

mission

The official mission magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church VOLUME 4 • NUMBER 3

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EDITORIAL

“If you’re looking for another heart-warming mission story, watch something else.”

I was struck by this comment made by someone who had just viewed our new mission series, *I Want This City*. He appreciated the raw honesty of the films, particularly the lack of happy endings so common in mission stories.

In each issue of *Mission 360°*, we try to share stories that paint a fair picture of what’s happening in Adventist mission around the world. Some celebrate conversions and miracles while others focus on the remaining challenges and needs.

This issue is no exception, but it also features several stories that explore the “darker” side of mission—the pain of personal loss. Our missionaries and Global Mission pioneers share the heart-wrenching cost of caring for an unreached world.

In the story “Sandy,” Sara Reichert writes profoundly about

the loss of a student and her yearning for God to restore all things. Doug Venn reveals his anguish about losing opportunities for sharing Jesus with those who have never heard His name in “I Want This City.” Ai Araki struggles with the loss of her eyesight, freedom, and home in “Only the Eyes Were Lost.” Lillie Grace Robinson Perrin shares a glimpse into the paralyzing pain of losing her newly wed husband in “The Diary,” and Mariame, in “My Would-Be Assassin,” grieves the loss of her relationship with her mother, who intends to kill her.

Yet, these stories are about so much more than loss. They’re about what God can do with brokenness, fear, longing, and despair. They’re about the miracle of His sustaining mercy and, ultimately, about perseverance and hope.

We hope you’ll find them as powerful and touching as we have.



Laurie Falvo
Managing Editor

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The official mission magazine
of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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The Impossible House

Wow, what a whirlwind the past two weeks have been for my family! As I glance around our new “miracle house,” I feel overcome with joy, gratitude, and a desire to share how God did the seemingly impossible to answer our prayer.

It all started two weeks ago when my husband, Roger, and I were having Friday night worship with our kids. We invited them, as we always do, to share whatever’s weighing on their hearts so that we can talk and pray about it. This time, their response took me by surprise.

“We don’t want to live in Guam anymore,” Alyssa said quietly, starting at the floor. “I wish we could go back to the States,” Nathan added.

“What?” I asked, swallowing hard. Roger had just committed to teach for another year at Guam Adventist Academy (GAA). And I loved living here. I loved the

weather, our friends, and working with our church doing Bible studies and outreach. How could they not love it too?

As we talked with the kids about their struggles, we discovered that they really missed being able to spend time in nature. Roger and I missed that too. We enjoyed the camaraderie of living on the school compound, but we feel closer to God when we’re surrounded by His creation.

We’d also been concerned about the amount of time our children were spending on the Internet. We wanted to provide them with the alternative of enjoying the outdoors. But we’d priced rentals in Guam. A four-bedroom home for less than \$1,000 was unheard of, and the school’s budget was \$800. Finding a place in our price range seemed impossible.

But God’s specialty is the impossible, I reminded myself. Roger

and I prayed about finding a home in the country and felt impressed to start looking right away.

I decided to step out in faith by calling my friend Patti to see whether we could borrow her huge van when we moved. “By the way,” I asked, “you don’t happen to know of a four-bedroom house available to rent for \$800 a month, do you? I’ve been searching, and all I’ve been able to find are two three-bedroom homes at that price on the entire island!”

“Wait a minute,” Patti replied. “There’s a gentleman here working on my air conditioner. Maybe he’ll have an idea. I’ll get back to you soon.”

A few minutes later, Patti called with the phone number for a landlord who travels a lot and just happened to be on the island. When I called him, he was willing to show us a four-bedroom home that very evening! Even though

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facilitates volunteer missionary service of church members 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, please visit AdventistVolunteers.org.

it was across the street from the beach, the price was only \$900; it also meant that we would need to help with some maintenance, which we were happy to do.

As soon as we got the OK from GAA, we started the process of moving. It was a lot of work, but two weeks later we spent the first night in our new house.

