats, the 29th *Luzeiro*.

Conceição is from Belém in the State of Pará, Brazil, and works in the public health-care system and a private clinic. She wanted to do something for Jesus but didn’t feel qualified. “I kept looking for a gift,” she said. “I asked God, ‘Lord, what gift do I have? I don’t know how to preach or do anything of the sort.’”

Then Conceição learned of an opportunity to serve on one of ADRA’s mission boats. She became the first volunteer doctor to join the 29th *Luzeiro*’s medical staff, and here she understood her gift and found her purpose.

Conceição relieves the pain and illnesses that affect villagers living along the Amazon River. “All

of them suffer from the local parasitic diseases as well as other diseases,” she said. “They have nowhere to go for treatment. We’ve also found people who suffer from psychological illnesses, people who are depressed and anxious.”

Recently, 62-year-old Manoel had a quick health checkup on the boat. He lives on Combu Island, and the arrival of the *Luzeiro* has benefited him on several occasions.

“This has been very good,” Manoel said. “I just learned that my blood pressure is steady. . . . Thankfully, my health is doing great. It is good to know I’m OK. We feel that they are putting their heart into the work. . . . They do an amazing job.”

Caring for people allows doctors and missionaries such as Conceição to talk to people on a deep level. “It’s very hard to reach a patient in pain who has no medication,” Conceição said. “I have encountered patients who said, ‘How can God exist if I’m suffering this much?’ But when you go there and minister to the sick, treating their illnesses, then you can talk about God’s love, and they understand that very well.”

For Conceição, serving on the mission boat isn’t easy. She struggles to get across the ramp and down the stairs, and, all too often, her workload is heavy. “I have a hip-to-knee prosthetic implant, which makes many things impossible for me,”

Conceição said. "I thought I wouldn't be able to go from the dock to the boat. Sometimes, it is very hard, but being here is worth it."

"Her mobility doesn't prevent her from doing good to anyone," boat captain Mauro Paixão said. "She is an incredibly warm person, always helping us no matter the circumstances."

Eduardo, the regional ADRA director, said, "Here's a fun fact about Dr. Conceição. Every day, I ask her, 'Doctor, how many appointments this morning?' She will reply, 'Eduardo, you can schedule 24 to 25.' Then I go and schedule the appointments as people arrive. At night, Dr. Conceição will ask me how many she covered. And I respond, 'Doctor, you actually covered over 42 appointments!'"

Conceição fulfilled her dreams of becoming a doctor and finding her gift. For her, the *Luzeiro* project represents God's plan for her life.

"ADRA is part of my life," Conceição said. "Whenever I come to the *Luzeiro*, I am able to help lots of people. I leave this boat feeling renewed. I never feel like I am doing as much for these people as God has been blessing me with their presence. This is how I express all the gratitude I have in my heart."

- 1 Conceição aboard the 29th *Luzeiro*
- 2 Conceição examining her patient Manoel



Watch this story in action at m360.tv/s2316.



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.



vividfaith

A service of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, VividFaith connects people with mission opportunities. It's the central place to find opportunities to serve and to share your faith. Use it to advertise mission openings, find qualified applicants, share urgent needs, tell your amazing stories, and stay connected with missionaries. vividfaith.com





God at the Intersection



Share the digital version with friends via the issuu app.

want you to meet a family,” the message read. Diana* slowly put down the phone, thinking about her friend’s invitation. She and her husband, Oswald, had had an exhausting week as frontline workers in the Middle East. They were just leaving Sabbath worship at their house church. It was a sweltering summer day, and they wanted to get home.

“Maybe another day?” Diana texted back.

“No! They traveled long to see you. Please come over,” was the instant reply.

That’s how, sitting together at their friend’s house, Diana and Oswald found themselves immersed in an extraordinary visit with Yusuf, his wife, Dilara, and their young son.

Early in the conversation, Yusuf asked Oswald about his and his wife’s faith. Oswald responded that they were Seventh-day Adventists. Yusuf and Dilara spoke almost in unison. “But we thought you were Christians!”

Oswald assured them that Adventists believe in Christ. He was explaining the biblical relationship of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit when, without warning, the boy became agitated and insisted on leaving. The visit quickly ended, but Yusuf was emphatic. “We want to know more. We have to meet again.” Diana and Oswald promised to send the couple a link to a brief explanation of Seventh-day Adventist beliefs.

Yusuf and Dilara read the information on the website carefully, and the next time they met with Diana and Oswald, they launched into a long list of questions. The frontline workers responded as carefully and simply as possible, but when they tried to enter a deeper discussion of biblical truths, again, something happened to cut off the conversation. The same kind of thing happened in their following meetings.

Diana and Oswald began sensing why the little boy had been agitated at their first visit. A supernatural battle was taking place right in front of them. They began bathing each visit in much prayer.

One day, Diana and Oswald drove near Yusuf and Dilara’s neighborhood after being out of town for a few weeks. After a bus in front of them stopped to let off passengers, Diana caught a glimpse of a man and woman carrying heavy bags across the street. Her mind raced as she tried to place what seemed familiar about them. As the bus began to pull away, she grabbed her husband’s arm and cried, “Don’t go! That’s Yusuf and Dilara!” She jumped out of the car, shouted their names, and gestured frantically to get their attention. Startled, Yusuf and Dilara froze, as surprised as Diana and Oswald had been to notice them in traffic.

