

# mission

PRODUCED BY  
THE OFFICE OF  
ADVENTIST MISSION  
**VOLUME 8**  
**NUMBER 4**

- 14** COVID Can't Stop Pioneers
- 18** First Aid From God
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# EDITORIAL

**A** few months ago, Ricky Oliveras, our Mission Spotlight video producer, recorded Dr. Mike Ryan talking with me about the 30th anniversary of Global Mission. Mike was the first director of Global Mission—taking it from conception to reality. We were supposed to talk for 20 minutes but ended up going for an hour. And there were plenty more stories to tell!

Mike couldn't resist recounting how, on our first trip together, I got us arrested. It was in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso. I was testing a new video camera, not realizing I was filming near a police station. Fortunately, it was all cleared up in about half an hour. We also recalled more poignant memories, such as Global Mission pioneers living sacrificially and planting churches in difficult circumstances.

Mike attended the 1990 General Conference Session in Indianapolis when the Global Mission initiative was voted. He remembers it being announced that one new Adventist church was being established every day. The thousands of Adventists gathered at the session greeted this wonderful news with applause. Today, we thank God that a new church is being established in less

than four hours, along with many more groups and companies.

The history books will one day tell the impact of Dr. Ryan's ministry: getting Global Mission off the ground, starting the pioneer program and the Global Mission Centers, and so much more. Global Mission brought about a new mindset, lifting our sights to the vast territories and people groups that we had, to put it bluntly, been largely ignoring. It refocused the church on the importance of starting new groups of believers.

When Global Mission began, there were 6 million church members around the world. Today, 30 years later, there are close to 21 million, and many of these are within the territories of the 10/40 Window.

While we still face tremendous challenges in reaching the unreached people groups of the world for Jesus, I want to thank you for everything you've done to support Global Mission in making the significant strides it has. Thank you for helping thousands come to know Christ as Lord and Savior.

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**Gary Krause**  
*Adventist Mission Director*



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## ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

PHOTO BY RICKY OLIVERAS

I met Gabriel at Spicer Adventist University when I was on a trip to southern Asia. He allowed me a glimpse into his life, sharing stories of his adventurous year living in a mountain village among those who didn't know Jesus. Although Gabriel had health problems and knew that he might die, he chose to risk everything to share the gospel. I invite you to read and watch Gabriel's story, "A Life Redirected." You'll find it on page 4 of this magazine and at [m360.tv/s20413](http://m360.tv/s20413).

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# A Life Redirected



**Ricky Oliveras,**  
Office of  
Adventist  
Mission

**G**abriel approached the remote mountain village for the first time. He didn't know what he was getting himself into. But he had heard a still, small voice impressing him to go.

He had taken a year off school because of health issues. But a friend told him about a village where people had never heard of Jesus. Even though his health was getting worse, Gabriel felt compelled to go.

"When I went to the village, I knew my health was very poor, and I might possibly even die," Gabriel said. "But I have a passion to take the gospel to the unreached. I told God, 'Since You've sent me here, You have to make me all right. You have to take care of me. I'm completely focusing and depending on You with all my health issues.'"

After arriving in the village, Gabriel rested and prayed for a week. Then he had to travel a long distance to see a doctor. A blood test revealed that his health had been restored! His prayer answered, Gabriel returned, ready to put all his energy into serving the community.

But he quickly realized the challenges facing him. The high altitude made it cold, he had to hike

long distances up and down steep terrain to get water, and the villagers knew nothing about basic health principles.

Although Gabriel had permission from village leaders, many opposed his presence. "It was very difficult for them to accept me," Gabriel said. But he had an idea, a way to break through to their hearts. There was no school in the village, so he turned his home into a classroom. The children loved him, and as time went by, the villagers started inviting him to spend time with them. Soon Gabriel was having conversations about health principles with the villagers. Sometimes they even talked about faith. "It took almost four months to become friends with them," Gabriel said. "When they finally accepted me as part of their village, I was very happy!"

The villagers began to ask Gabriel what he had in his life that made him so happy. This was the opportunity that he had been praying for, and he began to share the love of Jesus.

The villagers enjoyed hearing about Gabriel's hope in Christ. It was a liberating concept they had never heard before. Many accepted Jesus

and started meeting together on Sabbath.

Wonderful doors were opening. But Gabriel still became discouraged sometimes. He felt lonely, and the conditions were harsh. But Gabriel never gave up. He began hiking to other villages, as far as he could walk, to spread the gospel.

After this time of ministry, Gabriel knew that he only wanted one thing—to follow God's will for his life. His desire to delve deeper into the Bible led him to enroll in the school of theology at Spicer Adventist University.



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- 1 Gabriel bonding with some of the village children.
- 2 Gabriel hiked many miles to share Jesus with people living in surrounding villages.
- 3 Gabriel in class at Spicer Adventist University.

Today, Gabriel is happy to be studying at Spicer, a school dedicated to teaching and training students for a higher purpose. His dream is to become a full-time church planter. And thanks to a missionary family sponsoring his studies, that dream is set to become a reality.

Global Mission supports the ministry of hundreds of church planters such as Gabriel. They're called Global Mission pioneers. These mostly local missionaries specialize in reaching the world's most difficult to reach people groups for Jesus. Living on a basic stipend, they follow Christ's method of ministry, mingling with people, meeting their needs, and lovingly guiding them through the process of becoming disciples.

But they can't do it without our help. Please support Global Mission pioneers in their efforts with your financial gifts and prayers. And thank you for all you've done to help reach the 66 percent of the world's population that still hasn't had an opportunity to experience Jesus.



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Watch this story  
in action at  
[m360.tv/s20413](http://m360.tv/s20413).



**GLOBAL MISSION**

Global Mission supports thousands of local church planters, called pioneers, in starting new groups of believers in the 10/40 Window where there is no Adventist presence. But they need our help. Please support their ministry with your prayers and donations at [Global-Mission.org/giving](http://Global-Mission.org/giving).



*Global Mission is all about reaching the unreached for Jesus. We do this in various ways, including through the ministry of Global Mission pioneers, Urban Centers of Influence, “Waldensian Students,” and tentmakers, who use their careers to share Jesus with the unreached. The following story was written by a tentmaker when she worked in the Middle East North Africa region. We’ve withheld her identity to protect her and the Adventist work there.*

## A Tentmaker’s Greatest Need

**W**e live in the midst of a great controversy between good and evil, God and Satan, and this spiritual warfare directly affects the tentmaking mission. When my husband and I were tentmakers, we realized that we needed God’s power and protection and the Holy Spirit more than ever before.

When we moved to our new city, our goal was to mingle with people, build friendships, and share the love of Jesus as the Holy Spirit led us. We settled into a rental house in a small village about a 20-minute drive from my husband’s workplace. We were excited to become friends with our neighbors. But this didn’t happen quickly enough for me. While my husband was at work, I had a lot of time in the house alone. One day, I thought to myself, *I didn’t come all the way here just to sit in the house!* That day I talked with a friend on the phone about my loneliness and discouragement. She suggested that we pray and that God would provide the solution. After hanging up the phone, I decided to take a short walk in front of my house. I don’t know how this happened, but within 10 minutes, I was sitting with a group of about 15 village women. God had answered my friend’s prayer immediately!