I've wondered whether perhaps God saw that I was becoming so involved in my church outreach that I wasn't spending enough time with my kids. I'm delegating more now so that I can focus on helping them prepare for Jesus' soon coming. For me, this experience has been a clear demonstration of Ellen White's comment that all God's biddings are enablings (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 333).

When I started looking for transportation to move even before we'd found the house, Alyssa asked me, "Mommy, do you really

think God will find us a house that soon?" Although I couldn't see how, I answered, "He's the One who impressed us to look, so I believe God has a house for us. I don't know where yet, but I want to be ready."

Has God impressed you to do something that looks impossible, maybe because you can't afford it or don't have the time? He can do the impossible for you too. Will you step out in faith?

Amy Krum and her husband, Roger, have been missionaries in Guam for four years. Roger teaches physical education and practical arts at Guam Adventist Academy. They have two children, Nathan, 12, and Alyssa, 10. Amy is a homeschooling mom who enjoys the outdoors, singing, helping others, and sharing Jesus.



- 1 Roger, me, Nathan, and Alyssa at our new home.
- 2 Roger and me with "Grandma" Hachko, sharing Jesus at the local flea market.
- 3 Fellowshipping in our new place.
- 4 Enjoying nature with Nathan and Alyssa.



Fish Water Adventure

1

“We can’t let you walk down there. It’s too dangerous,” cautioned our church friends in Goroka, the capital city of the Eastern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea (PNG).

Going down into the settlements of Goroka, where high unemployment and alcoholism often fuel hot tempers, can be a risky adventure. Yet our church family was willing to take that risk if it meant being able to share the gospel with their countrymen. We’d planned a series of evangelistic meetings in Fish Water, a settlement down in a steep, narrow valley, not far from our church.

Our church family knew that the presence of my husband, Brooks, and me at the meetings

People started jumping out of the way like frogs leaping off lily pads. Before I realized what was happening, the truck was upon us.

could be both a blessing and a curse. Foreign missionaries didn’t come down into the settlement often, and the novelty of our presence would draw larger crowds to attend. But we would also stand out as foreigners, making us highly visible targets for crime.

As plans were being made, the church asked Brooks to present several sermons and me, because of my nursing background, to speak on the health effects of alcohol. They would take us down the steep, bumpy road into Fish Water in the back of a pickup truck full of church members.

They also arranged to have a platform placed at the side of Fish Water’s main dirt road. The settlement elders consented to close off the road during the meetings so that the attendees could sit on its relatively flat surface.

One night while Brooks and the church elders were praying for God’s blessing before the meeting started, my friend Olivia and I placed our roll-up mats on the ground, trying to find a “comfortable” place to sit for a couple of hours. Olivia’s eyes shone with kindness and love as we spoke about the meetings and our desire



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- 1 Olivia in the highlands of Papua New Guinea.
- 2 How the Goroka church family rolls!
- 3 Members of the Goroka Seventh-day Adventist Church.
- 4 Olivia's greatest gift was love.
- 5 Getting water at my home in Goroka.



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for people to come to Jesus. Olivia is a prayer warrior, and I loved getting to spend time with this sister of my heart.

Olivia and I were deep in conversation when we heard a horn honking loud and incessantly. We looked up and saw a white pickup truck barreling down the road toward us. *Surely it will stop when the driver sees all the people sitting on the road*, I thought. But it didn't stop or even slow down. People started jumping out of the way like frogs leaping off lily pads. Before I realized what was happening and got up, the truck was upon us. I felt frozen to the ground. Suddenly, I was tackled from the side and shoved off the road. Realizing that we both weren't going to make it out of the way in time, Olivia had decided that I was going to live even if it meant her death.