As the four friends hurriedly squeezed the bags into the car, Yusuf kept repeating, “It was

God who wanted us to meet today.” He explained breathlessly how they had missed their first bus, causing them to arrive 20 minutes later than planned. Diana and Oswald exchanged surprised glances. They, too, had experienced a delay that put them at the intersection behind the bus at the very moment Yusuf and Dilara needed help getting home.

Once inside their apartment, Yusuf and Dilara began asking Oswald and Diana more questions about their faith. They wanted to know whether there were other Seventh-day Adventists in the area, and if so, whether they met to worship.

Oswald invited the couple to visit their house church. On the day they attended, Oswald had just begun an explanation of the biblical Sabbath when the phone rang. Yusuf and Dilara’s son had been in an accident at school, and they needed to get him.

Once again, Diana and Oswald looked at each other. The enemy was working again! But this time, despite the interruption, the animated conversation could continue as they drove together to the school. They were all grateful to learn that the boy was all right.

It’s exciting for Diana and Oswald to be part of the journey that Yusuf and Dilara have just begun. “We have no guarantee it will be easy,” Diana admits. “The enemy works hardest in the face of God’s plans. Please pray for God’s continued protection of Yusuf and Dilara’s honest interest and that He will lead us in sharing His love and Word.”

* All names have been changed.

As told
to **Kathie
Lichtenwalter**,
Middle East
and North
Africa Union



GLOBAL MISSION

Global Mission is all about reaching the unreached for Jesus in the 10/40 Window, which includes the Middle East and North Africa. We do this in various ways, including through the service of Global Mission pioneers, urban centers of influence, Waldensian Students, and tentmakers who use their careers to share Christ.

Please support Global Mission in this region with your prayers and donations at **Global-Mission.org/giving**.



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



Growing a Healthy Church

1



Ricky Oliveras,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

Adventists in Serbia have made meaningful connections with people through healthful activities. Health clubs have drawn a lot of interest from the community. Groups go hiking, exercise together, hold health lectures, and conduct cooking demonstrations.

If not for these activities, the participants might never meet an Adventist or be exposed to the Adventist message.

Marija, a church member there, says, “Here, it’s important to build friendships first, and then you can say who you are. Otherwise, they will reject you from the start.”

Personal connection is how Jesus ministered when He was on earth. So, these church members are following His lead by implementing Christ’s method of ministry. This is key to building relationships, especially in growing cities such as Belgrade, where people tend to focus on their own busy lives.

“There are a lot of skyscrapers here filled with people who don’t know or want to know about God,” Marija says. “That’s the challenge here. It is a secular country.”

Just a few years ago, the part of the city known as Novi Belgrade had no Adventist church. Anytime the church members wanted to gather, they had to travel far to the nearest church. In 2020,

a portion of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped establish a church in Novi Belgrade. They were able to get a building with two levels. They hold church services on the second floor and are renovating the lower level to be an urban center of influence.

“It means a lot to us because we have our own services now and can invite friends,” says Ljilja, another church member. “The facility is very good, and we are grateful to God.”

“We are going to have the health clubs here,” Marija says. “We are going to teach people how to cook healthy food. . . . There are a lot of people here who like crafts, so maybe we’ll teach making soap from healthy ingredients as well as decoupage and quilting.”

Your contributions to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering have been received with gratitude. The new space feels like home to this congregation, and hopefully, it will allow them to grow.

“I am grateful to those who helped us, all the brothers and sisters from all over the world,” Ljilja says. “We prayed for more than 20 years to have this church, and that’s why we are also ready to give our offerings to those who need to have their own church.”

“I’m grateful to God that He gave people the will to give,” Marija says. “That tells us we have to work and justify what we got. We have to pray for God

to use us where we are and fill this building so that we will have to find another one.”

Please pray for this church as they open their urban center of influence in a new part of Belgrade. Thank you for giving to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering in 2020 and making this congregation's dream a reality!

- 1 In 2020, a portion of your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped established this church in Novi Belgrade, a municipality of Belgrade, Serbia
- 2 The church members host a variety of activities, such as hiking, to meet the needs of their community
- 3 Novi Belgrade is a secular city filled with thousands of people who don't know God. The new urban center of influence will help this church reach out to them for Jesus

Urban Centers of Influence

Global Mission supports wholistic mission to the cities through the ministry of dozens of urban centers of influence. These centers follow Christ's method of ministry to meet people's needs and start new groups of believers. To learn more, visit MissiontotheCities.org/urban-centers-of-influence. Please support urban centers of influence by scanning this QR code or visiting Global-Mission.org/giving.



Watch this story at m360.tv/s2337.





Doing the Next Right Thing



Marietta Fowler was the editorial assistant for the Office of Adventist Mission when she wrote this story.

As many countries face the task of helping refugees adapt to new lives, one may ask, “What can I do to help?”

This was the question Greg and Amy considered after Greg’s grandfather moved out of their house in the United States. They wondered how they could put their now-available basement to use.

