

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

2015 • **QUARTER 3** • SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC DIVISION

www.AdventistMission.org

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Your Offerings at Work

The Southern Asia-Pacific Division (SSD) would like to thank their brothers and sisters around the world for their generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering

during the 2nd quarter, 2012. Some of the funds received from this offering were used to purchase much needed medical equipment and to renovate the Adventist hospital in Medan, Sumatra. This hospital (pictured here) serves the needs of thousands of people in western Indonesia. Thank you for supporting mission!



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Dear Sabbath School Leader,

This quarter features the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, which includes the countries of Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam.

The Stories—In Their Own Words

Nearly all of the stories this quarter come directly from the people themselves—in their own words. I hope as you share these stories with others, you and they will be inspired by how God is working in the life of each person.

The Challenges:

Timor-Leste is a very young country, having gained its independence on May 20, 2002. The entire area of this island country is spread over 15,007 square kilometers. The official languages are Portuguese and Tétum, while English and Indonesian are

the more commonly spoken languages. The literacy and educational levels are extremely low, and the country is almost completely Roman Catholic.

The Adventist Church currently has just one church in Timor-Leste and members face religious liberty challenges, particularly students expected to attend school on Sabbath. Part of your Thirteenth Sabbath Mission Offering will help build an Adventist school in Dili.

Sri Lanka is an island nation off the coast of India. The most sacred mountain in the country is Adam's Peak. Pilgrims climb by candlelight to stand in what they believe to be the footsteps of Buddha.

One of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects this quarter is to build a church at the Lakpahana Adventist College and Seminary.

Bangladesh has a population of 163 million people (2013), making it the world's eighth most populated country. Bangladesh is also one of the world's most densely populated countries. More than 30 percent of Bangladesh's population live below the poverty line, however, the economy and standards of living have been improving over recent years. Our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help to construct a building for a School of Nursing in Gazipur.

May the Lord bless you as you share the mission stories this quarter!



Gina Wahlen, *Editor*

Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help:

- build the Timor-Leste Adventist International School (TAIS) in the capital city of Dili.
- build a church at the Lakpahana Adventist College and Seminary in Sri Lanka.
- construct a school of nursing at the Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College in Gazipur.
- CHILDREN'S PROJECT: Desks for the school children at TAIS.

Please Pray for Us

Sanzina



photo: Earley Simon

A few years ago I was living with my aunt in the city of Lospalos because I didn't have a home of my own. My sister-in-law, Regina, also lived there. One day I noticed that almost every afternoon Regina left the house to go somewhere. I wondered about it so finally asked her.

"I'm going to meet with the missionaries," she told me.

I had no idea what a missionary was.

"They're people who explain the Bible to everyone who wants to know about it," Regina said.

Learning About God

I was even more curious now and wondered whether I could learn about the Bible, too. Regina was happy I was interested and that evening told me the story about Adam and Eve. I had never heard this story before and found it fascinating. Regina also told me how wonderful God was to her.

The next afternoon Regina brought the missionaries—Thomas and Makario—to my aunt's home where the four of us studied the Bible together. However, when my aunt found out that we were studying the Bible, she became very angry and wouldn't allow us to continue the studies. From then on she was always angry with me.

Sometime later a Seventh-day Adventist Bible congress was held in the capital city of Dili. I was able to go, and it was during those meetings that I decided to be baptized. There was a problem, however, because by then I was living with a man with whom I had children, but we weren't married. The pastor gently explained that before I could be baptized, we would need to get married, and he would be happy to marry us.

I was really stressed, not knowing what the father of my children would say, but praise God, he agreed to get married! After the pastor married us, I asked my

husband for permission to be baptized, and he agreed. I thought that since he agreed with my baptism, perhaps he would also be interested in studying the Bible, but he wasn't.

Problems at Home and School

Things were not going well for us, and for a while we had to live in a tent. But, praise God, the Adventist church helped us by bringing materials and building a small house for us! Although my husband wasn't interested in the Bible, I wanted our children to know God, so I taught them Bible stories. Our eldest son went to church with me every Sabbath and decided to be baptized. Our younger son and daughter also wanted to learn more about Jesus. Sadly, my husband still had no interest in God and one day ripped my Bible apart as he yelled, "I don't want you to teach your religion to my children!"

But somehow we were still able to go to church each week, although it meant that the children missed school every Sabbath. All of the Adventist children here have problems with their teachers because

they don't attend school on Sabbath, and then the teachers become very angry with them. Even though they are good students, the teachers will mark their grades down because of this.

Adventist School Needed

We are so happy that one of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects is an Adventist School here in Timor-Leste. Things will be better once we have an Adventist school because then the children will be able to come to church without being afraid of what their teachers will say and do during the week. We will all be happy for that!

In the meantime, we try to share our faith wherever we can. One day I went on a bus to visit my family in Dili. While on the bus I met a young man and started telling him Bible stories. He sat by me the entire trip and really enjoyed listening to the stories. When we arrived in Dili I invited him to come to church with me on Sabbath—and he came! I introduced him to the Adventist missionaries there and encouraged him to study the Bible with them, just as I had done some years ago. I have heard that he's been studying with the missionaries every day. One day I hope to meet him again.

Please remember your brothers and sisters in Timor-Leste in your prayers. Please pray for the teachers, that they will be kind to the students and will allow the Adventist children to take their final exams. I would also like to ask you to pray for my husband, because he is very much against our faith. I just want my husband to study the Bible and get to know God—that way our entire family can follow Jesus. 🌍

Mission Post

- The Timor-Leste Mission was first organized in 2009 and reorganized in 2011. It currently has one church and 500 members.
- A former Portuguese colony, Timor-Leste is 98 percent Roman Catholic.
- The Timor-Leste Mission is an attached field to the Southern Asia-Pacific Division.

Always in Jesus

TIMOR-LESTE | July 11

Febrina



photo: Earley Simon

My name is Febrina, and I'm 17. I learned about Jesus from my uncle Marcos. I'm proud of him because he's the one who brought me into the Adventist church. I studied the Bible with him when I was in the fifth grade and then was baptized the next year.

After being baptized, I no longer went to school on Saturdays, because I had learned about the Sabbath. I felt happy and enjoyed reading the Bible, because it is true.

Challenge

By the time I was a junior in high school, the teachers began to notice me and my religion because every Sabbath I wasn't in school. One day I was taken to the school office for a meeting with the teachers. One of them asked, "Why don't you attend classes on Saturday?"

"I don't attend class on Saturday because I go church," I replied. After I explained more about the Sabbath, the group became very angry. They decided that I must attend class every Saturday, and if I didn't, I would be expelled.

After that meeting I went home and prayed about this problem. I asked the church to pray for my school. The following Sabbath I didn't go to school, and so I was expelled.

The Bible verse that helps me to always be strong in Jesus is Matthew 6:33: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." This verse really strengthens me.

Going to Work

After being expelled, I just stayed at home for a while. The church members continued to pray, asking God to strengthen me, so I decided to do something. Instead of just staying at home, I went to work. Now I work in a shop in Lospalos. This shop is owned by a

Seventh-day Adventist, so every Sabbath it is closed.

In this shop we want to share Jesus with the people who come in. One way we do this is by not selling cigarettes or alcohol. When the customers ask for these things, we explain that we don't sell them because the Bible tells us that they're not good for our bodies, and that our bodies are the temple of God. Almost every day someone asks us about these things.