As I looked over my shoulder, I saw Olivia lying under the front bumper of the truck, alive and unharmed! The truck had stopped just inches from running her over. I don't know what mighty angels brought it to a halt, but I praise God for His protection. As Olivia and I picked ourselves up from the ground, a belligerent drunk driver



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- Securely online: Giving, AdventistMission.org
- In North America, mark a tithe envelope "World Budget" at your local church
- Call 800-648-5824

emerged from the truck, threatening to kill us all if we didn't get out of the way. Several strong men quickly subdued him. For the rest of the night, Olivia and I clung to each other in sisterly love.

I went to Papua New Guinea as a missionary to share the love of Jesus. While I believe God was able to bless others through my activities, I feel like I was the one most blessed. I witnessed a tangible manifestation of His love—the willingness of a friend to lay down her life for me. John 15:13 says, "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends" (NKJV).

When I left Papua New Guinea, I was a changed woman. God was transforming me into His likeness using the very people I went to serve. What an amazing friend! What an amazing church family! What an amazing God!

Susan Payne and her husband, Brooks, served in Papua New Guinea for two adventure-filled years. Susan is now the development director at Adventist Frontier Missions in Michigan, United States.





Beauty Lessons

In 2012, Yang Jun (Jessica) nervously began producing her first radio program in Hong Kong. She designed the series specifically for female listeners and called it *Spiritual Beauty* (*Xin Ling Li Ren* in Mandarin). The program currently airs twice a week on shortwave radio in China and is available online. Adventist World Radio (AWR) recently talked with Jessica about *Spiritual Beauty* and in the process discovered much more about this committed young woman behind the microphone.

AWR: Jessica, why are you dedicated to working in radio?

Jessica: I think that God made the decision for me. Several years ago, I was planning to become a teacher. While I was earning my master's degree in education, I volunteered

part-time in the media center at the Chinese Union Mission. That gave me the opportunity to see the process of recording radio programs, and I found it fascinating. I also realized that this ministry has tremendous possibilities for sharing Christ's love.

When the director of the media center invited me to join the team as a producer, I really wanted to say yes. But I had no training and didn't feel qualified. I decided to pray and let God lead me.

After I completed my degree, I received a call from the director. She proposed that I work in the media center for three months and then decide whether I wanted to continue. I eagerly accepted her offer, and I love my work as a producer! I've grown closer to God, and I feel that He guides me every day as I seek to share His Word.

This job also provides me with a channel to connect with people whom I'd likely never meet. They aren't only my listeners, they've become my friends. They share their joys and sorrows with me in letters and e-mails, and ask for prayer. To be honest, I'm not good

at talking with others face to face, especially strangers. But through the radio I can talk to many people and feel close to them.

AWR: Why did you decide to start a program specifically for female listeners?

Jessica: When I took several psychology courses, I was fascinated by the differences between men and women. I really wanted to know more about myself as a female and figure out my purpose in life. I believe other women have the same interest, not just young girls but also married women who need to find their own value in

personality does she have? What problems does she encounter? Do you struggle with any of the same issues? What solutions can we find in Scripture?

AWR: How did you come up with ideas for topics?

Jessica: Mostly from reading Bible stories. I read each story many times and analyze each character. And, before I jump into the story, I pray for God's guidance and inspiration.

Another great source for content is my friends and listeners. They share their experiences and thoughts with me and invite me

Adventist World Radio (AWR) is the official global radio ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Its mission is to broadcast the Adventist hope in Christ to the unreached people groups of the world in their own languages. AWR's programs can be heard in more than 100 languages through AM/FM and shortwave radio, on demand, and on podcasts at awr.org and iTunes.

Thank you for supporting AWR through your mission and world budget offerings!

listeners. She said, "I'm inspired by your program. It helps me to know more about the women mentioned in the Bible and real-

I really wanted to know more about myself as a female and figure out my purpose in life. I believe other women have the same interest, not just young girls but also married women who need to find their own value in their families and workplaces.

their families and workplaces.

When I got the chance to produce my first radio program, I chose this subject immediately. In fact, I'm the main beneficiary! I've grown along with the program.

AWR: What are your goals for *Spiritual Beauty*?