They decided to pray about it. “As I was praying about what to do with our empty in-law apartment, the thought came to me that we could rent it and make some money,” Greg said. “But at the same time, I heard about refugees who needed homes. So, I contacted our community services leader in the Chesapeake Conference in Maryland and left a message asking whether he knew of anyone who had been bused from the border of Mexico and needed a place to stay for a while. He immediately called back and said, ‘Thank you for offering. Yes. We have a family.’”

Greg and Amy’s decision came with many questions: Was the family Christian? Did they drink or smoke? Were they honest people? If there were children, would they be well-behaved? But the information they received was limited.

“All we knew was that they were a family from Venezuela and the names and ages of the children,” Amy said. “And that they were going to be homeless if somebody didn’t offer them a place to stay.”

Greg and Amy prayed and deliberated about what to do for several hours. Then Amy

remembered something that one of her close friends at church frequently said: Do the next right thing. “The next right thing in this situation was to take them in,” Amy said. “So, we decided to extend hospitality to them.”

But Greg and Amy aren’t the only ones who have questions about such a move. “People ask, ‘How could you do this? It’s such a big thing,’” Greg said. “We spent 20 years involved in mission work in Asia, and I think the way we do this is just by doing the next right thing, step by step. God stretches you if you’re willing to be stretched.”

Like Greg and Amy, church groups and individuals in cities around the globe are helping refugees in various ways.

In Vienna, Austria, an urban center of influence offers German classes and assists refugees with filling out government forms. The center also has a clothing distribution program. And once a week, people can come to have a nourishing meal and pick up food supplies for their families.

In the United States, a refugee ministry in Clarkston, Georgia, helps families by offering basic food items when they first come into the country. They also provide furniture and mattresses.

The Adventist Learning Center in Beirut, Lebanon, serves Syrian refugee children. Many students have experienced traumatic events, and the staff aims to provide them with a stable learning environment. The center interacts with the parents, too, by offering literacy and English classes in the evenings.

The staff at the Adventist university in Medellin, Colombia, supports a special initiative that helps migrant families start small businesses. The equipment given to the families includes ovens, sewing machines, mobile food carts, and printers. The university staff teaches the migrants how to use the equipment, sell their products, and manage their business.

Fleeing to a new country is a stressful process that involves language barriers, financial challenges, and cultural adjustment. Refugees in your community need your help. Prayerfully consider how you can help them. If you need more ideas, visit the Mission to the Cities website, MissiontotheCities.org.

Greg and Amy have made a difference. Greg says, “I encourage you that if you want to make a difference in your community to show God’s love, choose to do the next right thing. God will show you what it is and help you make it happen.”

- 1 Greg and Amy
- 2 Guests enjoying a meal at an urban center of influence in Vienna, Austria
- 3 Children exercising at the Adventist Learning Center in Beirut, Lebanon
- 4 Kelli helping refugees shop at a ministry in Clarkston, Georgia

MISSION to the CITIES

Mission to the Cities is an essential part of the “I Will Go” 2020–2025 strategic focus voted by the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Global Mission supports Mission to the Cities by making disciples among urban, unreached people groups. Your sacrificial giving provides funding to support pioneers and urban centers of influence in starting new groups of believers.

To learn how you can help share hope and healing among the urban unreached, visit Global-Mission.org/giving.



See this story at m360.tv/s2326.

2



3



4





Now retired, **Lester Devine** served as director of the Ellen G. White/Adventist Research Center in Avondale, Australia.

Forgiveness for the Unknown Man

Brian Mansfield Dunn (1940–1965) was the first Seventh-day Adventist in mission service in the South Pacific Islands to lose his life by violent means in the course of duty. The following story is adapted from his biographical article in the online *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists*. We invite you to visit encyclopedia.adventist.org to enjoy more stories about Adventist missionaries.



1

Brian Mansfield Dunn was born in England on June 29, 1940. He graduated in 1964 from the nursing course at Sydney Adventist Hospital in Australia and then married Valmae Ruth Benham, also a nursing graduate, on December 29, 1964. The young couple left Sydney for Atoifi Adventist Hospital, then a 90-bed facility, on the island of Malaita in the Solomon Islands on November 23, 1965, to begin their term of mission service.

Less than a month later, on Thursday evening, December 16, 1965, Brian was returning from providing medicine for a patient when, standing at his own front door, he was speared out of the darkness.

Valmae, recalling the tragic night, said, “Brian turned to open the screen door to come back inside the house when he suddenly called out to me, ‘Quick, honey, I’ve got a spear right through me.’”¹ The spear, several feet long, was made from a piece of sharpened steel reinforcing rod and had to be cut with a hacksaw by one of the men who came to help. The vibration from this lengthy process was excruciating, and Valmae firmly held the spear to reduce the movement as much as possible. With the spear protruding from his chest and his back, there was no way Brian could get comfortable or lie down, but morphine supplied by a priest who came to assist must have helped somewhat.

Aided down the long hill to the boat after midnight, Brian climbed aboard the 18-foot Catholic mission boat himself because doing so was less uncomfortable than being helped by others. Because he was unable to lie down, the back was cut off a dispensary chair, and Brian sat on this all through the night during the long boat trip. He

was supported by two young men who constantly sponged his brow.