I pray to God about my future education. I don't know where I'll continue my studies. I request all church members to help me by praying for an Adventist school to be in Timor-Leste. But whatever happens in my life, even if more challenges come to make me fall, I have decided to always stay in Jesus.

Expelled by Family

Editor's Note: Sometimes believers are expelled by schools for accepting Jesus and His special Sabbath day, and at other times, parents disown their children when their son or daughter becomes a Seventh-day Adventist. This is the story of one such case:

My name is Helena. I learned about Jesus from Adventist missionaries who came to my village. The missionaries were very

kind to the people, and did many social activities, such as helping people to clean the village, the road, and people's houses. I was interested in what they were doing, so I went and joined them every day.

While we were working together, the missionaries invited me to study the Bible with them. We studied for two months and then I decided to be baptized. That was in 2009. I was very happy to study the Bible, because I found new lessons for my life. The verse that always encouraged me to study was Matthew 7:7—"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." It said just to come and ask Jesus in prayer. So when I have problems in my life, I think about this verse.

Before studying the Bible with the missionaries, I was loved by my mother and father, and all of my relatives. But after I accepted God in my life they abandoned me, and in fact, they now hate me.

After my baptism I decided to become a missionary. So I worked as a missionary for two years and then met and married a wonderful Christian man. I'm thankful to God because we are both in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We now have a son, and I stay home with him while my husband works for ADRA Timor-Leste..

But I don't know how to appease my family so that we can have as good of a relationship as we once had. So I ask you, please pray for my family—especially for my mother and father, so that one day they will again receive me as their daughter. And also please pray for an Adventist school in Timor-Leste, so that we can bring our children to study there. Thank you. 🌍

Fast Facts

- Timor-Leste, also known as East Timor, is the world's newest democracy, having gained its independence in May, 2002.
- The currency of Timor-Leste is the U.S. dollar.
- The official languages of Timor-Leste are Portuguese and Tétum.

Missionaries and Magicians

TIMOR-LESTE | July 18

Fernando



photo: Earley Simon

My name is Fernando Filipe, and I live in Timor-Leste. One day my little sister, Tereza, and I had to go to the hospital. While we were waiting in the emergency room, I noticed some men praying with their sick friend. I learned that they were Seventh-day Adventist missionaries. As they were leaving their friend, I asked whether they had any magazines. They didn't, but they did have a Bible. I said, "If you can, please share with me a story from the Bible." So they told me about when Jesus performed a miracle and healed a crazy man from many demons; the man was perfectly well. When I heard this story I was so happy.

My sister and I stayed in the hospital, and in the evening the missionary told us many more Bible stories. The next day, the missionary's friend was well enough to go home. As they were preparing to leave,

something in my heart wanted to follow the Adventist missionaries. I was very sad when they left.

Searching for the Missionaries

After we were released from the hospital, I went looking for the missionaries so I could study the Bible with them. After a week, I finally found them in a little village and asked whether we could study the Bible together. They happily agreed. We studied every day, and finally I decided to be baptized.

Not everyone was happy with my decision. My neighbor told me that if someone is always studying the Bible, they'll become crazy! But I told my neighbor that the Bible is God's Word, and that I didn't believe that anyone would go crazy just because they studied His Word.

Another person became so angry that he hit me hard and my hands became very swollen. He said that I should stop studying the Bible—but I still continue to study. Please pray for this man.

My wife, our two children, and I are the only Adventists in our village. Every Sabbath we worship together, read the Sabbath School lesson, and pray.

To reach the people of our village,

our family has started a tamarind candy business. Tamarind candy is made from the fruit of the tamarind tree, which normally grows in tropical regions. It's known for having a sweet and sour taste and is chewy. "ADVENT" is our brand name, and we've named this candy product "Malachi 3:10." People come to buy our candy, and whenever they see the box, they read this verse!

I would like to ask our Adventist church members, wherever you are, to please pray for us and how we can share God with the people in our village. And also pray for my tamarind candy product. I believe that through this business, people will ask me about the verse in the name. Please also pray that we'll soon be able to have an Adventist school here in Timor-Leste.

God is More Powerful

My name is Maria Soares, and I'm 62. I first learned about Jesus from my son, Nando. One day I was having bad problems with my eyes, so I went to a local magician. Unfortunately, he wasn't able to help my eyes.

Then one day my son and his friend, Acasio, visited me. They shared the Bible with me, and I was especially interested in Matthew 7:7: "Ask and it shall be

given unto you, seek and you will find." This text helped me know that God is always ready to listen, so I stopped going to the magician and started praying to God. I believed that it was possible for God to heal me, and He did! My eyes fully recovered!

I studied the Bible with Nando and Acasio for six weeks and then was baptized. But after my baptism, my relatives and neighbors were no longer good to me. They said that I've joined the church of Satan. Sometimes they throw rocks at my house, but I just pray to God about that.

I'm thankful that even though I have many problems, I'm still able to share God's words with some people—especially with my husband's family.

Please pray for me to always be strong in Jesus. Even though my relatives and neighbors hate me, I always pray for them. I just want that one day they, too, will seriously study the Bible and come to know God as I have. 🌍



Fast Facts

- Timor-Leste covers an area of 14,874 square kilometers.
- The population of this island nation is 1,065,582.
- The official name of East Timor is the "Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste."
- The capital of Timor-Leste is Dili.

The Highest Score

TIMOR-LESTE | July 25

Maria

photo: Earley Simon



My friend Mariano and I recently finished high school. We had been classmates since junior high school, but at that time, Mariano was always getting into trouble and wasn't friendly with anyone. But by the time we were in senior high school, something had happened to him. In fact, I hardly recognized him because now he looked like a person with a kind heart.

Mariano and I always got the top grades in our class every semester. Because of this, our teacher chose us to be the class leaders—Mariano was the chair, and I was the vice-chair. That meant that on days when the teacher wasn't in class, we were the ones in charge.

Whenever we were in charge, Mariano always shared stories about God with the class. I was very interested to hear these stories and always asked

him to share God's Word with us when the teacher was away.

But after a while I became jealous of Mariano. I noticed that although he never came to school on Saturdays, he *always* got the very highest score on all of the final exams. I studied harder and always tried to do my best, but I was never able to beat Mariano—he always came in first!

Smartest Student

My grandfather is a magician, so one day I asked him to do something that would make me smarter. He gave me some traditional medicine and told me that it would help me get the top score on tests. But I still never came in first; it was *always* Mariano.

One day I decided to ask Mariano why he had changed and was now the smartest student in the class. He told me that it was because God helped him and that he studied the Bible. When I heard that I was very happy, because I knew that we had a Bible at our house—my mother's Bible.

So I went back home and tried to read

Genesis, chapter one. But I became tired of reading because I didn't understand it. The next day I went back to school and asked Mariano how he could study the Bible. I told him that I tried reading it but didn't understand what I was reading.

Studying Together

Mariano laughed and said, "If you really want to study the Bible, I'll come to your house and we can study the Bible together."

I agreed. So after class we always went to my house and studied the Bible. Two weeks later, my neighbors asked me what I was doing with my friend every day. "We're studying the Bible together," I told them. "If you want, you are welcome to come and join us."