My husband and I really wanted to share spiritual truths with the local people and were praying for this. We wanted them to experience peace and joy in Jesus. One day, we received a message from our local Adventist union that a young man had contacted them for Bible studies. He was from the city where we were living! For the next year, we were able to study the Bible with him. One time while we were studying, the police arrived at our house. Personal and public evangelism were illegal in the country, and we could be kicked out of the country. It was a Sabbath afternoon, and we were shocked that they would show up then. Thankfully, the police just looked at my husband’s ID card and left us in peace. Thank You, God!

The young man we were studying with really loved animals, especially dogs. We decided to keep a puppy at our house for him to play with when he visited us. He absolutely loved that dog, and the dog was a comfort to him after his little sister died. Everything was going well with the puppy until one day it got sick. We tried everything to nurse the puppy back to health and prayed our hearts out for the dog. Then, a few days later, the puppy died. The young man and my husband and I were all heartbroken, but especially the young man. The next Sabbath, though, the young man got up in front of a small group and shared that because of the puppy’s death, he now better understood the pain that God went through when Jesus died on the cross. Praise God that He turned this sad situation around for good!

One time while my husband and I were back in our home country at a conference recruiting more tentmakers to work in the region where we were serving, we received news that someone had broken into our house. This news was so upsetting to us! After the long flight back, we arrived at our house and found that parts of it had been ransacked and the front door had been busted in. Our landlord blamed the burglary on our security guard and wanted to put him in prison for years. This would have been devastating to the guard and his family because he had four small girls. Also, we had realized the burglar was not the security guard. Desperately needing God’s intervention in the situation, we asked friends and family to pray. After we had prayed a lot, the landlord dropped the charges against the security guard. Praise God!

These are just a few of the challenges we faced as tentmakers. My husband and I realized that the battle was raging on the front lines of mission, and we had to fully depend upon God. Every day, we decided to ask God to fill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the strength and wisdom we needed for that day. We also asked people to pray for and with us. We learned through experience that relying on God is a tentmaker’s greatest need!

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



## Ways to Give

- ▶ **ONLINE**  
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- ▶ **PHONE**  
Call 800-648-5824
- ▶ **MAIL**  
In the United States:  
Global Mission, General Conference  
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Silver Spring, MD 20904-6601

In Canada:  
Global Mission  
SDA Church in Canada  
1148 King Street East  
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](http://TotalEmployment.org).



To see what's happening in mission in the Middle East and North Africa

Union Mission, visit [m360.tv/middleeast](http://m360.tv/middleeast).

# God's Unexpected Delay



**Enock Ratemo**

serves as a volunteer math teacher for grades 7 through 12 at the Delap Seventh-day Adventist School on the island of Majuro in the Marshall Islands.

Originally from Kenya, he earned his bachelor of science and technology in automotive engineering and willingly uses his skills wherever needed.

One of the amazing blessings of serving in the Marshall Islands is experiencing the spirit of “going the extra mile.” Working on the island of Majuro has presented me with many opportunities to help out with extra activities. Apart from my teaching job at Delap Seventh-day Adventist School, I enjoy helping with other duties and am always humbled because I get to practice different areas of expertise. Being an engineer, I’ve been called upon to use my training for fixing school vehicles; maintaining our mission sailboat, the *Glad Tidings*; and providing technical support for our school’s radio station. I’m grateful to God and the people around me who have helped me a lot.

One of my most recent rewarding experiences was installing the solar panel system at Lanlon 89.1 FM, located at the Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School. Ebeye is one of the Marshall islands in the Kwajalein Atoll, with a population estimated at 20,000. Lanlon 89.1 FM covers a large area and has been an effective tool for spreading the good news to the people on Ebeye. However, intermittent power outages occurred due to the old generator, which suffered from the wear and tear of aging. They needed a solar-powered system to provide continuous broadcasting. Previously, there was an obstacle to installing the solar system due to government restrictions.

I thank the Lord for allowing the government to accept the solar installation.

The project was estimated to take about a week. Kevin Ndemo, a volunteer teacher at Ebeye, and many others there helped with the installation. There were a few glitches due to limited materials that were quite hard to find, but the Lord provided the things we needed to finish the project. We had to find alternatives that wouldn’t compromise the procedures and standards required for solar installation.

By Tuesday, six days into the project, the system was working perfectly. Praise be to God! That afternoon, Kevin and I went to the Air Marshall Islands office to confirm my return ticket for the next day, but to my surprise, the flight was postponed until Friday. This disappointing news took me aback because I had already put a one-week pause on my online master’s degree studies. Now I believe this all was God’s plan. I had finished the solar installation a day late, which left no time before my flight to help with various electrical jobs at the school.

See how God works? He clearly allowed the flight to be postponed, permitting me time to finish His work. Most of Wednesday and Thursday were spent on school-related maintenance jobs.

After I completed my work on Thursday, we took the afternoon to tour around on a boat. Seeing dolphins close up was one of the most



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- 1 Rooftop view of Enock installing the solar power panel.
- 2 Enock and Kevin working in the radio station.
- 3 Solar panel on the roof of Ebeye Seventh-day Adventist School.
- 4 With Michael and Justice Love, who have a music ministry on Ebeye, teaching children to play the ukulele.
- 5 Afternoon boat ride in Ebeye.

memorable experiences. We visited Carlos Island, and I jumped off a 131-foot shipwreck twice. It was such a thrilling moment!

When I landed safely back in Majuro, I was glad to be home. Ebeye will always be in my heart because of how warm and hospitable the people are. Always happy, the kids would shout with a broad smile, "Hello, Mister, welcome to Marshall Islands!" If I ever find the slightest opportunity to return to Ebeye, I will grab it with both hands. I pray that the Lord will keep the radio and solar equipment safe so that His word can reach many people. This is chiefly why I serve God, to finish the work the Lord has given us so that we will soon go home! May this be your prayer too.

*Reprinted and adapted with permission from Guam-Micronesia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists.*

Every year, the operation of Guam-Micronesia Mission schools depends heavily on volunteers and donors. To help them continue their mission, please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to serve. Visit their website for current needs, and check back regularly for future positions at [www.gmmsda.org/missions/open-positions](http://www.gmmsda.org/missions/open-positions).



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](http://AdventistVolunteers.org).



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



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# Juliana's Incredible Miracle

**W**hen I found out that I'd be a Waldensian student in a veiled country, I began to pray for my future classmates.

On the first day of school, I made a new friend, the only woman in the room wearing traditional clothes. Her name was Mariam.\* The next day, I sat next to her, and we chatted together. She asked me whether I had any friends at the university. I told her, "Yes, I have *you!*" She was really happy. Later I learned that she didn't have many friends in the class or at the school before I came.

As time passed, Mariam became my closest friend at the university. She even said that I was like a sister to her.

Mariam and I were taking a public speaking class together, and we had to make presentations in front of the class. She chose to give a speech on the similarities and differences of major world religions. Mariam asked me to help her prepare the presentation, and I was thrilled to have the opportunity to discuss my faith with her. She told me twice that she was interested in reading the Bible. I told her that I would look for one for her.

One day Mariam expressed that she'd never met people as kind as the other Waldensian Students and me, that we were totally different from other people. She also said, "Juliana, I want to be like you." I was so shocked because I knew that I had a lot of weaknesses in my character and often made mistakes. The only thing that came to my mind to answer her was, "Mariam, I make a lot of mistakes, but I try each day to follow Jesus' example. He was good with people and in everything He did when He was here on earth."