The group sailed through rough seas at times until they reached Kwailabesi on the other side of the island. There, Brian was transferred aboard the larger and faster mission vessel, *Dani*, which sailed for the Anglican mission hospital at Fuambu on a northern point of the island. Contacted by radio, the Anglican mission boat *Bradley* set out to meet the *Dani*, and the crew supplied penicillin and morphine before arriving at Fuambu on Friday afternoon around 3:30. Because the road to the airstrip some 15 miles distant was rough, the *Dani* took Brian farther along the coast as near as possible to the airstrip, where the waiting pilot, to save time, taxied the aircraft off the strip and down to the beach. Once on board, Brian was flown to Honiara and taken by ambulance on the rough, potholed road to the hospital, where at around 6:30, five doctors began to do what they could to save the young missionary's life.

While in surgery at around 8:30, Brian's heart failed. However, with massage, its function was restored. On Sabbath morning, his prospects looked better, and he told his wife that he would be fine "by the end of the week."² But Saturday night, he became delirious. Briefly regaining consciousness, Brian took the opportunity to tell those with him that he was "ready to die."³ As he healed, his blood pressure began returning to normal levels more quickly than his spear-damaged heart could bear. The outer heart muscle ruptured, and Brian bled out in his sleep on Sunday afternoon, December 19, 1965.

Brian Dunn was buried at Honiara in the Solomon Islands the next afternoon, with the leading dignitaries of the town among the 300 people in attendance. Later, Valmae noted that just after her husband was attacked, "when I got him into the house on Thursday night, he prayed and kept praying for forgiveness for the unknown man who had speared him."⁴

This young missionary couple had been married less than a year when Brian was murdered just a few weeks after commencing their term of medical missionary service. He was 25 years old when he died. Valmae returned to Australia to spend some time with her parents, noting then, "I may have to go back soon."⁵ Indeed, she did return to mission service just a few months later, serving as a nurse in a leper colony in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.



2

Sources

Brian Dunn Service Records, South Pacific Division of the General Conference Archives.
Frame, R. R. "Tragic Death of Medical Missionary, Brian Dunn." *Australasian Record*, January 24, 1966.
Mitchell, A. R. "Brian Mansfield Dunn obituary." *Australasian Record*, January 31, 1966.
Parker, Ross. "Dunn Benham marriage." *Australasian Record*, February 1, 1965.
"People and Events." *Australasian Record*, May 16, 1966.
"Sydney Sanitarium Graduates, 1959." *Australasian Record*, January 18, 1960.

- 1 R. R. Frame, "Tragic Death of Medical Missionary, Brian Dunn," *Australasian Record*, January 24, 1966, 2.
- 2 Frame, 2.
- 3 Frame, 2.
- 4 Frame, 2.
- 5 Frame, 2.

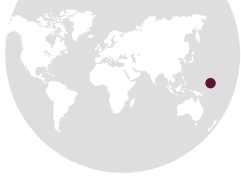
ESDA ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

More than 4,000 articles and 11,000 photographs featuring Adventist missionaries, evangelists, institutions, events, and beliefs.

encyclopedia.adventist.org

1 Brian Dunn (Photo courtesy of Adventist HealthCare Limited)

2 Brian Dunn and his wife, Valmae (From *Adventist Heritage* 11, no. 2 [Fall 1986]: 15)



Hey, That's My Island!



When **Gracelyn Lloyd** wrote this story, she was the communications director for the Guam-Micronesia Mission.

Hey, that's my island!" A cheerful voice warmed the chilly air on Southern Adventist University's (SAU) campus in Tennessee, United States, last autumn. I turned to see a man smiling and pointing at our student missionary recruitment banner.

"That's Yap. I'm from Yap." He gestured toward the image of a triangular thatched-roof hut on our poster, then quickly passed through to a room under renovation.

I was staffing the Guam-Micronesia Mission recruitment booth but caught up with the young man during lunch. I learned that his name is Edwin. He graduated from our Guam Micronesia Mission (GMM) high school on Yap and is studying construction management at SAU. His testimony of what led him here was exactly why we're recruiting students to become student missionaries: to come to our islands and change lives.

Edwin described how the Seventh-day Adventist school on Yap and the student missionaries that taught there through the years had influenced his life.

"I started the second grade at public school in Yap," he began. "I was a crazy kid. I got into a lot of trouble and had bad friends. My parents didn't have money and weren't highly educated. They were working villagers."

Despite the challenge of a limited income, Edwin's

parents wanted to provide the best for their children. They asked around and learned that the Seventh-day Adventist school had a good reputation and had native English speakers as teachers.

When Edwin started at Yap Seventh-day Adventist School, his knowledge of English was limited to the words *yes* and *shut up*. The transition wasn't easy, and he was suspended in the second grade. But Edwin was attracted to the school even during his suspension because he loved to play with the other kids. He hid in the field until recess and then joined the other students.

When Edwin officially returned to school after his suspension, things changed for the better. He credits the principals and teachers for leading him through his formative years. He remembers how an American missionary teacher took an interest in him and met with his parents. They devised an improvement plan, and the teacher tutored him after school. Edwin recalls fondly how she taught him to spell his name and the names of several colors.

As time went on, other struggles arose. Edwin became a bully at school. "I wanted to be the toughest," he explained. "But by fourth grade, I realized I didn't have any friends." John, his homeroom teacher and later his principal in high school, became a spiritual mentor in the young boy's life as he helped Edwin understand how Jesus died for each person.