When they heard this, they became very angry. They told me to stop studying the Bible, but I decided to keep studying anyway. During this time, my mother didn't know about these Bible studies because she was away, working in Dili, and I was staying with my grandparents. When she heard that I had been studying the Bible and was even planning to be baptized, she became very angry and said that she would throw me out of the house if I became a Seventh-day Adventist.

I prayed a lot about this and asked the other Adventists in the church to pray for me. Then my grandparents told my mother that I had changed, and that I looked and acted better. My grandmother said that I had become a "nice girl, with no more abusive words in her mouth, and was no longer naughty." After my grandparents explained this to my mother, she understood and was no longer angry with me.

Mission Post

- According to the ancient Austronesian (the natives of Timor) legends, Timor was formed after an ageing crocodile transformed into an island when a boy helped the crocodile when it was unwell. The boy's descendants are supposedly the natives of Timor.
- The majority of the people in Timor-Leste are Roman Catholics, followed by Protestants, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists.
- For more on this and other Thirteenth Sabbath projects this quarter, watch *Mission Spotlight* at www.missionspotlight.org.

Expelled From School

I was baptized in 2012, and after that I had many problems. My friends and classmates were mean to Mariano and me. Now I, along with Mariano, no longer attended school on the Sabbath. Then the teachers moved all exams to Saturdays and wouldn't make any exceptions for the two of us. So both Mariano and I were expelled from school because we "didn't follow the rules."

But praise God, a nearby Muslim school accepted us, and we were able to continue our studies there without any Sabbath problems. Mariano and I were always at the top of the class—we even got higher scores than before!

After graduating I decided to become a volunteer missionary with the 1,000 Missionary Movement (see www.1000mm.info) and am working with a good partner from Indonesia. Please pray for me to always be a strong missionary, especially as we face challenges in the villages where we work. 🌍

A Great Plan From God

Romena



photo: Earley Simon

My name is Romena and my husband is Alfonso. We have four children. I was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 2012, and before then I was Roman Catholic—but just by tradition. I didn't know anything about the Bible.

I came to know Jesus through some difficult circumstances with our young son, who was born with very bad problems with his eyes. I brought him to the magician to be healed. Every day we went there and the magician performed traditional rituals for my son. We spent a lot of money for this, but he was never healed.

After a while I told Alfonso, “I will never believe in tradition or magic anymore. We lost our first son because of this and I don't want our second son to die as well.”

So we decided to take our son to

the hospital in Dili. There the doctor examined him and said that he needed to have surgery. When I heard this I became very nervous and afraid. We signed some documents and the doctor said that he could do the surgery the next morning.

“OK,” I said, but inside I was afraid that our son would die.

Finding Peace at the Hospital

Before the surgery I met a wonderful lady from Indonesia. She was sick and in the hospital. She explained that she was a teacher and she tried to comfort me because I was already like a woman in mourning. She asked whether I believed in God and whether she could pray with me. After we prayed I wanted to learn more from this lady, and something made me believe that my son was going to be OK.

Following the operation, we had to stay in the hospital for several days. Every day

Fast Facts

- East Timor was made a Portuguese colony in the 16th century. It declared its independence in 1975.
- Shortly after it declared its independence, East Timor was occupied by Indonesia.
- The country gained its freedom again following the UN-sponsored act of “self-determination” in 1999. After three years of unrest, it became the first new sovereign state of the twenty-first century. Timor-Leste is its new name.

this woman told me more about Jesus. She invited me to just put everything into God’s hands, who created us, but I didn’t understand what that meant.

I noticed that when her friends came to visit her they brought their Bibles and had worship together. One day after her friends left, I asked her, “What is your religion?” She replied that she was a Seventh-day Adventist and asked about my religion. I explained that I was Catholic, but that I had some friends who were Adventist.

“Great!” she said. “I think you should study the Bible and learn more about it.”

Praise God, before long my son was healed and we were able to return home. I decided at that time to really look for God, and so I visited some Adventist missionaries—Thomas and Makario—and asked them to teach me the Bible. We studied together every day.

Answered Prayers

But one day my son became very sick again, and we had to return to the hospital. While we were in the emergency room, I began to pray: “Jesus, if you are really my God and my Creator, please heal my son.” After four days my son was better! This made me want to know and study the Bible even more!

Unfortunately, at that time Alfonso wasn’t happy that I was studying the Bible, and he told me to stop. However, it was so precious to me I just kept going to the Bible studies anyway. Finally, I made the decision to be baptized. But there was a problem—Alfonso and I weren’t actually married—we were just living together. So the pastor said that before I could be baptized, we had to get married. Then Alfonso surprised me and said that he wanted to marry me in the Adventist church! So we were married, and afterwards I was baptized.

Then Alfonso surprised me again. When we were back at home he told me, “I want to study the Bible too. I see that this is the right church.” When I heard these words, I was so happy! In my heart I said Thank You to the Lord. After three months of Bible studies my husband was also baptized.

Looking back, I realize that behind the sad situation of having to take our son to the hospital, God had a great plan. We were able to meet the wonderful Adventist woman who shared her faith and encouraged me to take Bible studies and eventually become a Seventh-day Adventist. I’m thankful to God because now we are a family in God. 🌍

Shining Lights

SRI LANKA | August 8

Abilasha



Abilasha comes from a Hindu family from Puttalam in the northwest area of Sri Lanka. Her family has never liked Christians and avoided them whenever possible. Abilasha's father was an alcoholic, which made family life very difficult and disrupted her studies. There was no peace and harmony at home, so she begged her mother to let her go to school somewhere else. She wasn't enjoying school and couldn't concentrate with all the disruption at home.

Abilasha had an uncle who was a Seventh-day Adventist, and he would sometimes visit the family. Each time he came, he talked about an Adventist school called Lakpahana ("Light of Sri Lanka"). He explained what a good school

it was and described its beautiful rural setting on a coconut plantation.

After hearing about Lakpahana many times, the mother decided that Abilasha should go to school there, even though she didn't like Christians or the God that the Christians worshiped. So Abilasha made the journey from her home in Puttalam on the northwest coast, to the center of the country, where the school is located.

A Change of Scenery

Once she arrived on campus, Abilasha loved the beautiful and peaceful setting of Lakpahana. There she was introduced to the God of heaven and began to experience His love. She attended the worship services, and as her interest grew, she began to study the Bible for herself.

She was especially encouraged by Psalm 23 and Psalm 115, which have often helped her during times of difficulty.

Abilasha also appreciates prayer and was especially happy to learn that her father is doing much better now. She is thankful to the Lord that she is getting good grades in school. She is hoping to one day become a doctor.

Abilasha enjoys helping with a branch Sabbath School near Lakpahana and especially likes telling Bible stories and teaching songs about Jesus and His love. She's been helping at the branch Sabbath School for a year and is looking forward to continuing.

Branching Out

One of the teachers at Lakpahana, known as Teacher Manjula, is also actively involved in the branch Sabbath School. She has been helping out for quite some time. One day she noticed that in a nearby village, the people seemed lonely and worried, and they felt that no one cared about them. She could see that they needed encouragement and so began holding a branch Sabbath School there. The group sang with the children and with whoever else came.

They noticed that a blind man, who appeared to be in his 40s, was coming to their meetings. He enjoyed the songs so much, and two weeks after he started coming, he brought his mother to the meetings. He felt included with the singing and asked the branch Sabbath School team to record their music so he could listen and sing any time he wanted.