After that conversation, my personal relationship with Jesus began to change. When I read the Bible, I wanted to learn more about Him and to be more like Him. I just wanted others to see the love of Jesus in me.

One weekend, Mariam invited me to her house. Little did I know that I was about to experience an incredible miracle. For four days, I became a part of Mariam's family. Even though her family was of another faith, I decided that I had nothing to hide and that I would be myself and live my faith. So, I did everything that I normally do: spent time with God in morning devotions, prayed before meals, and kept the Sabbath.

One night, Mariam and I were in her room. I saw her holy book sitting on the little table beside her bed. I asked to look at it, and we started to have a wonderful conversation about faith. We were able to talk about the Creation story and about the plan of salvation.

"Mariam, would you like to read about these stories in your very own Bible?" I asked.

"Yes!" she responded. And then I presented her with a Bible in her language.

She took it with her hands and hugged it. She was so happy! I was shocked about that, but then I reasoned that the Holy Spirit must be working in her heart.

Later that night, before going to sleep, I stepped out of the room, and when I came back, she wasn't there. And the Bible wasn't there either. I was so worried. After a few minutes, Mariam appeared in the room and told me that she showed the Bible to her parents. Now I was really worried and thought to myself, *I won't be sleeping in this house tonight!*

But, unexpectedly, she told me that they were happy and thankful for the gift. I was so relieved and praised God silently. What an incredible miracle!

The next day, I returned to school. That week we had to make our presentations in front of the public speaking class. As Mariam began her presentation about different religions, she spoke confidently. Before, she was very shy and would read directly from her notes. But this time, she didn't look nervous at all.

When we finished our presentations, I told Mariam that she did an awesome job! I asked her how she managed to present so well. She said that it was because she was reading the book that I'd given her. Later that week, she told me that she was reading the story of Jesus and really liked it. She had read about 10 chapters.

I'm sure that God is working in Mariam's life. Please pray that Mariam will keep reading and continue to allow the Holy Spirit and the Bible to transform her life.

\* Name has been changed.



The author participates in the “Waldensian Student” initiative, a frontline mission approach in which Seventh-day Adventist students live, study, and serve in secular universities in specific countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa.

Following Christ’s example of outreach, they mingle with people, win their confidence, minister to their needs, and as opportunities arise, bid them to follow Jesus.

- ◆ For information on how to become a “Waldensian Student,” contact [Questions@adventistmission.org](mailto:Questions@adventistmission.org).
- ◆ To sponsor their unique ministry, visit [Global-Mission.org/giving](http://Global-Mission.org/giving) and select the “Waldensian Student” Program.
- ◆ Watch stories about “Waldensian Students” at [m360.tv/waldensian](http://m360.tv/waldensian).



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# Youth Alive

**H**ow can adolescents and young adults make healthy choices in contemporary society? To discuss this issue, 105 youth, young adults, and leaders participated in a Youth Alive pilot project in Tirana, Albania, and Klaipėda, Lithuania.

Youth Alive is a youth discipleship initiative designed to build resilience among teens and young adults by inspiring and equipping them to make healthy choices. The program is coordinated at the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, and this pilot project is running in partnership with the Trans-European Division. The initiative in each country began with training for leaders, who were then joined by adolescents and young adults for a Youth Alive Congress.

After specialists at the Youth Alive Congress lectured about physical, mental, and spiritual health, participants were then encouraged to reflect on important issues, such as the need to establish healthy relationships without abuse; the risk posed by different types of addiction, including technology, harmful substances, and pornography; and the psychological, physiological, and spiritual symptoms that risk behaviors entail. The participants then met in small groups, called Friendship Groups, in which the topics presented by the speakers were discussed under the guidance of a leader and followed by practical activities.

“I liked everything; it was super fun. I learned about positive relationships, depression, how to be happy, and how to choose the right things,” said Joana Hallkaj, a 13-year-old participant.

Leo N. España, president of the Albanian Mission and pastor of the Tirana-Central Adventist Church, sees the project as extremely relevant because “teens and young people are the future of our church, as they will become future parents and church leaders.”

He added, “We are very happy to be part of the pilot project of Youth Alive in Albania. This project provides Christ-centered guidelines for them to foster a healthy life free from addictions, including the essential elements in developing their characters in a wholistic way fostering the spiritual, mental, and physical aspects. I really enjoyed seeing our young people build bonds through their Friendship Groups and pray for each other.”

“The project, besides developing many recreational activities, also includes group dynamics

that help them connect more deeply with themselves, others, and with God. There is also a very important part of the project that includes getting involved in community services. This can be a way of planting new churches,” suggests Juliana Ortolan, the project leader in Albania.

In Lithuania, some of the leaders and participants visited a nearby retirement home, holding a concert in the backyard. The residents were pleasantly surprised and very happy to be visited by the youth.

Some of the young people also went to the town center to share the Adventist health message. They offered to swap cigarettes for apples and invited people to a smoking cessation program. Another group sang hymns at their local hospital and handed out magazines. Residents appeared to be very pleased and asked for such programs in other cities as well.

Piloted in Albania and then Lithuania, Youth Alive has also been implemented in the United States, India, and the Philippines. Research into the effectiveness of Youth Alive is being undertaken by Dr. Duane McBride, director of the Institute

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for Prevention of Addictions and research professor of sociology at Andrews University, and Dr. Katia Reinert, General Conference associate director of Health Ministries and Youth Alive global coordinator. The program will be evaluated through a risk-behavior-tracking questionnaire and a discipleship survey, allowing an assessment of behavioral and discipleship changes during the project's years of implementation.

This was the first worldwide experience of the Youth Alive project. However, according to Reinert, this was actually a new approach to a program created many years ago. "The church created the project as a way of engaging youth and adolescents because they are more open to risky behaviors at this stage of their lives," she says.

While the program had been used for many years around the world, it needed to be adapted to ensure relevance to modern culture and youth today.

Delmar Reis, Albania Mission Youth Ministries director, believes that this project is relevant in Albania and can also be applied globally through local churches, schools, and communities.

Reinert sees this project as an opportunity to help the church grow and develop discipleship. "Our desire is that Youth Alive is not only discipling young Adventists but that its wholistic message may influence the local community and empower the young people to lead and be active in mission by building resilience and living a happier and healthier life."

This story by Vanessa Ortolan dos Anjos with Parengė Dovilė Bakonytė was adapted with permission from TED News Network®, the official news service of the Trans-European Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

- 1 A friendship group activity in Albania.
- 2 Youth Alive group in Albania.
- 3 Closing celebration of Youth Alive in Lithuania.
- 4 Working together as a team in Lithuania.
- 5 Youth Alive Congress attendees in Lithuania.



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## YOUTH ALIVE

Youth Alive is a global initiative of the General Conference Health Ministries department. The program focuses on developing nurturing relationships with teens and young adults and equipping them to make healthy choices and overcome addiction. It's used by schools and churches worldwide to disciple youth and is part of the ministry of Urban Centers of Influence in Albania and Lithuania, which are supported by your contributions to Global Mission. To learn more, visit [youthaliveportal.org](http://youthaliveportal.org).