"I began to question my walk with Jesus," Edwin said. "Principal made us memorize Bible verses in class that helped me answer



these questions that were building up.” Edwin brought home his growing faith and tried to share what he had learned with his parents.

Edwin’s life changed when he was introduced to the Adventist faith through the school. He stopped bullying other students. He graduated as valedictorian of his class. His relationship with Jesus grew deeper, and he was baptized after moving to the United States. Today, Edwin praises God for His provision as he diligently pursues higher education.

Edwin’s experience is an example of why the Guam-Micronesia Mission (GMM) schools exist. We invite university students to take a gap year and serve as missionaries because giving 10 months to provide Adventist education on our islands elevates lives academically and spiritually.

The mission’s education department is our most active ministry with the broadest reach: it shares the light of the gospel on our nine main islands every day of the school year! Most of the 2,000 students at our schools this year are non-Adventist (almost 99 percent at some schools) because families are drawn to the native-English-speaking, college-educated, mission-hearted teachers.

GMM school students have followed paths to become influential pastors, teachers, government leaders, and church administrators. But most importantly, students at our schools have been led into a closer walk with Jesus.

As missionary teachers build relationships with students, witness to families, and work closely with the local Adventist churches in outreach, they are changing lives for eternity. Prayerfully consider spending

this next year on an island such as Yap and sharing the love of God with students such as Edwin.

Adapted with permission, this story is featured on the Guam-Micronesia Mission website.



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



Watch video stories about Adventist Volunteer Service missionaries at **m360.tv/avs**.



Have you checked out the issuu app yet? Find past issues of **Mission 360°** magazine.



Among the many things I appreciate about serving at Adventist University Zurcher in Madagascar is the natural environment. The school is in the central highlands on nearly 500 acres of thick forest, and the resins from the pines make the air smell wonderful.

Ellen White wrote about the benefits of spending time among certain trees. She said, “There are life-giving properties in the balsam of the pine, in the fragrance of the cedar and the fir.”¹

She also counseled parents and educators to help young people develop woodworking skills. So, in addition to offering academic courses, our university provides students with the opportunity

Project Joseph



Cédric Lachenal is the dean of theology and director of the Ellen G. White Center at Adventist University Zurcher in Antsirabe, Madagascar.

to learn a variety of trades, which has the added benefit of providing income for the school.

Because the university sells wood, it's not unusual to see tree stumps all over campus following fresh cuts. The Ellen G. White Center decided to make good use of them in an innovative plan called Project Joseph. The main idea was to relate to Jesus' youth years and His experience beside his earthly father, as outlined by Ellen White in her book *The Desire of Ages*. Project Joseph helped strengthen the students' skills and patience by creating a table for the center's exposition room.

We selected a particularly big stump covered with the red-tinged clay-soil common in



The table in the Ellen G. White Center

Madagascar. At this point, most of the students and faculty doubted the realization of the project, but they complied with the routine. In groups of two or three, they spent their break times removing the dirt from the bark with brushes and chisels. Then the center borrowed machinery that helped us with the finishing stage of the cleaning. The students were engaged full-time for a month polishing, leveling, and stabilizing the stump to make it perfect for mounting with a glass tabletop.

After the stump received its first layer of varnish, 12 men carried the approximately 770-pound piece of wood to the Ellen G. White Center to receive its second coat. Today, the table remains in the center as a testimony to those who patiently followed the example of Jesus.

Since participating in this first project, several graduates who have become pastors have started similar projects in Madagascar's rural areas. By involving youth in woodwork, they follow Ellen White's counsel: "There should be opened to the youth means whereby many may, while attending school, learn the trade of carpentry. Under the guidance of experienced workmen, carpenters who are apt to teach, patient, and kind, the youth should be taught how to build substantially and economically. Cottages and other buildings essential to the various lines of schoolwork are to be erected by the students themselves."²

I've been pleased to be part of Project Joseph and see our young people developing skills that will serve them well. I want to thank all our church members worldwide who support Adventist University Zurcher and all our Seventh-day Adventist schools through their mission offerings and prayer. We are helping to prepare students for eternity.

1 Ellen G. White, *The Ministry of Healing* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press®, 2003), 264.

2 Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (Nampa, ID: Pacific Press®, 2011), 311.

Your generous and systematic mission offerings help support the ministry of hundreds of missionaries. Please give at AdventistMission.org/donate.



Check out m360.tv/missionary for more stories about missionaries.



Global Mission and the Drug Trade



Laurie Falvo and Ricky Oliveras, Office of Adventist Mission

Global Mission was established in response to an urgent need for frontline mission work. There are still 23 countries and areas where there is no Adventist presence. And incredibly, dozens of cities of more than 1 million people don't have a single Adventist congregation.

Global Mission is faithfully meeting these challenges through the church-planting ministry of urban centers of influence or UCIs.

One such UCI, called Agape Villa, was built on land donated by an Adventist lay couple in Kalay, Myanmar. The city is at the crossroads of the drug trade between India and Myanmar. It's strategically located to help people overcome their addictions.

Agape Villa is staffed by three Bible workers and usually has more than a dozen attendees, or campers as the staff calls them, in residence.

The campers are frequently brought to the center by concerned family members who are desperate to get help for their loved ones. Upon

arrival, the camper signs an agreement that they will stay at the center for the entire five-month program.