Jessica: To help my listeners discover the rich value and meaning of a woman's life. I'm on a journey to learn these things myself, but I hope that I've given my listeners some ideas for discovering their own God-given value.

Each episode features the story of a woman in the Bible and raises questions that relate to the story, such as: What kind of

to share them with others. I also glean books, magazines, and the Internet for things that I think will enrich women's lives and their relationship with God. I even offer health and beauty tips.

AWR: What response have you gotten from listeners?

Jessica: Because this was my first program, I didn't have any training in production and hosting. What I had was faith in God and a group of enthusiastic colleagues. After the program went on the air, I was very nervous. I didn't know how many people would listen or how they would feel about it.

Several weeks passed, and I got the first letter from one of my

ize the precious value of being a Christian." This letter gave me a lot of encouragement.

One letter in particular that I received touched me deeply. In it, one woman shared, "When I listen to *Spiritual Beauty*, I feel like a best friend is talking to me, like a sweet and clear spring in my heart."

I'm so grateful to think that God has used me to bless someone else's life.

Shelley Nolan Freesland is the communication director for Adventist World Radio at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.





Back for More!



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There I sat, a typical Adventist college senior doodling in my notebook, half listening to my economics teacher as thoughts of my own financial predicament churned in my mind. Graduation was imminent and with it substantial student loans I wasn't sure how I'd repay.

I wouldn't have been so concerned if I was planning to work for a secular organization. But I longed to use my media skills for Jesus. *Could I really support myself doing that?* I wondered. *Would God sustain me?* I made my future employment a matter of serious prayer.

Soon I learned about an opportunity to serve as a volunteer missionary in South Korea, teaching conversational English and Bible. It wasn't media, but it was a perfect solution for the present. It would be a mission, fulfilling my desire to serve Jesus, and it would pay the bills, fulfilling my obligations to Caesar. I was sold!

God planted a seed for mission in my heart when I was a boy, although I wasn't very happy about it then. When my body-builder older brother announced that he would be leaving home to serve as a volunteer missionary in Taiwan, I sat in the hallway of our Southern California home pouting and teary-eyed. I should have known better than to throw a tantrum. He picked me up with one hand, pressed me against the wall, and looked me straight in the eye. "Why are you acting like this?"

- 1 Me and my little munchkins.
- 2 My students learn about Florence Nightingale while they apply first aid bandages, giving them a basic appreciation for health.
- 3 Prayer is like breathing for Mom. Her connection with God is a great inspiration to me.



he demanded.

“Because I love you, and I don’t want you to go,” I whimpered.

It hurt to lose my big brother for a year, but his decision to serve inspired me to make a life-changing call to my mom many years later.

“Mom, are you sitting down?” I asked.

“Why’s that?”

“I’ve decided to go be a missionary in South Korea.”

“Make sure you take warm clothes. It can get quite cold over there.”

“Mom, did you hear me? I’m going to South Korea to be a missionary.”

“Yes, but I don’t think you heard me. Take warm clothes. It gets cold.”

I thought I’d catch Mom off guard with my news. But she had

always been a praying woman and had spent hours on her knees talking to Jesus about my career. This amazing opportunity came as no surprise to her.

I had an incredible, rewarding experience in South Korea. But it wasn’t all easy. I went through some difficult times, including the dissolution of my engagement to a young woman in the United States. The loss hit me hard, but God consoled me through His loving presence and the support of new friends.

He worked on my character that year. He used a fellow volunteer to show me that I needed to seek to better understand people. I discovered that we can talk with others about Jesus all we want, but unless self is surrendered to Him, our words are meaningless. I learned that actions speak louder

than words, and set about trying to show God’s love through action to my students.

I served as a volunteer teacher for a year and then became involved in health ministry before returning to California. Then, to my delight, God gave me an opportunity to return to South Korea to use my media skills for His glory.

I went from doing short-term mission work to being a full-fledged missionary, and God has led every step of the way.

I came. I saw. And I came back for more!