## LIFE HOPE CENTERS

Global Mission supports wholistic mission to the cities. This includes a rapidly growing number of Life Hope Centers, also known as Urban Centers of Influence (UCIs), which serve as platforms for putting Christ's method of ministry into practice. They provide an ideal opportunity for total member involvement in outreach that suits each person's spiritual gifts and passions.

- To learn more about UCIs, visit [MissionToTheCities.org](http://MissionToTheCities.org).
- To watch videos about Life Hope Centers, visit [m360.tv/uci](http://m360.tv/uci).





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# COVID Can't Stop Pioneers!

This article was written by a young Global Mission couple who recently moved to a large veiled city. Before they arrived, there were no Seventh-day Adventists there. Please keep them and their important work in your prayers.

It was an unusual time for us. Everyone in our country was talking about the new coronavirus. Each day, many new cases were found in different parts of the country. Parks, markets, schools, and government offices were closed. We also had to shut down our church plant until otherwise updated by officials. Everyone was expected to quarantine at home. It was an order.

In the beginning, we turned on the TV news reports and watched people in our country as they started to search for face masks, hand sanitizer, and tools for sterilizing. People rushed out to shop. They were panic-buying food and essential supplies for their families. People needed face masks; however, we weren't able to find them in pharmacies or online. Day by day, more and more people realized how severe the virus was. It had become a pandemic.

We could feel people's fear. They were hopeless and depressed because they lacked personal protective equipment. Many lost beloved family members. Families ached. It was heartbreaking.

Home-quarantined, we couldn't worship in our church plant but instead worshiped with our members and interests through the internet. We were so thankful for modern technology that allowed us to continue to meet with people, give Bible studies, and sing together. We had two prayer meetings every day through social media; one was in the morning from five o'clock to six o'clock, and the evening one was from six o'clock to seven o'clock. We also joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church's 100 Days of Prayer initiative. We received the devotional material from the church's leaders and prayed not only for our country but also for countries around the world.

After every morning and evening prayer time, we conducted a one-hour Bible study. We started in Genesis and have now gone through the books of the major prophets. We believe all this took our relationship with God to another level.

Eventually, we received permission to leave our homes. We started to discuss with our

members and interests how we could serve our community and share the love of Jesus with people who had never heard of Him. We prepared outreach packages that included *Hope Beyond Tomorrow* (the Adventist Church's 2020 missionary book). We printed the contact information for our church plant on the books so people could connect with us in the future. The packages also included essential supplies like face masks, alcohol swabs, and disposable gloves. We distributed the packages to our neighbors and people who served our community during the pandemic, such as security guards, cleaners, and mail carriers. While doing so, we didn't forget our mission: to share the good news of Jesus with people who wanted to know more. We even used our Bibles to answer their questions, which we really enjoyed.

During our community service, we met many non-Christians. Although some people refused our packages, we believe God is working on them. Our purpose was to let them know there is a God who loves them very much and that our church plant is open for them.

Even now, we aren't able to go back to our church plant and worship together. We will continue to use the online platform to worship, share Jesus, and study the Bible with our members and interests. Our baptismal class has three people who will soon be ready for baptism! Please pray for the rain of the Holy Spirit on our church plant and the people in our veiled city.



## GLOBAL MISSION

Global Mission's 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.

- ▶ To watch video stories about pioneers, visit [m360.tv/pioneer](https://m360.tv/pioneer).
- ▶ Please remember us in your will and trusts. Visit [Global-Mission.org/PlannedGiving](https://Global-Mission.org/PlannedGiving) or call 800.648.5824.



# River of Healing

“[The church] was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world.” “Wonderful is the work which the Lord designs to accomplish through His church, that His name may be glorified. A picture of this work is given in Ezekiel’s vision of the river of healing: . . . [‘Everything will live wherever the river goes].’”<sup>1</sup>

**L**ayla is part of that river of healing. She wakes up every morning, spends time with Jesus in prayer and Bible study, and asks God to fill her with the Holy Spirit so she can be a blessing to others. During her morning routine, she pulls out her cell phone and chooses an encouraging message that she’ll send to her friends through social media. Layla then goes to work as a nurse at a large hospital in one of the most closed countries in the world, where it could be very dangerous for her to share her faith. As she cares for patients, she listens to them and speaks an encouraging word. If the Holy Spirit prompts her, she prays for the patients or gives them a spiritual book.

God is doing amazing things through Layla. She just shared with us the following quote and inspiring story.

## In Layla’s own words

“God calls not only for your benevolence, but your cheerful countenance, your hopeful words, the grasp of your hand. Relieve some of God’s afflicted ones. Some are sick, and hope has departed. Bring back the sunlight to them. There are souls who have lost their courage; speak to them, pray for them. . . . Bring them to Jesus Christ. And in all your work, Christ will be present to make impressions upon human hearts.”<sup>2</sup>

I take these words seriously. Every time I go to work, I ask Jesus to use me. I ask God for divine appointments.

Last Thursday, I was assigned to take care of Sara, who’s very sick and has difficulty breathing. Two years ago, Sara had a lung transplant and has to use oxygen. She can’t even go to the bathroom by herself. But it was a delight for me to help her with all her basic needs. Due to health challenges and stress, her blood pressure was very high when I checked it. I gave her advice on how to lower it

naturally by eating healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables. I also encouraged her to pray and ask the Lord to heal her. In fact, right then, I asked her if I could pray for her, and she said yes. She asked about my faith, and I told her that I’m a follower of Jesus. She took my hand and kissed it, and I could see how thankful she was that I prayed for her even though she’s not a Christian.

Later in the afternoon, Sara’s doctor decided she could be discharged. She was happy to go home. But I was still concerned about her blood pressure, so I checked it again, and her blood pressure was much lower than before. She said to her son in her local language that my presence had a calming effect on her. All I could say was praise God. Just like it says in the quote above, God was making an impression on her heart.

While I was at the hospital, I got her son’s phone number so I could check on Sara. Just yesterday, I felt impressed to text her son.

I wrote, “How’s your mom doing? Would it be okay if I share a video about Jesus? It’s about how He saved and healed people. I believe that Jesus can heal your mom as well. If you want me to share the video with you, just let me know.”

He texted back, “I hope you’re well and thank you for what you’re doing for the people. We’re fine, and my mother’s health has improved, and she’s encouraged. Yes, send me the video to share with my mother. Thank you.”

I sent the video about Jesus to him.

Later he texted, “My mother is much better than before. Your messages are useful and give us hope.”

Please pray that Sara and her son will come to know Jesus.

## Join the movement

Hope. Encouragement. Light. This is what Layla is spreading to her patients in this closed country. God’s river is flowing and touching lives in tangible ways. Will you join this healing movement? Will you say, “I will go!”?

1. Ellen G. White, *Acts of the Apostles* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press®, 1911), 9, 13. The quoted bible verse here is from the New King James Version, while the original quotes the King James Version: “everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live.” Ezekiel 47:9.
2. Ellen White, *A Call to Medical Evangelism and Health Education* (Nashville, TN: Southern Publishing Association, 1954), 23.



Reach the World: I Will Go is the strategic plan for the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 2020 to 2025. It's a rallying cry to all church members to reach the world, inspiring and equipping them to use their God-given spiritual gifts in witness and service to Christ.



The Great Commission in Matthew 28 is clear: Jesus' followers are to go and make disciples of all nations. The gospel must be shared with the hundreds of unreached people groups around the world. I Will Go outlines specific objectives and ways to accomplish this task.