One resident, Lalthakima, had started drinking more than 20 years ago when he was 17. He reached his lowest point after his divorce. Then, he learned about Agape Villa.

The grace of God and daily Bible study and prayer transformed Lalthakima's heart. He found hope and health again after alcohol had nearly destroyed his life.

Over the past few years, Global Mission has helped to establish UCIs in several countries that offer long-term, wholistic ministry that connects with people on a local and personal level. Each center may look different, but all UCIs have the same goals—to minister to people's physical and spiritual needs, lead people to Jesus, and plant new groups of believers.

Thank you for supporting Agape Villa!

- 1 Lalthakima loves gardening at the center
- 2 The Bible workers, wearing red short-sleeved shirts, lead out in a Bible study
- 3 A dormitory built by the campers at Agape Villa

- To learn more about UCIs, visit MissiontotheCities.org/urban-centers-of-influence.
- To support UCIs, visit Global-Mission.org.
- Please remember Global Mission in your will and trusts. Visit Global-Mission.org/PlannedGiving or call 800-648-5824.



View this story at m360.tv/s2335.





ADRA's Dramatic Rescue

1



Crystal Earnhardt is a writer who lives in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

It must have seemed like the end of the world to the more than 20 million people, many in high-rise buildings, who were sound asleep on Monday, February 6, when massive earthquakes measuring 7.8 and 7.5 on the Richter scale rocked Türkiye and Syria.

It was Zoltan who first noticed the rescue dog intensely sniffing what was probably the remains of an apartment building. The canine's ears perked up, and his entire body quivered excitedly. He barked and looked up to see whether he had gotten anyone's attention.

"Over here!" Zoltan yelled.

Immediately, he was surrounded by a dedicated team whose main goal was to unearth people from a deadly grave of collapsed buildings that had crumpled to the ground the day before.

Within seconds, Zoltan was on his hands and knees scooping debris. He couldn't see a person in the pile, but the dog clearly indicated that there was life somewhere in that heap. Zoltan knew to trust the dog.

Ordinarily, Zoltan wouldn't be serving in this capacity. His job as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) director of Hungary involved the organization of relief efforts for those impacted by the earthquake.

However, his unique qualifications of being a paramedic and internationally accredited search and rescue technician were urgently needed now to find people buried in the wreckage. So, he volunteered to be a part of the Hungarian Government's Search and Rescue Team (SAR).

"I'm here!" Zoltan yelled, hoping to lend encouragement. "Can you hear me? Hold on!"

Was he too late? Zoltan wasted no time but methodically and deliberately began removing the debris. He noted that it was noon. Hour after weary hour passed as the team moved a mountain of material. At two o'clock in the morning, 14 hours later, they pulled a woman out of the wreckage, still alive! Zoltan bowed his head in a prayer of thanks.

He needed sleep, just a few hours. When daybreak arrived, Zoltan and his team returned and labored 36 more hours. They were able to pull six people, including two children, alive out of the rubble. Unfortunately, one of the children died shortly after.

Realizing their time was limited, thousands of civilians and SAR teams from various countries worked side-by-side, many using only their bare hands to remove shards of glass, metal, and cement. ADRA International workers supported them by providing food, water, wipes, and emergency

equipment such as hammers and drill heads. ADRA Romania sent 100 heat generators. Others provided mattresses for the few schools and public buildings that could be transformed into temporary shelters.

Shock after shock continued to move the earth and make the task more difficult. More buildings tumbled down like castles of sand. Many of the women and children, the wounded, and the elderly milled about, too afraid to enter a structure for fear that it would collapse over their heads. Some slept in cars. ADRA brought tents to provide shelter from the bouts of snow and rain.

“For over 10 years, ADRA offices have been implementing a variety of humanitarian relief projects, including shelter, health, and education initiatives for refugee families and children in the region,” says Kelly Dowling, emergency response manager for ADRA International. “In the aftermath of this massive disaster, ADRA remains committed to helping vulnerable communities and families in rebuilding their lives. Please keep Syria and Türkiye in your thoughts and prayers.”

With at least 50,000 killed and an estimated 5 million people homeless, Türkiye and Syria face bleak days of challenge and sorrow. Prayerfully, their views of Adventists will change because church members moved in unison with purpose and love to save people from certain death. After all, that is a vivid picture of what Jesus did for us, and that is a vivid picture of what ADRA does for 118 countries around the world.

- 1 Zoltan Sitkei, ADRA director for Hungary, digging for survivors
- 2 ADRA workers and volunteers delivering supplies to survivors



The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the international humanitarian arm of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, serving in 118 countries. Its work empowers communities and changes lives around the globe by providing sustainable community development and disaster relief. ADRA's purpose is to serve humanity so all may live as God intended. To learn more, visit ADRA.org.

Thank you for supporting ADRA through your weekly mission offerings and, in North America, by giving to World Budget. To give, visit adventistmission.org/donate.



Travel around the world with ADRA at m360.tv/adra.





1

The Tip of My Finger Was All God Needed



At the time she wrote this story, **Maharani Lumban-Gaol** was a social media specialist at Hope Channel International.