Originally from California, United States, Handel Smith served as a volunteer missionary in South Korea, teaching English and Bible.



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



I Want This City

Doug prayed for God to inspire him with a big dream. He gave Doug the dream of reaching Bangkok for Jesus.



Have you ever met someone who has never even heard the name of Jesus? If you're looking in New York City, that person might be hard to find, but hit the streets of Bangkok, and you'll find yourself surrounded.

Missionary Doug Venn spent five years looking for ways to share Jesus in Thailand's capital, arguably one of the planet's most unreached cities. The opportunities were breathtaking. The limitations were heartbreaking.

One of his most trying moments came when leaders of a slum area offered land and invited Adventists to establish a church. Doug was excited until he discovered that the \$30,000

it would take to build it would require two-thirds of the Thailand Mission's annual budget. There would be no church. There simply wasn't money.

He was challenged again while looking for Bible studies to share with unreached friends. He discovered that the only lessons available to reach the millions in this unreached city were photocopies of photocopies, so many generations out that the blotchy print was hard to read. "The literature rack



Q: How old were you when you first heard of Jesus?

A: 45 (and she still hasn't heard the *story*—only the name.)



Would you want to share literature that has been photocopied so many times, it looks like this?

at our local church in the United States was better stocked than the one we have here at the Thailand Mission to serve an entire nation” Doug said. “And there we were just trying to serve one or two cities of 50,000 instead of a nation of 65 million.”

Pastor Doug’s experiences are documented in the television series *I Want This City*. With cameras running, he traveled the city by water taxi, motorcycle taxi, tuk tuk, and sky train, revealing

just how vast the need is in this country, which is less than one percent Christian.

Look for *I Want This City* on Hope Channel in October.

Karen Suvankham is the communication coordinator for Mission to the Cities at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



Watch a sneak-peek interview with Doug Venn about *I Want This City* on Hope Channel and 3ABN during the weeks of July 1, August 12, and September 23. For a program schedule, visit M360.tv/schedule. Or watch it online now at m360.tv/E1203.

I Want This City

premiers on Hope Channel in October.



Q: Have you ever heard of Christians or Jesus?

A: No, I have not heard

“If you’re looking for another heartwarming mission story, watch something else.” —Kirk

“To see a man brought to tears about not being able to share Jesus and realize that it’s all because we haven’t made mission a priority—that’s tragic.” —Laurie

“Wow, my church needs me, God needs me. There’s a calling in this.” —Brenda

Facebook.com/IWantThisCity



My Would-Be Assassin

What do you do when you discover that your own mother is trying to kill you?

My story began with a dream that bound me to the heart of Jesus and severed me from the heart of my mother. A dream that brought me the thrill of new life and the constant threat of death.

My name is Mariame Diallo. I'm 34 years old, and I live in Guinea, West Africa, with my young son. I'm a member of the Fulani tribe, and until five years ago, I was not a Christian.

At that time, all I knew about Christianity was that becoming a follower of Christ meant breaking a covenant with your family

and could lead to your death. So, imagine my amazement when I saw Jesus in my dreams calling me to become a Christian!

Each time, He looked at me compassionately and said, "I am the way to life, come to Me." And each time, I felt troubled by this irresistible source of power mingled with love.

I had these dreams so many times that I decided to look for a church to attend. But there are many churches in my city, and I didn't know which one to choose.

Early one Saturday morning, a young girl knocked on my door. "I

can show you a church to attend," she offered in a hushed voice.

I stared at her in shock. *Who is this child?* I wondered, *and how does she know that I'm looking for a church?* Nervous yet excited, I followed her to the doors of a Seventh-day Adventist Church.

My little guide smiled reassuringly and beckoned me to enter. Then, suddenly, she disappeared! In that moment, I knew in my heart that it was really God who had led me to this church.