Explore the I Will Go plan at [IWillGO2020.org](http://IWillGO2020.org) and find your place in this global movement!



# First Aid From God



From Papua New Guinea, **Viviana Gunua Damagoi Kumbia** is a high school teacher at the Delap Seventh-day Adventist School on the South Pacific island of Majuro.

It came as no surprise that my students preferred playing a good game of basketball to learning first aid. But as a teacher at Delap Seventh-day Adventist School in the Marshall Islands, I had been tasked with teaching physical education and first aid. And I was determined that they learn both.

I'm not a first aid instructor, but I had been required to take a first aid class in order to serve as a college assistant dean of women. I'd never needed my skills until now.

A few weeks into the school year, the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society held a high school first aid competition. Two students in each school were chosen to be trained by the Marshall Islands Red Cross Society. Then these two students would teach the other students in their class. The teacher must not do the teaching. My responsibility was to

provide things the students might need to practice for the competition. We were given only two weeks to prepare!

A trainer had been appointed to help us, but he came only once because he lived so far from the school. He had left mannequins for the students to practice cardiopulmonary resuscitation, a 346-page Red Cross Society First Aid book, six strips of cloth, three long pieces of wood, and three tablecloths. The rest was up to my two students and me.

I prayed for guidance. Then I photocopied the theory section of the book and handed the sheets out to my students to study for their test. I left the practical part to my two student trainers. I asked God to help us practice and study the things that would be included in the competition. I worried because I didn't have a program guide for the competition and had no idea what to expect.

Delap Seventh-day Adventist School first aid team with Viviana on far right.



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

Before we left for the competition, we had our morning worship, which was about Gideon and his 300 men. We prayed and left all our anxieties before the Lord, claiming Joshua 1:9, which says, "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest." Then the 15 students and I went to the competition with the materials we had been given and a lot of faith and prayer.

When we arrived at the competition site, one of my students was given the day's program by one of her friends from another school. She turned to me and said, "Miss, take a picture of this. I have to return it to her." I took a picture of the program and sent a prayer of thanks to God.

Then one of my students noticed that the other schools had come equipped with their own gear for the competition. He turned to me and said, "Miss, they came prepared, and we're going to lose."

I could see he was discouraged because we hadn't brought much equipment compared to what the other schools brought with them. I looked at him and said, "Win or lose, remember we came here to learn. Don't worry about what the other schools have. We will improvise with what we have. We've already told God what we need, and He will provide. Have faith. Remember the story of Gideon."

He smiled and said, "OK, Miss." I praised God for the wisdom that He gave me to speak to my students.

During the event, my students and I improvised with the first aid materials we had plus extra shirts, socks, hair bands, or scarves to participate in every session of the competition.

By the end of the First Aid competition, Delap Seventh-day Adventist School was first in the First Aid Theory questionnaire and second overall in the Marshall Islands First Aid High School competition!

I praised God for answering our prayers and using me as a witness to



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my students. It was a perfect opportunity for my students to see God answering their prayers before their very eyes. One of my students whispered to me, "Miss, now I know what it feels like to have God fight and provide for you and also answer your prayers. It's a happy, good feeling."

This experience reminded me that God, the Creator of the universe, sees the end from the beginning, so in every trial, be it minor or major, I must trust Him fully with everything.





# God, Please Send Me to China



Florence Muriel Howe was an intrepid nurse and missionary who felt a strong conviction to serve the people of China. In the following story, you'll see she did whatever it took to get there and lived an amazing life of mission service.



**Lester Devine** is a director emeritus of the Ellen G. White/Adventist Research Center in Avondale, Australia.

**F**lorence Muriel Howe was born in 1908 in New South Wales, Australia, to parents David and Phillippa Howe.<sup>1</sup>

In 1931 Muriel left her home to study at the Australasian Missionary College (now Avondale University College), and she paid her own school fees.<sup>2</sup> While there, she was the secretary of the Missionary Volunteer Society.<sup>3</sup> During this time, the conviction grew that the Lord was calling her to devote her life to China. But the church had not appointed any workers from Australia to China in 20 years, so she knew that she would have to “find her own way there.”<sup>4</sup> Muriel decided that she would go to China, train there as a nurse, and learn the language with a “roof over her head” for

the three years she was studying. Her father was opposed to these plans, but Muriel was over 21 and could make her own decisions. She asked the Lord for three signs that what she was doing was His plan for her. The first sign was that she would be accepted as a nursing student by the Shanghai Sanitarium Board, even though no European had ever trained with the national students. The second sign was that, without any personal request to others, the Lord would provide 60 percent of the money she needed. The final request was that everything would fall into place in time so that she could sail for China on a ship scheduled to leave Sydney, Australia, on April 28, 1934.<sup>5</sup> She then waited to see how the Lord would lead.



Seven weeks before her scheduled departure, Muriel received her acceptance as a nursing student from the Shanghai Sanitarium. She had saved 40 percent of the funds she needed, and the 60 percent remaining soon came to her, unsolicited, from several sources. In fact, Muriel had more than she needed, as the Australasian Division leaders provided sufficient funds to thoroughly outfit her with warm clothing, something she was unaware she would need. In the meantime, her father, who had expressed strong objection to her plans, told her, "If the Lord wants you to go, let the Lord provide; but if you want to come back at any time, I'll help you."<sup>6</sup> At her last Friday evening vespers service at the college before she sailed to China, Muriel stood with those who wished to give their testimony and sang the well-known hymn "Take My Life and Let It Be."<sup>7</sup>

Muriel sailed for China in April 1934.<sup>8</sup> Once there, she went without many things due to her lack of finances, but she graduated from her nursing course in 1937.<sup>9</sup> Her experiences while a student nurse are chronicled in a series of articles in the *Australasian Record*, published in 1937.<sup>10</sup> Rather than pursuing postgraduate work, she then chose to travel some 2,000 miles to the hospital at Lanchow on the borders of Mongolia and Tibet.<sup>11</sup> During her time there, the Chinese-Japanese war was raging, and the hospital suffered. Twice Muriel had to be evacuated.

Eventually, the Japanese took over the hospital at Lanchow with the expatriate staff having to leave with just two hours' notice, abandoning most of their possessions. Muriel traveled for weeks with 18 others on a truck through lawless bandit country and endured considerable hardship as they crossed 10,000-foot mountains. At one stage, their truck got bogged in a river. It took 12 mules and 30 coolies to pull it out. It was covered all over with mud that all had to be cleaned off, and the engine had to be dried out before the faithful "Chevvie" could continue the journey. Once the truck got going again, it took eight hours to cover the first 20 miles because the roads were so bad; armed guards accompanied them through bandit country. There was illness among the 19 in the group, and Muriel spent a lot of time treating them; she was glad she had not left her medical kit behind in Lanchow. Her health had suffered during this ordeal, and she returned to Australia to recuperate, arriving in September 1939.<sup>12</sup> She wrote letters describing her experience during that harrowing journey, and her story was published in two parts in the *Australasian Record*.<sup>13</sup>

The Second World War made it necessary for Muriel to remain in Australia.<sup>14</sup> However, Muriel wanted to return to China and did so in 1945.<sup>15</sup>

Muriel worked in China until 1949, when she had to leave again because of the Communist takeover of the country. During those four years in Chungking, Muriel worked with Dr. Harry Miller, who had her look after the national leaders of China,



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and their families, such as Madam Chiang Kai-Shek and other prominent citizens who came to him for treatment.<sup>16</sup>

Muriel moved to the United States at the end of 1949 to continue her nursing education. Because it was unlikely she could ever return to China, Muriel accepted an invitation to mission service at Malamulo Hospital in Nyasaland, now called Malawi. There she was responsible for the general nursing and the midwifery training programs in that large (then 290 beds) hospital.<sup>18</sup>

But as much as Muriel enjoyed her time in Africa, her heart was still in China, and so she continued her life of service in Formosa (Taiwan) from February 1955.<sup>19</sup> There, she had charge of the nurses' training program in the hospital for which the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering had been allocated at the end of 1954.<sup>20</sup> Later in her life, she also worked as a nurse and teacher in Ohio, USA, and in Hong Kong.