Ross was shocked when his siblings told him what his parents had done. “When they bought their plots at the cemetery, they also bought one for you because they thought you would die first,” they said. “For the past 20 years, we’ve been waiting for a phone call telling us that you had been murdered or overdosed.”

Ross grew up in Queensland, Australia, with recently baptized Adventist parents. He attended an Adventist primary school and then a public high school, where he discovered there was more to the world than the Adventist community. He graduated and moved to Brisbane to pursue a college degree, and there he began to drift from God.

Ross took a job as a bartender to pay his tuition and rent. He began to use illicit drugs and even became involved in their manufacture. But no matter what he did to experience temporary happiness, he felt empty and unfulfilled.

One night, Ross walked toward Story Bridge, a popular spot for people seeking to end their lives. Suddenly, two men approached him. Recalling the fateful experience, Ross said, “They asked me, ‘Do you believe in God?’ I answered, ‘Yeah, kind of. I used to.’ They then asked if they could pray for me.”

Ross doesn’t remember what the men said, but something in their prayer changed his mind, and he turned and walked away. He had taken 10 steps when he turned around to find out who the men were. “They had disappeared,” Ross said. “I had a clear view in every direction. They were either world-class sprinters or angels. That night, I realized that this was serious. I had done something that got the attention of Someone.”

Sometime later, Ross learned that his parents were seriously ill. He hadn’t been in contact with them for 20 years because he was ashamed of his addiction, but he felt compelled to see them again. Unfortunately, Ross’ father died within several hours of his visit, but he did care for his mother for six months. She asked him to take her to church each Sabbath. Initially, he went merely to accompany her, but over time, he began to learn more about God and became convicted of his need for a Savior.

At church Ross first discovered Hope Channel and Hope Sabbath School. He began listening regularly to the Hope Sabbath School audio podcast.

The podcast had a significant effect on Ross. He became more involved at church and immersed

himself in God's Word. As he studied, he began to understand God's love and the transformative power of faith. People even suggested that he become a pastor! He could hardly fathom that God could use someone with such a dark past, yet he became convinced this was God's plan for his life. "God can use anyone, because God loves everyone," Ross said.

Ross is now an ordained pastor and continues to spread God's message of hope to those struggling as he once did. "If my journey can help just one to reconsider God and take Jesus into their life, it was all worthwhile," he said.

Ross tearfully recalled a frequent dream that his eldest sister had and shared with him. He was drowning, and she could see only the tip of his index finger above the water. But that was what she grabbed to bring him back.

"It's never too late," Ross said. "Even if it's just a finger that's above the water. That's how powerful the grace of God is. The tip of the finger is all He needs."

Ross emailed the Hope Sabbath School team to share his testimony about how Hope Channel played a critical role in his spiritual journey. On receiving the email, Derek Morris, president of Hope Channel International and the host of Hope Sabbath

School, was eager to meet him. Ross expressed his gratitude. "God has placed you where you are now because someone in the world needs you." His words are a reminder of the transformative power of the Lord through the work of Hope Channel and its impact on people's lives.



HopeChannel

To explore the various programs on Hope Channel, visit [HopeTV.org](https://www.hopechannel.org) or watch on DirecTV 368, Roku, or the free Hope Channel app.

Thank you for supporting HOPE Channel through your weekly mission offerings and, in North America, by giving to World Budget. To give, visit [adventistmission.org/donate](https://www.adventistmission.org/donate).



- 1 Ross (*right*) with his brothers, about 1978
- 2 Ross, pictured with two of his sisters, at his graduation in 2018 from Avondale College (now Avondale University) with a degree in Ministry and Theology
- 3 Ross' ordination service at his home church of Manjimup, January 14, 2023
- 4 One of the first baptisms Ross (*right*) conducted in Manjimup in 2019





The Most Important Teaching



Karen teaching music to her kindergarten students



Karen Tessaro de Melo is a music and art teacher from Brazil. From 2019 to 2022, she served at Ubon Adventist International Mission School in Ubon Ratchathani, Thailand. She is currently teaching music in Cambodia.

I had been wrong! Before becoming a missionary, I believed that those who needed the most help in life experienced poor economic or social conditions.

In Thailand, I was aware that there were people who struggled and needed food, medication, or other kinds of assistance. But as a music teacher at an international school, I dealt with the wealthiest people in the city.

On the outside, my students seemed to have everything they needed. But as I got to know them, I realized that some lacked the most essential thing in life: love. They came from dysfunctional homes and had behavioral disorders that were challenging to deal with.

I discovered that the children who disturbed my classes the most with their aggressive behavior were the ones who needed the most care and kindness from me. I learned to represent Jesus to these troubled children through my attitude. Every time they had a problem in my class, I talked to them individually to solve it.

In teachers' lives, there are great moments. But not all classes are fun, and not every student likes us. Sometimes we must put aside our pride to serve those who seem to hate us. However, every single act of love matters. The kids may not remember our names in the future, but they will surely remember how we made them feel and the values they learned from our words and actions.

There aren't many baptisms in Thailand, and I realize that most of my students will probably never become Christians. But the seed was planted, and someday, it may bear fruit in some of their hearts.

I sometimes felt discouraged while serving as a missionary because I usually didn't see big changes in the children's lives. I felt that I wasn't making much of a difference. God had to teach me that the work wasn't mine but His. God was working through me.