Providential Placement

Right in front of where they were holding their meetings lived a family

Mission Post

- Buddhism came from India to Sri Lanka in 250 B.C.
- Sri Lanka has been home to many Buddhist schools and monasteries for centuries.
- Seventy percent of the population of Sri Lanka is Buddhist, 13 percent Hindu, 10 percent Muslim, and 7 percent Christian.
- Today there are 37 Seventh-day Adventist churches in Sri Lanka with a total membership of 3,932.

that father did not get along, and there was a lot of fighting. Two children were living in that home and they had noticed the branch Sabbath School. At first they watched from their window, then from their doorway, and then from their front porch. Finally, they felt comfortable enough to join the group. The children soaked up all of the songs and stories that were shared during the meetings in front of their house. They began to feel loved and safe and started smiling and singing with the other children.

Manjula and her team are certain that the Lord led them to start a branch Sabbath School right in front of this home. Happily, the boy and girl are now studying at Lakpahana as a result of their first contact with this branch Sabbath School. Manjula encourages every church member to become involved in outreach programs and to share God's love with whomever He leads them to. 🌍

“For the Least of These...”

SRI LANKA | August 15

Yomali and Chathua



Yomali, 14, remembers that when she was young, her family was happy. But then her father had an affair, and the peace and harmony in the home was shattered. Her parents were always fighting. One day Yomali watched in horror as her father pushed her mother down the well. To try to cover up his deed, the father and relatives decided to tell people that Yomali’s mother had gone for a long trip abroad. But sometime later the police came looking for her. As the police kept questioning Yomali’s father, he became frightened and tried to jump into the well, but then decided to run. He was successful in his escape from the police, but that left Yomali without a mother or a father.

The police took Yomali to a children’s home, but there were no children her age,

so they took her to another home with children her own age. Although scared, Yomali acted out her frustrations by not obeying the rules of the children’s home. She wouldn’t come in at night and would sometimes hide up in the trees. The housemothers simply couldn’t control her.

They had heard about an Adventist-run service named International Children’s Care (ICC) and how well disciplined the children were there. The housemothers decided they would try sending Yomali there to see whether ICC could manage this “out-of-control” girl.

From the moment she arrived at ICC, Yomali noticed that there was a big difference, and she liked it very much. They began telling her about Jesus and teaching her Bible stories. She enjoyed all of the stories, but the one about Job really spoke to her.

Over time, Yomali’s heart softened and she grew to love God. Now she enjoys gardening and has her own patch of ground that she tends. She believes that gently and consistently caring for the plants will help them to produce a wonderful harvest. She also has come to

learn that in the same way, Christ's love nurtures our hearts so that we, too, can flourish for Him. Yomali hopes to one day become a missionary and go wherever God sends her.



A Better Life

Chathua was born with a deformed arm. Rather than take him home, his mother instead left him with an aunt and uncle. They happily took in Chathua to join them and their two sons.

Things were going fairly well for him. He loved his aunt, uncle, and cousins and going to the Lighthouse Adventist church together. He enjoyed living in the beautiful city of Kandy in the central hills of Sri Lanka. His uncle and aunt also helped him get treatment for his arm so he could begin to learn how to use it to accomplish the everyday tasks that he needed to do.

All seemed well for Chathua until tragedy struck his new family: his uncle passed away. It was a terrible shock for everyone, and his aunt felt it was too much

for her to handle three growing boys.

It was about this time that they met a gentleman who told them about ICC in Lakpahana. The aunt decided that it would be best if she sent Chathua away so that she would have only two boys to care for. There was a mixture of feelings in Chathua's heart about this decision, but he had to obey his aunt and he thought it would be better to go to ICC than to have no one to care for him.

Little did Chathua know that when he came to ICC, that his life would change for the better. He gained full use of his poor arm, and as he learned about God, he began to give the glory to Him.

Chathua now loves to work with his hands. He takes scraps and turns them into beautiful things with his creative mind. He dreams of teaching the skills God has given him to others. He also enjoys watching birds and he marvels at their intricate designs and colorful patterns. His favorite text in the Bible is Psalm 23 where it says that God is his Shepherd. He has learned to trust in God as his Shepherd and to provide what he needs. He believes that God looks after him just as a shepherd looks after his sheep.

Chathua has adjusted well to ICC and to school. "I want to study hard, be a good student, and get good grades," he says. "This has been one of my prayers for a long time. I pray for wisdom and that God would bless by studies. I have noticed that over the time I have been here, my grades continue to improve and that the Lord is answering my prayer." The most challenging classes Chathua has taken are the math classes, but he continues to pray for that wisdom every day, and the Lord has helped him—even with math, he says. 🌍

Whose God Is Stronger?

BANGLADESH | August 22

Romesh



It was a sunny and hot Friday in June at the Jouthokhamar church—located beside the Adventist Hill Tracts School & Seminary (AHTSS) in Bangladesh. Nearby was a big Hindu temple. A Hindu priest lived in the temple and worshiped the idols every morning and evening.

Mr. Binod Joti Tripura was one of the school and church workers, and he was in charge of looking after that particular church. On this particular Friday morning, he went with the students to the village. When they returned to the church, they saw that someone had occupied the church's land and had put a fence around it!

Mr. Tripura and the students tried to pull it out. Suddenly, the Hindu priest came out of his temple and started shouting at them. Then the priest started to curse Jesus, saying that He was an illegitimate son and a false prophet and

called Him obscene names. Mr. Tripura and the students told him to stop using such terrible language against God.

No One to Save You

The priest became so angry with Mr. Tripura that he promised to kill him that night, “and there is no one on earth,” he said, “who can save you from my hand.”

Mr. Tripura had a lot of faith and replied, “My God is a living God. I’m sure that He is going to punish you before sunset tomorrow night. There’s no one in the world who can save you from my Almighty God’s hand.”

Many of the villagers were there, and they all heard this conversation. They knew that the Hindu priest was a powerful man, and believed that he had power from a goddess. They believed that if he wanted to, he could destroy a man’s life any time, so the villagers were afraid of him.

The village people were sure that Mr. Tripura would be killed by the Hindu priest that night. Early the next morning (Sabbath), the villagers came back to see

Mission Post

- The Bangladesh Union Mission was first organized in 1919, then reorganized in 1938 and again in 1979.
- There are 121 Adventist churches in Bangladesh with a total of 28,681 members.
- Christians make up only 0.4 percent of the population.
- The majority religion in Bangladesh is Islam, with 86.6 percent of the population. Hinduism follows with 12 percent, and Buddhism with just 1 percent.

the dead body; instead, they found him very much alive.

An Early Morning Surprise

“Why are you all here at my house so early in the morning?” Mr. Tripura asked the crowd.

“Sir,” they replied, “we love you as our neighbor, and we couldn’t sleep the whole night because we were worried about you. We thought you’d be dead by morning, so we came to pay our respects.”

“I worship a God who is living and powerful,” Mr. Tripura told them. “You’ll see the results today before sunset. He (the Hindu priest) will be punished by my God.”

“How?” asked the crowd.

“I don’t know,” Mr. Tripura replied, “but I believe that God will punish him today (Sabbath).”

The students and staff decided to have a special fasting day that Sabbath. They praised God through music and a series of Bible readings and special time of prayer. “Oh Lord, we praise your name

and surrender ourselves to Your feet. Please forgive our sins and accept our prayers. Lord, you know everything that has happened with the Hindu priest. We believe that you are the living God. Please show your mighty power so that the people will realize that our God is a living and Almighty God.”