Muriel Howe retired to Loma Linda, California, in 1976.<sup>21</sup> She spent the last months of her life, after a stroke, in a nursing home in Loma Linda operated by two young women, both former students from

her Taiwan years. She died on August 19, 1992, and was buried in Loma Linda.<sup>22</sup>

Years earlier, in a national radio broadcast across Australia, journalist Frank Legge commented about Muriel Howe, "Now we have someone here who is not famous but deserves to be. She is loved by all sorts of people from the Gobi desert to the lepers of Africa."<sup>23</sup>

## ESDA

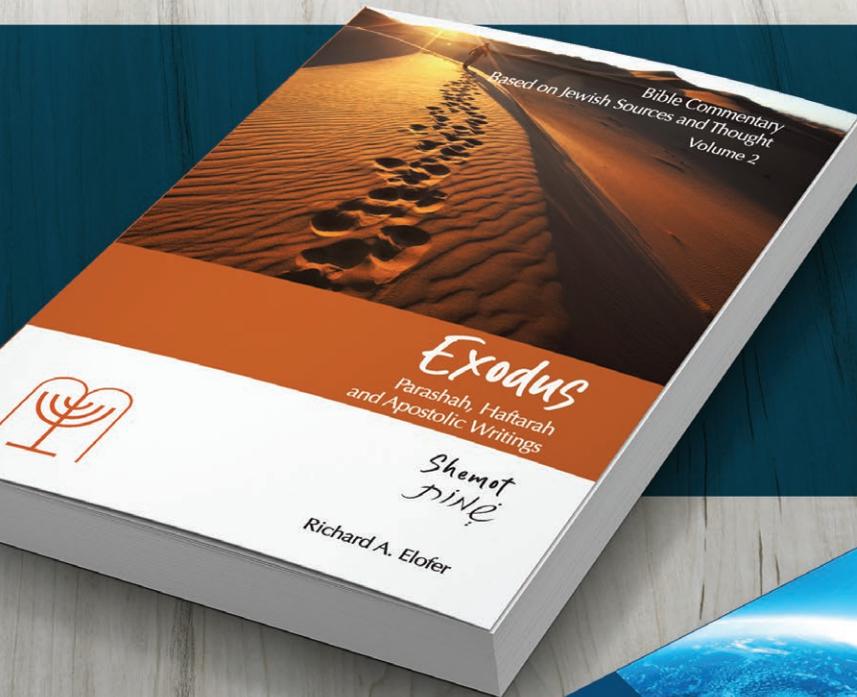
ENCYCLOPEDIA  
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A new online Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) is available at [encyclopedia.adventist.org](http://encyclopedia.adventist.org). Launched by the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference, the ESDA features over 2,500 articles on the history and structure, culture, theology, and more of the Adventist Church around the world. The content includes more than 4,500 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 adapted from a longer article from the encyclopedia.



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23. C., "Deserves to be Famous," 3, 4.

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GLOBAL MISSION

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## A Cry of Desperate Need



**Beth Thomas** is a freelance writer and editor living in the United States with her husband and two children.

**T**ravel with me, in your imagination, to the ancient city of Troas. It is the middle of the night. Completely exhausted from long days of difficult travel, the apostle Paul is sleeping soundly. Suddenly, he awakes with a start. He sits up and looks around. No one is there. *Was it only a dream?* he wonders. He lies down again, trying to reclaim his interrupted rest, but sleep evades him. Instead, he wrestles with swirling thoughts of the dream, its meaning, and what personal actions he will take.

Paul had recently finished his first missionary journey with Barnabas through what is now southern Turkey. Upon Paul's return to Antioch, the leaders of the infant church realized that heresy was creeping into some of the newly established congregations and asked him to return and encourage the believers in the truth.

As Paul and his new traveling companions, Silas and Timothy, went from town to town along the now familiar route, they shared with both Jews and Gentiles the beautiful message of Jesus and His life, death, and resurrection; their own

personal testimonies of how He changed their lives; and teachings from scripture. As a result of their labors, the Bible says that churches were "established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:5).

Now, as Paul slept soundly in Troas, a man suddenly appeared to him in a vision. His pleas punctuated Paul's peaceful sleep: "Come to Macedonia and help us!" His words were not a suggestion but a desperate call for assistance from outside their original plan. Could it be that God was calling Paul and his companions to change their plans and take the gospel into new territory, with new people, languages, and customs and, certainly, new challenges?

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church considers its strategic plan for the next five years, the unnamed Macedonian man's words still ring in our ears. While we are sometimes tempted to cover the same ground, tracing the same roads to the familiar places where God's work is firmly established, the cry of desperate need from unentered territories calls for our attention.

Today, 41.6 percent of the world's population is considered unreached. This means that there is no Christian presence and there are no Christian resources in the area. Another 27.2 percent of the world's population is not Christian, but they have access to resources. Combined, that means that nearly 70 percent of the world has yet to be touched with the message of Jesus and His love.

The second objective of the church's strategic plan is "to strengthen and diversify Adventist outreach in large cities, across the 10/40 Window, among unreached and under-reached people groups, and to non-Christian religions." While the church has always had a strategic emphasis on mission, there is always room for improvement and growth.

Unfortunately, the trend across the Christian world is that the majority of resources generated through tithes and offerings are reinvested in territories where God's work is well established and not the neediest places where the gospel has not yet penetrated.

If we aren't intentional, it is easier for us to invest resources to strengthen established churches in places like North or South America, or sub-Saharan Africa, while places like North Africa, the Middle East, and the densely populated countries of Asia suffer from a lack of financial and physical support. This second objective calls us away from our area of comfort and challenges us to pioneer new work among unreached people groups who are still waiting to hear about Jesus.

To determine how successful we are at accomplishing this goal, church leaders have prayerfully set 11 key progress indicators (KPIs) to help us evaluate our progress in this critical work. These KPIs include

- ▶ planting worshiping groups of believers in each country within the 10/40 Window where there is currently no Adventist presence (KPI 2.1)
- ▶ establishing at least one Center of Influence to minister to the needs of people in urban areas of one million people or more (KPI 2.4)
- ▶ challenging each of the 13 divisions of the General Conference to identify all significant immigrant and refugee populations in their territories and put in place initiatives to reach them with the saving message of Jesus (KPI 2.7)
- ▶ developing for each conference and mission a five-year plan to increase the number of primary and secondary schools, giving more children the opportunity to receive a Christ-centered education (KPI 2.10)

This broad series of initiatives harnesses the energy and creativity of Life Hope Centers, or Centers of Influence, that minister to urban populations through physical and spiritual health and wellness education; "tentmakers" who, like

Paul, use their business and trade skills to live and work in unentered territories in order to meet new people for Jesus; and other creative frontline missionary endeavors that create new opportunities to connect with people who have not heard the end-time message that Jesus desires His people to proclaim to the world.