I loved my first worship experience and decided to attend church each Sabbath. But when

Suddenly, I remembered the mysterious ingredient, and everything made sense. Mother had tried to poison me by consulting a marabout, a holy man believed to have supernatural powers, a common practice in my tribe.

my parents found out, they were furious. They disowned me as their child.

Then one day my mother brought my favorite stew as a peace gesture. I was so delighted to see her, I set the steaming bowl on the table and hurried back to see how she'd been doing.

"Aren't you going to eat now?" she asked impatiently.

"Actually, I'd like to freshen up a bit first," I ventured. "Let me take a quick shower, and then we can visit while I eat."

"I'd like that, Mariame," she replied, moving toward the door, "but I have many errands to run. Eat the stew while it's still warm, and we'll talk soon."

I showered quickly and then rushed to the kitchen to enjoy my feast. But I was too late. A stray cat had climbed on my table, sending my precious meal crashing to the floor!

As I cleaned up the mess, I looked longingly at the beans and vegetables until an unfamiliar ingredient caught my eye. *What is this?* I wondered.

I was pleasantly surprised when Mother called later that evening.

"Mariame, how are you feeling?" she asked tensely.

"I feel fine, Mother, why?"

"Really?" she interrupted, sounding incredulous. "You don't feel any pain or discomfort?"

Suddenly, I remembered the mysterious ingredient, and everything made sense. Mother had tried to poison me by consulting

a marabout, a holy man believed to have supernatural powers, a common practice in my tribe.

I hung up the phone and struggled to breathe. I'd never imagined that my own mother would try to murder me. I poured out my heart to God, pleading for protection.

My parents have made several attempts to kill me since I was called by Jesus to Christianity, but He has always intervened.

I'm so thankful for His blessings. He's given me a new life, a new family at church, and a new dream—to see my people, especially my parents, embrace Him as Savior and Lord. He's even given me an opportunity to train as a Global Mission pioneer so that I can be part of making my dream come true!

Please pray that I will share Jesus faithfully in my community, that Jesus will continue to protect me, and that I'll be able to plant a church among my people soon.

—Mariame

Mariame Diallo with Laurie Falvo, who serves as managing editor for *Mission 360* in the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters. Mariame is one of only a few Seventh-day Adventists in the Fulani tribe, which has about 20 million members. As far as we know, she will be the first member of that tribe to become a Global Mission pioneer.



Special thanks to Pastor Gbale Blozo Dakouri, director of the Guinea Mission, and Alexis Kouadio, controller of the Office of Global Mission at the West-Central Africa Division.

Global Mission pioneers are lay people who start new churches in areas or among people groups where there is little or no Adventist presence. Living on a small stipend, they seek to understand the needs of the people whom they've come to serve and then minister to those needs through a holistic approach.

Since 1993, they've helped thousands of people to experience abundant life in Jesus and started more than 11,000 new Seventh-day Adventist congregations. Their ministry wouldn't be possible without your donations and prayers. Thank you!

If you would like to support Global Mission, be assured that every dollar will go directly to the front lines of mission, reaching people who are still waiting to hear about Jesus.

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Planting Seeds

Friendly smiles, squeezing hands, facial expressions, warm hugs—this was how I communicated with the village women. We didn't speak the same language, but we managed to speak with our hearts.

My responsibilities at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters sometimes take me to places I'd otherwise never have a chance to go. Usually, I travel to urban areas, but on a recent trip to Tanzania, I had a unique opportunity to visit a remote Barabaig village about a three-hour drive from the large city of Arusha.

Mariam, one of our hosts, had been able to arrange this excursion for me and several other church workers because she is Barabaig.

We began our journey on the Great North Road, but the first

turn off the main highway had us jostling back and forth as our driver navigated ruts and crevices. The road became narrower and all but disappeared as we rounded a bend and came upon a small lake. When we paused to take pictures, the district pastor pointed up the hill to a simple structure of several poles supporting a metal roof. "That's a one-day church," he said, "where one of my congregations meets to worship."