A Little Cloud

They prayed to God many hours during that hot day. Finally, at 3:00 P.M. they saw a little cloud in the sky, but still they didn’t know how God was going to punish the Hindu priest.

After a while it started raining. Everyone was afraid—they realized that lightning would strike somewhere. Finally, they saw lightning strike the Hindu temple twice within five minutes. The temple started to burn and all the idols were broken down. Mr. Tripura and the students realized that it was the answer to their prayers.

The Hindu priest was really afraid, so he came and asked Mr. Tripura for forgiveness for his misdeeds against him as well as God. He forgave him completely, and the storm stopped within five or ten minutes.

Now that the rain stopped, the villagers came to see the burnt temple and broken idols of the Hindu priest. They said to Mr. Tripura, “Sir, we knew that you are a great magician. You have defeated the Hindu priest, a powerful man, by your great magic.”

“I’m really not a magician,” Mr. Tripura told the crowd. “I worship the true God, who is alive. He answered my prayer. God is Almighty and powerful. There’s nothing that God can’t do for us. Believe in Him. If we believe, then God will save us and fight against our enemies.” 🌍



Working Together

By Dipa

I grew up in an Adventist home and learned the Bible stories from my parents, and my older brother and sister, and also in Sabbath school. So I knew about God since my childhood. When I went to school I learned more about God and was baptized.

Now I'm married and have children. We live in the area of the West Bangladesh mission. Here I've met many people who don't believe in God. Many are addicted to intoxicating drugs. After coming to this village, I visited many homes and encouraged the people to come to church. I've also given many Bible studies. Praise the Lord, many have given up their addictions and are coming to church. It is exciting to see how much they have changed.

When we came to Uchadanga village, every evening our family gathered together for worship. The very first day when we started singing, the neighborhood children came and joined with us to sing and pray. After a few days, someone asked, "There are many people

who want to come and join in your worship, would you accept them?"

I told them, "Yes, everyone can come to the church," so now we gather together in the church to worship God every evening.

My favorite Bible chapter is Psalm 91. From beginning to end, I love this chapter very much. When I fall into danger I remember these verses and feel safe. I tell my schoolchildren this verse and they believe it. In danger I recite this verse in my mind and I feel peace in my innermost soul. I thank God for His words to us.

Don't Let Them Go!

Preaching and teaching God's word isn't always easy; sometimes we face very difficult situations. Once we were going to a certain village, but we stopped at another village on the way, where we visited many homes and prayed with the people. When we were coming back through that village, some youth caught

us and started yelling, “These people came here to make us Christian. Hold them and tie them—don’t let them go.” They were calling more people. We were afraid and praying to God for help.

God is so great! He immediately sent an answer to our prayers. Just as a large crowd was gathering, we all heard a call to prayer. Some said, “Let them go. We don’t want a major disturbance now.”

Then they told us, “If we see you again, we will beat you black and blue.” I’m sure that God rescued us and that many times He rescues people like this. After arriving home we prayed and thanked God for His protection and for answering our prayers.

We often preach in villages and often have to travel quite far on foot. When we go to the villages, we visit many homes. Most of the village people stay at home in the evening and go to work in the morning. During the winter season, when we go visiting it becomes dark early, so we have to go home quickly. But in the summertime we get long hours to visit and talk.

The Privilege

Up to this time, I’ve been privileged to bring many souls to God. One experience I would like to share involves a Hindu lady with whom I became very close friends. Every day I would go and talk freely with her. One day she asked, “Sister, you are married and have a husband. Why don’t you wear bangles on your arms and vermillion on your forehead?”

This gave me the privilege of explaining my Christian behavior and

* In Hinduism, women traditionally indicate they are married by making a bright red (vermillion) mark on their forehead, using a powder called sindoor.

Fast Facts

- More than half of Bangladesh’s population are farmers, but the country’s main export earnings come from the garments industry.
- More than 2,000 periodicals and daily newspapers are published in Bangladesh.
- The Bay of Bengal is the largest bay in the world.
- In Bangladesh, the left hand is considered unclean, so one should always use the right hand when eating or passing food or drink.

beliefs to her. Gradually, I showed her from the Bible about food and other things. In this way our friendship became very strong. One day she came to our church and said that she wanted to see how we sang. After this, she often returned. One Sabbath she started to sing with us. Then she shared the song with her husband. In the evening both she and her husband were singing. So I invited both the husband and wife to join us in singing at the church, and they both came.

One day they told me that they wanted to become Christians. They very much liked the Adventist church and our singing and praying. One day my husband preached about not worshiping idols. Afterwards this couple said that this was true.

“Why do we bow down to man-made idols?” they asked. “From now on we will serve and accept your God.” We gave them more Bible studies, and they were baptized. They now come to church regularly. 🌍



Broom Beater

Philish

As a child, I studied at the school in our village. After passing the standard exams, I was accepted into the Adventist boarding school of Gowalathan. I came to know many things about Jesus Christ while studying there and decided to accept Him as my Savior. I was baptized there and learned more about Jesus day by day.

I've had many answers of prayer in my life and would like to share one with you.

One day, I was visiting house to house in our village. Suddenly, I heard the sound of crying. I immediately went to the family and learned that the mother was crying for her daughter.

"What has happened to her?" I asked.

Through her tears, the mother told me that her daughter was suffering from a very high fever, and sometimes her body would go into convulsions. "She's not getting well," the mother said. "Our priest came and prayed for her, but she still isn't getting well and her temperature continues to climb higher."

I asked whether she would like me to pray for her child, and the mother immediately accepted. We knelt down and I humbly prayed to our Almighty God—who heard and answered our prayer. Just one hour later, the mother came to me, her face beaming. "Teacher, my daughter is walking now. She's completely well. Really, God is with you."

New Church and School

The Thanarbaid Seventh-day Adventist Church is new. This year we also started a school. Unfortunately many of the villagers tried to stop it from being built. They treated us meanly and were personally opposed to me and my family.

I had been praying with some of the villagers every evening. In this way, God softened their hearts that had been so hard and pitiless as they tried to stop the work. Now there is no problem, and our new church and school are running well by the grace of God.

We usually have family worship every morning, but in the evening we worship

together with our neighbors. We sing and praise God regularly and always have weekly worships, too.

A Call to Preach

My favorite Bible text is Ecclesiastes 11:1—“Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days” (NKJV). Why do I like this verse? Because it tells us to preach. Jesus tells us to preach. If we don’t preach, the trees and rocks will cry out! I prayed and told God, “Oh Lord, I’m going out to preach about you. I don’t know how many will accept you.” But I had great faith that people would accept Jesus when the Holy Spirit touched their hearts. I was so happy when, after I preached for about two months, eight persons accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

One day, I was going to preach in another village. I kept the Bible in my bag. Suddenly, someone came to me and asked, “Where are you going?”

I told him that I was going to a certain village. He said, “Please don’t

go. If you go there, a woman will beat you with her broom.”

“Why would she do that?” I asked.

“Because you converted her eight friends. Now they are Seventh-day Adventists, and this woman is very angry because she has to drink wine alone—now she is totally friendless.”

“I’ve been working for God for a long time,” I told him. “But I have never yet been beaten for the name of God by anyone. I think, if that would happen, it would be very meaningful to be beaten for God’s name.” So, I decided to go to that village.