How did Paul respond to the vision? The Bible tells us that he and Silas immediately set sail from Troas, bound for Macedonia. Arriving at Philippi, the capital city, they stayed for several days. One Sabbath morning, they went down to the river, where a small group of spiritually minded people met to pray. There they met Lydia, a woman of means and influence. As God opened her heart to the gospel message Paul shared, Lydia accepted the message, and she and her entire household were baptized. As the first convert to Christianity in that region, Lydia helped lay the foundation for the European church.

What if Paul had brushed off the Macedonian call? Lydia may never have heard the life-changing message of Jesus and His power, and the growth of the fledgling church in that region would have been delayed.

So, what part will you play in this bold I Will Go initiative? Would you prayerfully consider how you can connect with others in your community? You don't have to travel abroad. There may be immigrants in your neighborhood who come from non-Christian countries—you can find creative ways to reach out to them! You can support Christian education so that young people around the world have an opportunity to learn about Jesus in a safe environment. You can allocate your offerings to urban ministries, to Global Mission for the 10/40 Window, to frontline missionaries who go into dark, unentered regions. Do you have a business or a trade? You can use those skills to go on a new adventure with Jesus, touching lives for eternity.

As He did with Paul, the Holy Spirit will disrupt our plans, place a burden on our shoulders, and help us redirect our energy to bless people we might be overlooking. When He calls, will you be as willing as Paul to respond to His appeal? By God's grace, we will respond: "I will go!"

If you would like more information on the I Will Go strategic plan, visit [IWillGo2020.org](http://IWillGo2020.org). The following resources may also be helpful:

- ▶ Global Mission website: [global-mission.org](http://global-mission.org)
- ▶ Mission to the Cities website: [missiontothecities.org](http://missiontothecities.org)
- ▶ Urban Centers of Influence website: [urbancenters.org](http://urbancenters.org)

Adapted with permission from Adventist News Network.

# A Bird and a Seed



**Lilian Bruna Sarmiento**

served as a One Year in Mission volunteer in her home state of Paraná, Brazil.

In 2016, I joined a project called One Year in Mission (OYiM) and went to serve in a town called Itambé, which is located in the state of Paraná in southern Brazil. It was an amazing experience!

It was also a perfect opportunity for God to change my life and my way of seeing many things. Sometimes people think that being involved in mission work changes people's lives simply because they're there, but that's not the case. A missionary's life changes only if he or she is willing to change. The spiritual struggle is intense, and you can see the battle clearly around you. I think this is one of the best things about mission work because, in proportion to the attacks of evil, you feel God taking care of you. He did amazing things to help me reach out to people, such as what He did in the story I'm about to share.

Every morning our OYiM leader, Silvio, shared beautiful and inspiring devotional thoughts with us. He also gave us assignments to complete, such as doing good to others, not using our cell phones for one day, visiting someone, and praying with a stranger.

One day my mission partner, Thallis, and I were assigned the task of intentionally doing something good for someone. As we rode our bicycles through town on our way to visit a particular neighborhood, we thought about how we could fulfill our task. Then, as we passed the town's main square, we noticed a baby bird lying on the ground. It had fallen from a tall tree, and we stopped to see whether we could help.

Thallis climbed the tree and returned the bird to the nest. But then he couldn't climb back down. *What are we going to do?* we wondered. We didn't have long to wait because the property owners had been watching us, and they came out with a ladder. Thallis was relieved, but I couldn't help laughing at his predicament!

Because of this experience, we started talking to the people and developed a nice friendship with them. After a few visits, we started studying the Bible with the whole family—father, mother, two children, and even a grandmother! Isn't it amazing how God works? And all of this was because we stopped to help a bird.

The family didn't get baptized while we were there, but a seed had been planted in their hearts, and perhaps one day, we'll have a beautiful meeting together in heaven.

If you're afraid or full of doubts because you don't know how to reach people, don't worry. Just put yourself in God's hands. He will give you an unexpected opportunity, perhaps using a bird, a cat, a dog, or something even more surprising!

## One Year in Mission

One Year in Mission (OYiM) is a young adult urban missionary movement designed to take the

Three Angels' messages into the cities of the world. Teams of young people (18+) work for an entire year mingling with people, ministering to their needs, magnifying Jesus, making disciples, and inviting people to become part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church family. Is God calling you to be part of OYiM? Learn more at [youth.adventist.org/OYiM](http://youth.adventist.org/OYiM)!

Watch One Year in Mission stories at [m360.tv/oyim](http://m360.tv/oyim).



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# Woman on a Mission

**A**imee and her coworkers, Eunice and Ralph, left the ADRA Philippines office at dawn to begin a hard day's work. Although it was still morning, the tropical sun penetrated Aimee's skin and made her yearn for a cool bath. But that wasn't an option. A group of hungry people stood nearby, waiting for their bags of rice.

Two months earlier, the Taal volcano, silent for 43 years, had erupted with a vengeance, blasting poisonous gases, rock, and ash approximately nine miles into the air. Thousands fled their homes, seeking refuge at evacuation centers, where they were stranded for weeks. To help make their stay more comfortable, ADRA provided the evacuees with straw mats, mosquito nets, and bedsheets. They also provided cash assistance to help them rebuild their lives once they were able to leave.

As ADRA's public relations and marketing officer, Aimee had spent hours with the evacuees. How she pitied the old ones, commonly called Lola and Lolo (Grandmother and Grandfather), who could barely walk yet somehow had fled the falling ash. She had listened to multiple people share their stories of escape and their worries about how they would recover. Those were long days, when sleep only came on the heels of exhaustion.

Then COVID-19 struck!

One day while the ADRA team was distributing emergency supplies to those in need, Aimee scanned the crowd for a smiling face—someone who might be willing to do an interview. She noticed two women who seemed calm and happy and decided to approach them.

One of the women, named Elsie, told Aimee that a kind neighbor had brought her and her two children to the evacuation center the day of the eruption. Although she was very frightened, Elsie had had the presence of mind to pack clothes for her children and a Bible. As Elsie shared her experience, Aimee could tell that there was something different about her. Her eyes held no hint of the anxious despair that tortures many during catastrophic events.



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"Ma'am, can you share with us how COVID-19 has affected you?" Aimee asked.

Elsie smiled. She was happy to share her faith. "Honestly, if you believe in God," she said, "you feel relaxed. Even if you can't work. If you have put your faith in God, your burdens will feel light."

Others had voiced the opposite opinion. In fact, one woman had told Aimee that COVID-19 was worse than the volcano eruption. At least they could flee the volcanic ash, but now they were on lockdown, unable to go anywhere.

"I also told my children that as long as we cling to the Lord, He won't allow us to go hungry," Elsie



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added. “And the Lord took care of us.”

Aimee couldn't help but think of all the food that ADRA had provided during the eruption and pandemic. God had impressed people all over the world to donate so that others could eat.