In His mercy, God showed me some glimpses of what He was doing. I saw children enjoy listening

to Bible stories and learn how to pray and love God. I even experienced some of these defensive children growing to trust me.

I remember a boy in fifth grade who struggled socially for a long time. His classmates made jokes about him and rejected his presence. He would have outbursts of rage and fight with them. His parents sought psychological treatment, and over time, he became calmer. But he still couldn't get along with others.

Despite the boy's tough exterior, he had a teachable heart and humbly acknowledged his fault. I told him to count on me and talk with me whenever he needed to. I was so happy that he did. He even asked me to play games with him. Because he was feeling more comfortable with me, he felt encouraged to approach other kids more carefully. It was beautiful to see his improvement.

In my last days at the school, this boy told me he would miss me a lot and never forget me. I could see how my acceptance had touched his young heart. I may never see these children again in this world, but who knows what surprises God is preparing for us in heaven? Please pray with me that my students will be there.

Is God calling you to go? Check out these links!

- Volunteering: vividfaith.com and AdventistVolunteers.org
- Tentmaking: TotalEmployment.org
- I Will Go!: IWillGO2020.org



Hear from other volunteers at m360.tv/avs.



MARK THE DATE

SEPTEMBER

9

UNUSUAL
OPPORTUNITIES
OFFERING

ARE YOU READY TO TAKE YOUR LEAP OF FAITH?

When a crisis or unexpected situation hits the Seventh-day Adventist Church, we need to be nimble and agile to respond rapidly. By so doing, we can turn a challenge into a new opportunity to increase the impact of God's mission throughout the world.

Please give generously on September 9 to the Unusual Opportunities Offering appeal. Mark your tithe envelope "General Conference Unusual Opportunities Fund" or call 1-800-648-5824.

Giving.AdventistMission.org



Adventist
Mission



CHILDREN'S STORY

Storytime with Aunt Marita



Story by **Andrew McChesney**,
Office of Adventist Mission



Animation by **Diogo Godoy**



Agustina was eight when a friend invited her to a neighbor's house in Uruguay. "Aunt Marita tells great Bible stories every Friday evening," her friend said. "You should come!"

Agustina asked her mother for permission to go, and she agreed on the condition that the two of them go together. Her mother wanted to hear what kind of stories Aunt Marita was telling.

On Friday evening, they went to Aunt Marita's house. Aunt Marita read a story from the Bible. Then everyone sang songs about Jesus. When the sun went down, she said the Sabbath had begun, and she prayed.

Agustina enjoyed the meeting and begged her mother to let her go again. They went together again the next Friday. But after that, her mother allowed Agustina to go by herself.

After a while, Agustina learned that every Sabbath Aunt Marita went to a small Seventh-day Adventist church a few blocks from her house. She asked if she could go with her to church, and her mother agreed.

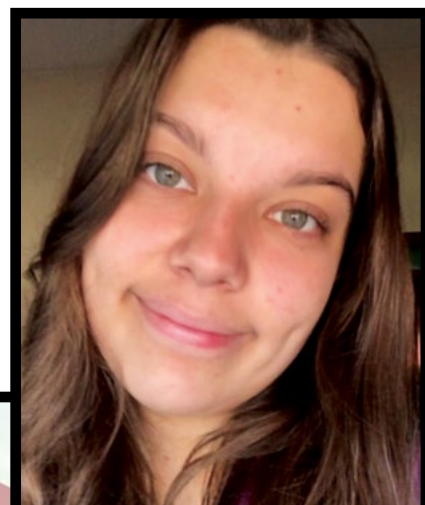
Sabbath became the best day of the week for Agustina. She was thrilled to welcome the Sabbath at Aunt Marita's house with a Bible story, singing, and prayer on Friday evening. Agustina jumped out of bed joyfully on Sabbath morning to attend church with Aunt Marita.

At church, Agustina fell in love with the Sabbath School class. She especially liked hearing mission stories from the *Children's Mission* quarterly about children around the world. It was inspiring to hear how God was using the mission offerings to change the lives of kids just like her!

Although Agustina was young, she listened to the sermons very carefully. Soon she began to study the Bible. The more she read the Bible,

her prayers! God even helped them find money to pay for the school tuition.

Agustina loves Jesus with all her heart. "It was so amazing to know that someone like Jesus could love me so much that He gave His life for me!" she says.



the more she learned about Jesus and His love. Agustina decided to give her heart to Jesus and get baptized.

A short time later, someone told her that there was an Adventist school in Uruguay. Agustina wanted to study there, but her mother said the public school was better because it was free.

Agustina didn't give up. She prayed for many months to study at the Adventist school. Then her church took part in a special 10 Days of Prayer program with other churches around the world. Agustina prayed extra hard. At the end of the 10 days, her mother agreed to send her to the Adventist school. She was so happy! God had answered



Watch "Storytime With Aunt Marita" at m360.tv/s2233.

More Children's Mission Stories

Find dozens of inspiring mission stories for children at AdventistMission.org/childrens-mission-quarterly.

Still reaching the unreached!

Global-Mission.org/OurMission



In 2021, a new Adventist church was planted every

3.6 hours.

And yet . . .



More than

40%

have never heard
the gospel

33

 cities with over a million residents each **have no Adventist congregations**

1.1 billion

 people identify as **non-religious.**