When I arrived, the woman was angry and told me that she had been waiting to beat me with her broom. But, something amazing happened! As I came closer to her house, she became calm and quiet! She even said, “Perhaps I can become a member of your group one day.” I am sure that this was a result from the power of prayer.

An Honest Question

Chandiapara, another village, is full of Roman Catholic Church members. There is not a single Seventh-day Adventist in the village. So, I went there with lots of prayer and my Bible in my bag. One day, I met a young man who asked, “Why don’t you observe the Resurrection Day instead of Saturday?” Then I read Genesis 2:1, 2; Exodus 20:8-11; and 31:14 to him. He listened very carefully, then said, “I haven’t heard this before.” And he then added, “I want to become a member of your church!” He accepted Jesus, and after more Bible studies he was baptized. In this way, an unknown youth became a Seventh-day Adventist after hearing God’s Word. I really feel so much happiness in my heart when I share God’s Word with others. 🌍

Mission Post

- The capital city of Dhaka is the largest city in Bangladesh. The city has an estimated population of 15 million people, making it one of the largest cities in the world. Dhaka is known as the “City of Mosques.”
- Not all Muslim women in Sri Lanka wear burkhas.
- For Hindu women there are many marriage symbols, including painting a red line on the head where the hair split is, and wearing two white bracelets and one metal bracelet.

Interest Pays Dividends

BANGLADESH | September 12

Ratan



How did I come to know Jesus? I had a friend named Liton who owned a tailoring shop called Popular Tailors. The shop is located right beside the Seventh-day Adventist school campus in Dhaka.

I worked with Liton, who made the students' uniforms for the Adventist school. Because of this, I often needed to go onto the campus. In the course of my work, I became acquainted with Mr. Shapon Halder, who was the secretary of the Bangladesh Union Mission. Mr. Halder was kind and took a real interest in me. One day he invited me to study the Bible with him, and I accepted. We studied together for some time and eventually I was baptized. After that my life completely changed, and I decided that I wanted to work for God and became a church planter.

What Is a Christian Like?

I live in a place called Kishoreganj. In this region, people are not familiar with Christians. When we first introduce ourselves as Christian or start preaching, people come just to see what a Christian looks like, or how we eat, or what our attitude is like. Sometimes life is difficult because we are constantly being watched.

But God is blessing us, and with his guidance we've been able to plant a church here. We now have regular church activities, many people have been baptized, and more are preparing for baptism. A lot of people are responding to the Adventist message and joining the church. So if it's God's will, everything is possible!

My favorite Bible verse is Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (NKJV). This is my favorite verse because I believe that Jesus’ second coming is very near and we should bring all to Christ. So, I continue to preach. But sometimes it’s not always easy.

A Difficult Situation

One lady, Aroti Sarker, was recently married. I regularly go to her area to preach, and Aroti was one of the people who came to the meetings and was baptized. After hearing this news, her husband kicked her out of their home and told her to go to the house of the man who convinced her to be baptized. So she came to my house and with tears told me everything.

I tried to console her by assuring her that God was on her side and that she should never be afraid. I told her that I would do all I could to help her, but unfortunately the situation got worse. Nearly everyone in the village said that all responsibilities had to be borne by me, otherwise they would file a police report against me and have me removed from the area. During this time I spent the whole night in prayer, seeking God’s wisdom and power.

By the blessing of God, the next day I and one of my friends went to her husband’s house and discussed everything with him. He calmed down and took his wife back. Wonderfully, after a while the husband was also baptized!

Kindness Opens Doors

One month ago I was waiting for my wife at the hospital where she works. Suddenly I noticed one couple crying as they left the hospital. I went to them to find out what was wrong. The man explained that his wife was pregnant and that they came to the hospital to admit

Fast Facts

- The country of Bangladesh is almost entirely flat. It has the largest, most fertile delta in the world where the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna Rivers come down from the Himalayas and drain into the lowlands.
- More than 30 percent of the population live below the poverty line; however, the economy and standards of living have been improving over recent years.
- The national flower of Bangladesh is the white-flowered water lily, called Shapla.
- Jackfruit (Kathai in Bengali) is the national fruit and the Mango tree is the national tree.

her. However, they were told that no bed was available, so the doctor sent them out.

I felt very sorry for them and by God’s grace, I found a place for them. They were so grateful, and later I was able to share the gospel with them. Following Bible studies, this couple was baptized and today they are very happy.

Kept Safely

Whenever I start any journey, I always start with prayer. Two months ago, I was riding on a bus to Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh. As usual, I prayed on the bus for a safe journey. At 9:00 A.M. the bus started the journey, but after a while, the driver lost control and the bus ended up in the low land beside the main road. It was a miracle that none of the passengers were severely hurt. I received a small injury on my forehead, but that was all. I have strong faith in God and believe that He answered my prayer and kept me alive in what could have been a deadly accident. 🌍

A Changed Life

BANGLADESH | September 19

Swapon



I am Swapon, and I come from the Khulna district of Bangladesh. I was born into a Hindu family, and our entire community is Hindu.

When I was a child, some Christian people came to our village. They offered many things to us and asked us to accept the Christian religion. Most of the people are poor, so they became Christians in order to receive the goods. After a few months they returned to Hinduism.

Some years passed and one day some men came again to our village. They started preaching, and it was really interesting. They talked about a man named Jesus, who loved and died for us. They also told about some of the things Jesus did while on Earth. Their preaching touched my heart.

The people stayed for a while and visited our homes. Even though we are

poor, they showed their love to us. Their preaching and the way they behaved influenced me. At their final meeting, I expressed my desire to learn more about Jesus and to become a Seventh-day Adventist. I still remember how the pastor's preaching changed my life. I'm happy to know Jesus and to be a member of the Adventist family.

I Have God's Love

The people of my village are very poor—they are living their lives hand to mouth. There is no one who can help them with their needs, so I try my best to help them. I teach the poor children of the village who are not able to go to school. I don't have money to reduce their poverty, but what I do have is God's love. If anyone gets sick or is having a problem I visit and pray for them and tell them

Mission Post

- Bangladesh has 121 Adventist churches with a total membership of 28,681.
- The Bangladesh Union Mission office is located in the capital city of Dhaka.
- One of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering projects is to help build a new school of nursing building for an Adventist college in Bangladesh.

about Jesus, who loves and takes care of us. The people are happy to hear about Jesus—it gives them light and a hope to live for.

In 2012 after graduating from the 1000 Missionary program, my friend Amol and I were planning to travel back home. Suddenly he got sick. I didn't know what to do, so I started praying silently. After some time Amol felt a little better, so we went to the bus station. When we arrived, we saw that the bus left without us. We were very upset because we missed the bus, and we didn't have extra money to buy new tickets. So we started praying to God to help us find a way home. After a few minutes the people from the bus counter came to us and said that another bus was coming, so they put us on that bus. On the way home, we thanked God, and our faith grew stronger after this incident.

Power of Prayer

My friends in the village and I were often involved with wrong activities, but after I became a Christian, they would often ridicule me. One day they came to my house and threatened me. They told me to stop preaching in the village, and then they left. I started thinking about what I

could do for them, so I started praying for them. I remembered one verse in the Bible about continually praying, so I kept praying that God would change their hearts and they would start doing good things. A few days later they came back and apologized. I was so happy to hear that and was thankful to God for answering my prayers. Now they are doing a good work and helping others in the village. Our God is mighty; He listens to our prayers and I am very thankful to Him!