Elsie then shared that there were new believers in her village who couldn't attend church due to the pandemic. To fill in the gap, she invited them to her house to worship. After the service, she spent time helping the children learn to read and understand the Bible.

Aimee noted that instead of ranting about her own hardships, Elsie chose to focus on the salvation of others.

Hearing Elsie's story suddenly made the world seem like a happier place for Aimee and validated her calling in life. In working for ADRA, she was being the hands and feet of Jesus—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and giving to the poor.



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- 1 Aimee on the job
- 2 Elsie
- 3 Foods items distributed by ADRA and Adventist Community Services to families in the Philippines
- 4 The Taal volcano eruption that occurred January 12, 2020



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The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the global humanitarian organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Through an international network, ADRA delivers relief and development assistance to individuals in more than 118 countries.

ADRA's response to the volcano eruption and COVID-19 in the Philippines included the distribution of 1,192 bed kits, financial assistance, and 56.2 tons of rice, as well as 2,360 bars of soap, 1,180 liters of disinfectant, and 272 gallons of alcohol to prevent the spread of infection. ADRA gave a triage tent to Adventist Hospital—Santiago City and produced materials to raise awareness about COVID-19. It also assisted Adventist Health in acquiring 11,000 face masks for the six Adventist hospitals in the Philippines.

- To learn more about ADRA, visit [ADRA.org](https://ADRA.org).
- To watch ADRA mission stories, visit [m360.tv/adra](https://m360.tv/adra).

**Thank you for supporting ADRA through your World Budget offerings!**



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



Animation by **Diogo Godoy**

# No Time for Toys



**W**hen Rishon and his family moved from a big city to a small house on a mountainside, his parents talked with him about getting rid of some of his many toys.

“You don’t need all those big toys,” his dad said. “You are going to be very busy doing things other than playing with them.”

“The village children are poor and don’t have nice toys like you,” his mom said. “Why don’t you give them your big toys?”

Rishon was an obedient boy, and he didn’t mind giving away his big toys. He gave them to the boys and girls in the village, who were very excited to receive the gifts. Rishon was happy to see their joy, and it felt so good to do something kind for others.



As the days passed, Rishon saw that his mom and dad were right. He was very busy. He went to school at home, and when he wasn’t studying, he worked in the family garden, planting, weeding, and harvesting corn, potatoes, and other crops. He also spent part of each day memorizing Bible verses. He realized that he didn’t have time to play with his small toys either, so he gave some of them to the village children.





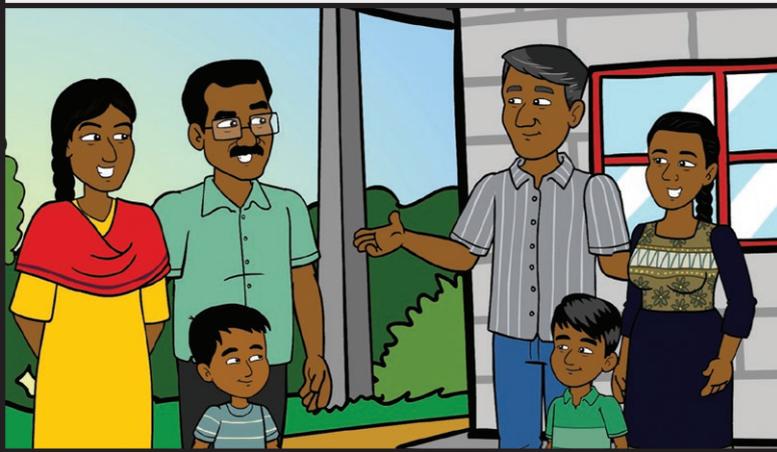
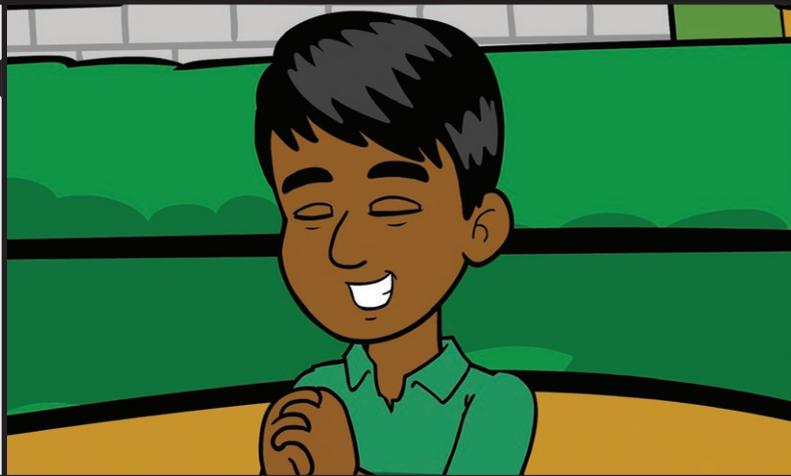
The children quickly became Rishon's friends. At first, they liked him because he gave them toys. But then they got to know him, and they saw that he was a kind, gentle boy. They liked to visit Rishon at his house.

Rishon liked to play with the children. Sometimes they played with Rishon's old toys. But most of the time, they played church.

You see, the children weren't Christians, and their parents weren't Christians. They didn't know anything about God creating the world or Jesus dying for people's sins. They didn't know anything about praying to God.

But by playing church, Rishon taught the children about Jesus and told them stories about people in the Bible. He told them about Jesus dying on the cross to give eternal life to everyone who believes in Him. He invited them to pray to Jesus and showed them how.

"Dear God," he said. "Thank you for being our very best Friend. Please give us a heart of love for You and for others. In Jesus' name, Amen."



The other children began to copy Rishon's prayers, and they told their parents about the Bible stories. Then some of the parents asked Rishon's parents to teach them more about Jesus.

Now Rishon doesn't have much time to play with his remaining toys. He is too busy being a missionary for Jesus and helping to grow God's church.



Rishon and his parents

## You, too, can help grow God's church!

Do you know that our church has a special group of missionaries that start new churches just like Rishon did? They're called Global Mission pioneers. They share God's love with those who don't know Him and help them become followers of Jesus.

- ▶ To read more amazing stories about pioneers, visit [Global-Mission.org](http://Global-Mission.org). Please pray for them and support their ministry at [Global-Mission.org/giving!](http://Global-Mission.org/giving!)

## More Children's Mission Stories

The longer version of this story and others like it can be found in the *Children's Mission* magazine at [AdventistMission.org/mission-quarterlies](http://AdventistMission.org/mission-quarterlies).



Watch this story at [m360.tv/s2048!](http://m360.tv/s2048!)

# Have you ever thought about making a planned gift to God's global mission that will keep on giving years after you are gone?

**W**hen you make a planned giving arrangement to benefit Global Mission your gift will have a growing impact on the lives of unreached people in cities, towns, and villages who still need to hear about Jesus.

**S**o whether you're reviewing your registered retirement savings plan or selecting your annuity, now is a great time to invest in the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church through a planned giving gift to Global Mission.

Please prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to make a planned giving gift to help plant new groups of believers." You can add a provision in your will to leave a portion of your estate to Global Mission, directing it to "Where Needed Most." **To learn about making a lasting impact, visit [Global-Mission.org/PlannedGiving](https://Global-Mission.org/PlannedGiving) or call 800.648.5824 and speak with our planned giving and trust officer.**