I worship God all the time because He loves me and protects me from evil. Once I became very sick, so my mother took me to the doctor, but he wasn't able to help me. Then my mother become very worried and wanted to take me to the witch doctor. I told her that I didn't believe in that, and that only God could heal me and we should pray to Him. So my mother started praying, and a few days later I was well again. The first thing I did was to praise Him for his care for me.

My favorite chapter in the Bible is Psalm 23. Every time I read it, I can feel God's love more. What a promise he has given to us. The chapter inspires me more deeply toward God rather than to worldly things. He provides everything I need. This text encourages us to put our faith in God, and that's why I love it so much.

As I mentioned earlier, most of the people in our village are Hindu. I share with them about Jesus, His love for us, and how he gave His life on the cross. They are very surprised to hear this and are interested to learn more. I invite them to church, and they often come. I continue to preach and share the good news with them. Please pray for me so that I can win these souls for Christ. 🙏

Thirteenth Sabbath Program

➤	Opening Song	“Rise Up, O Church of God” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 615
➤	Welcome	Superintendent or Sabbath School teacher
➤	Prayer	
➤	Program	“Three Gems of Asia”
➤	Offering	
➤	Closing Song	“Lead Them, My God, to Thee” <i>The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal</i> , No. 653
➤	Closing Prayer	

Participants: Two narrators. *[Speakers don’t need to memorize their parts, but they should be familiar enough with the material to present it confidently.]*

Props: A large map of the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. (Scan the map on the back page of the quarterly or download the map from www.AdventistMission.org and project it onto a screen. Or draw a map on a large piece of paper.)

Narrator 1: The Southern Asia-Pacific Division is made up of 13 countries and several island federations. While some of these countries are open to the gospel and membership is strong, other countries present difficult challenges to the church. Today we are focusing on Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh.

Narrator 2: Timor-Leste, also known as East Timor, is an island situated approximately 400 miles (640 km.) to the northwest of Darwin, Australia. The island has some beautiful coastlines. The people of Timor-Leste are known as East Timorese. As many as 12 local languages are spoken in the country; however, most

people are fluent in Bahasa Indonesian. Interestingly, the country’s currency is the U.S. dollar.

Narrator 1: The majority of the people in Timor-Leste are Roman Catholics, followed by Protestants, Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists. Timor-Leste is one of only two primarily Roman Catholic countries in Southeast Asia, the other being the Philippines.

Narrator 2: In May, 2002, Timor-Leste became the first country to become independent in the 21st century. As the new country is growing and developing, religious liberty is still somewhat of a

challenge. Students especially have challenges regarding classes and exams scheduled on Saturdays. Many young people are suffering for their faith because they don't attend school on the Sabbath. This is one very important reason to establish a Seventh-day Adventist school in the capital city of Dili. Your Thirteenth Offering today will help build this school.

Narrator 1: The Timor-Leste Mission was first organized in 2009, and reorganized in 2011. While the population of Timor-Leste is about 1.2 million, only 516 are Seventh-day Adventists. That's a ratio of 2,326 people to 1 Adventist. Please pray for the new Adventist school in Timor-Leste and thank you for giving generously to the Thirteenth Sabbath Mission Offering.

Narrator 2: Traveling 3,308 miles (5,323 km.) west and north from Timor-Leste we arrive in the country of Sri Lanka. This island nation is known as "India's teardrop" because of its shape and proximity to India. Sri Lanka is an ancient land that has a documented history of more than 3,000 years. Because of its location, Sri Lanka has been strategically important since the time of the ancient Silk Road. It's a diverse country, home to many religions, ethnicities and languages.

Narrator 1: Ancient Sri Lanka was also the first country in the world to establish a dedicated hospital in the fourth century. It was also the leading exporter of cinnamon to the ancient world.

Narrator 2: Sri Lanka has a rich Buddhist history, because Buddhism was brought from to the country from India in 250 B.C. Ancient kingdoms in Sri Lanka maintained a large number of Buddhist schools and monasteries and were at the

forefront of promoting Buddhism into other southeast Asian countries.

Narrator 1: Today, 70 percent of the population is Buddhist. Buddhism is given special recognition in the Sri Lankan Constitution which requires Sri Lankans to "protect and foster the Buddha Sasana."

Narrator 2: Hinduism is the second most prevalent religion in Sri Lanka, although it came to the island before Buddhism. Today, 13 percent of the population is Hindu.

Narrator 1: Islam is the third most dominant religion in the country. It was brought to the island by Arab traders, starting around the seventh century A.D. Followers of Islam in Sri Lanka today make up 10 percent of the population. Most are believed to be descendants of the Arab traders and the local women they married.

Narrator 2: Christianity came into the country by Western colonists in the early 16th century. Around 7.4 percent of the population is Christian, of which 82 percent are Roman Catholics. The remaining Christians are evenly split between the Anglican Church and other Protestant denominations.

Narrator 1: In a 2008 Gallup poll, Sri Lanka was ranked the third most religious country in the world, with 99 percent of Sri Lankans saying that religion was an important part of their daily life.

Narrator 2: The Sri Lanka Mission of Seventh-day Adventists was organized in 1950. Today the Mission has 37 churches and 2,785 members. The Lakpahana Adventist College and Seminary has been ministering to Sri Lankan young people for decades. However, they do not yet have a church building. Your generous Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help

build a church on this beautiful campus.

Narrator 1: The “Land of Bengal,” better known as Bangladesh, is located east of India and northeast of Sri Lanka. It is the world’s eighth most populous country, with more than 160 million people, and is also one of the most densely populated countries on earth.

Narrator 2: Bangladesh is home to the Ganges Delta—the largest delta in the world. The Royal Bengal Tiger is Bangladesh’s national animal. This amazing tiger has a roar that can be heard from nearly 2 miles (3 km.) away.

Narrator 1: Since 1991, Bangladesh has made significant improvements economically, in primary education, food production and health.

Narrator 2: Islam is the majority religion in Bangladesh, making up 86.6 percent of the population. It was introduced in the region by Muslim traders and missionaries after the 7th century, but the Muslim conquest of Bengal began in the early 13th century. Today, Bangladesh has the fourth largest Muslim population on earth after Indonesia, Pakistan and India.

Narrator 1: Hinduism makes up 12.1 percent of the population in Bangladesh, where they are the third largest group of Hindus in the world after India and Nepal. Just one percent of the population is Buddhist, and only 0.3 percent is Christian.

Narrator 2: Seventh-day Adventists came to Bangladesh in the early 20th century, and the Bangladesh Union Mission was first organized in 1919. It was then reorganized in 1938 and 1979. Currently, the mission has 121 churches and 28,681 members.

Narrator 1: The mission also operates the Bangladesh Adventist Seminary and College located in Gazipur. To address a need in the country for professional, Christian nurses, the college is planning to offer a nursing program. Your Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help to build a much-needed building for the new school of nursing in Bangladesh.

Narrator 2: As we have heard the stories this quarter from our brothers and sisters in Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, let’s consider how we can help them fulfill their mission through an Adventist School in Timor-Leste, a church in Sri Lanka, and a new school of nursing building in Bangladesh. Thank you so much for your generous gift to the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering today.

[Offering]

Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects

Next quarter will feature the Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division. The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the following projects:

- Gateway Adventist Primary School in Botswana
- Gweru Adventist Health Centre in Zimbabwe
- Solusi University dining hall extension in Zimbabwe
- School supplies for the Gateway Adventist Primary School

First quarter 2016 will feature the South American Division. Special projects will help the Amazon region of Brazil and the capital cities of Paraguay and Uruguay.

Leader's Resources

For more information on the cultures and history of Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh, visit your local library or a travel agency, or check out the websites listed below.

For cultural information visit the following websites:

Timor-Leste: gov.east-timor.org; www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/timor_lesteh.htm

Sri Lanka: www.srilanka.travel; www.lonelyplanet.com/sri-lanka

Bangladesh: www.infoplease.com/country/bangladesh.html; www.factmonster.com/country/bangladesh.html

You may also wish to visit the Southern Asia-Pacific Division: <http://ssd.adventist.asia>

The Children's Mission quarterly contains additional material that can add flavor to your mission presentation, including recipes from Southeast Asia. Ask for this quarterly at your church, or find it online at www.adventistmission.org. Click on "Mission Quarterlies" in the "Sharing" column. You will find the recipes at the end of the Children's Mission quarterly.

An offering goal device will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Ask your Sabbath School council to set a quarterly mission offering goal (set the goal a little higher than last quarter and divide it by 14, one part for each of the 12 regular Sabbaths this quarter and two parts for Thirteenth Sabbath). Chart the weekly progress toward the quarter's goal on the goal device.

For children's Sabbath schools: To focus attention on the school in Timor-Leste, draw a large school building on poster board. Photocopy silhouettes of children and place one around the building each week as the offering goal is reached.

Remind members that the ongoing work of the world church depends on Sabbath School mission giving every week, and that one quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to the projects in Southern Asia-Pacific Division. On the twelfth Sabbath, report on mission giving during the quarter. Encourage members to double or triple their normal mission giving on Thirteenth Sabbath. Count the offering and record the amount given at the end of Sabbath School. This immediate feedback will encourage members to continue their mission giving.

From time to time, please remind members that they can give anytime to the Thirteenth Sabbath Mission Offering on our secure website: giving.adventistmission.org, then choosing "13th Sabbath Offering" from the fund pull-down menu. Thank you so much for supporting mission!

YOUTH & ADULT MISSION

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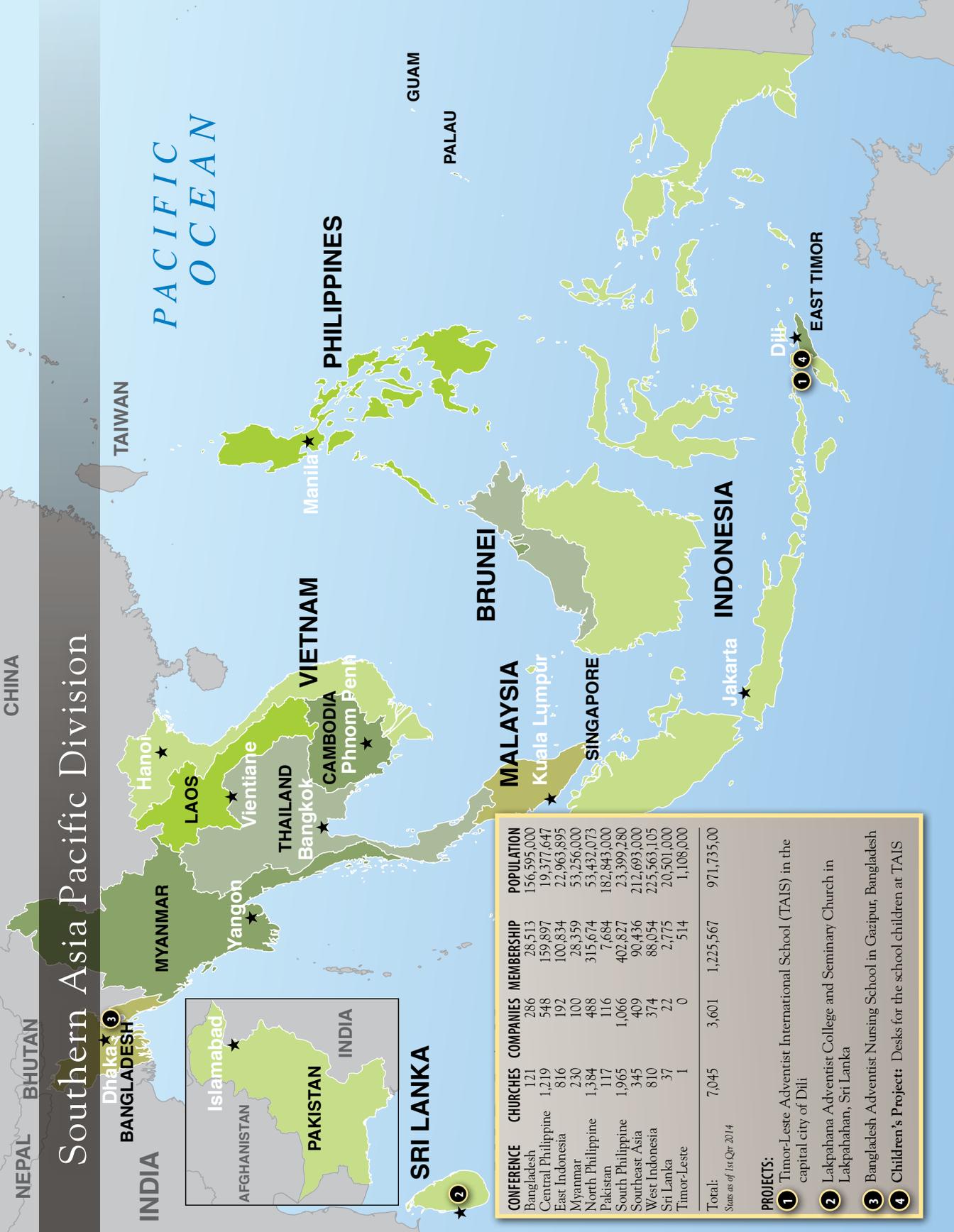
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Southern Asia Pacific Division

PACIFIC OCEAN

CONFERENCE	CHURCHES	COMPANIES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Bangladesh	121	286	28,513	156,595,000
Central Philippine	1,219	548	159,897	19,377,647
East Indonesia	816	192	100,834	22,963,895
Myanmar	230	100	28,359	53,256,000
North Philippine	1,384	488	315,674	53,432,073
Pakistan	117	116	7,684	182,843,000
South Philippine	1,965	1,066	402,827	23,399,280
Southeast Asia	345	409	90,436	212,693,000
West Indonesia	810	374	88,054	225,563,105
Sri Lanka	37	22	2,775	20,501,000
Timor-Leste	1	0	514	1,108,000
Total:	7,045	3,601	1,225,567	971,735,000

Stats as of 1st Qtr 2014

- PROJECTS:**
- ① Timor-Leste Adventist International School (TAIS) in the capital city of Dili
 - ② Lakpabana Adventist College and Seminary Church in Lakpabahan, Sri Lanka
 - ③ Bangladesh Adventist Nursing School in Gazipur, Bangladesh
 - ④ **Children's Project:** Desks for the school children at TAIS