As we continued our journey, we came upon a group of children playing in front of their homes. I wanted to meet them, but when I got out of the car, they ran and hid. I crouched down to make myself more approachable, and tentatively, they ventured back out. As Mariam introduced me, they stared at me quietly with

beautiful eyes that looked like dark, deep pools of water. A hint of a smile played on their faces for a few moments, and then, suddenly, they were all giggles! I could have played with these children for hours, but if we were to get to the village, we had to keep moving.

Finally, our car stopped near an opening in a six-foot-high barrier made of long, thorny branches. As I stepped through the entrance, I saw a compound containing several huts and a community gathering area. I felt as though I had entered a different world, and I desperately wanted to absorb every sight, smell, sound, and texture to embed this experience in my memory forever.

Mariam's friend Lilian, who lived nearby, introduced us to the village women, a group ranging from teenagers to 60- or 70-year olds. The young girls grinned at me shyly, but the older women looked at me with no expression from behind crossed arms. *What did they think of our visit? I wondered. Were we interrupting them? Was I unwelcome company?* Thankfully, the middle-aged women seemed pleased to have guests and excitedly discussed with Mariam and Lilian what to show us first.

I was led into a hut about five by eight feet. A stiff animal skin lay on the dirt floor, and a small fire smoldered at the other end. "This is the husband's hut," Mariam told me.

Next we entered a slightly larger hut, which was about six by twelve feet. "This is where one of the wives lives," Mariam explained. "They need bigger huts so that they have space for a cooking fire



1



- 1 Showing off my traditional dress, a gift from the Barabaig women.
- 2 Each of the wives in the village has her own hut, where she lives with her children.
- 3 I enjoyed playing with my new friends.
- 4 Initially, the older women of the Barabaig tribe didn't seem very happy to see me.

dressed me in a traditional cloth dress! The Barabaig do exquisite beadwork, and they helped me navigate the unfamiliar cut of the material, sharing a laugh with me about my uncertainty.

As our time to leave neared, we formed a circle with the women to express our gratitude for allowing us to visit. I struggled through the Barabaig pronunciation of "thank you" while handing each woman a bag of rice and giving her a hug. Even the older women of the tribe were pleased that I attempted to speak their language, and I felt their return

2

and a separate area for sleeping with their children."

The smoke was thick in the hut with only a small circle above to escape. My eyes and nose burned, but I wanted to sear this memory into my consciousness. Hard empty gourds for eating and drinking were hung with twine on the branches that made up the

room divider. A western-style red and white umbrella hung neatly in the corner and seemed oddly out of place. I was struck by how all their basic needs were met with just a few material belongings inside a small home.

To my delight, the women had a surprise for me when I stepped back into the glaring sunlight. They

3



4



embraces through the stiff skins of their dresses.

One of the pastors in our group closed our visit with a simple message: “We love you, and we serve a God whom we believe loves us all. We may not see you again here on Earth, but we would like to see you in heaven someday.” He invited them to visit the nearby church on the hill if they wanted to learn more about God. Then, with their consent, he prayed for their village and their families.

Even now, my heart fills with emotion, remembering how proud I was that day to be a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. I don't know whether anyone from that village will go to the church on the hill, but I know that the pastor's tender voice and loving words planted seeds there. His gentle approach to mission is part of an indelible memory of my visit with the beautiful people of that Barabaig village.



Sherri Ingram-Hudgins is the director for Adventist Membership Systems at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters. She works with church officers worldwide to update membership technologies.

FAST FACTS

- ▶ Tanzania has 3 missionary families dedicated to sharing Christ and living out the gospel.
- ▶ There are more than 20 Global Mission pioneers working across Tanzania.
- ▶ Tanzania is home to more than 490,000 Seventh-day Adventists.



5



6



7

- 5 Small mud, stick, and straw houses are common in this region.
- 6 The Barabaig people of north-central Tanzania form a pastoralist, semi-nomadic society.
- 7 Offering a bag of rice to each woman as a parting gift.

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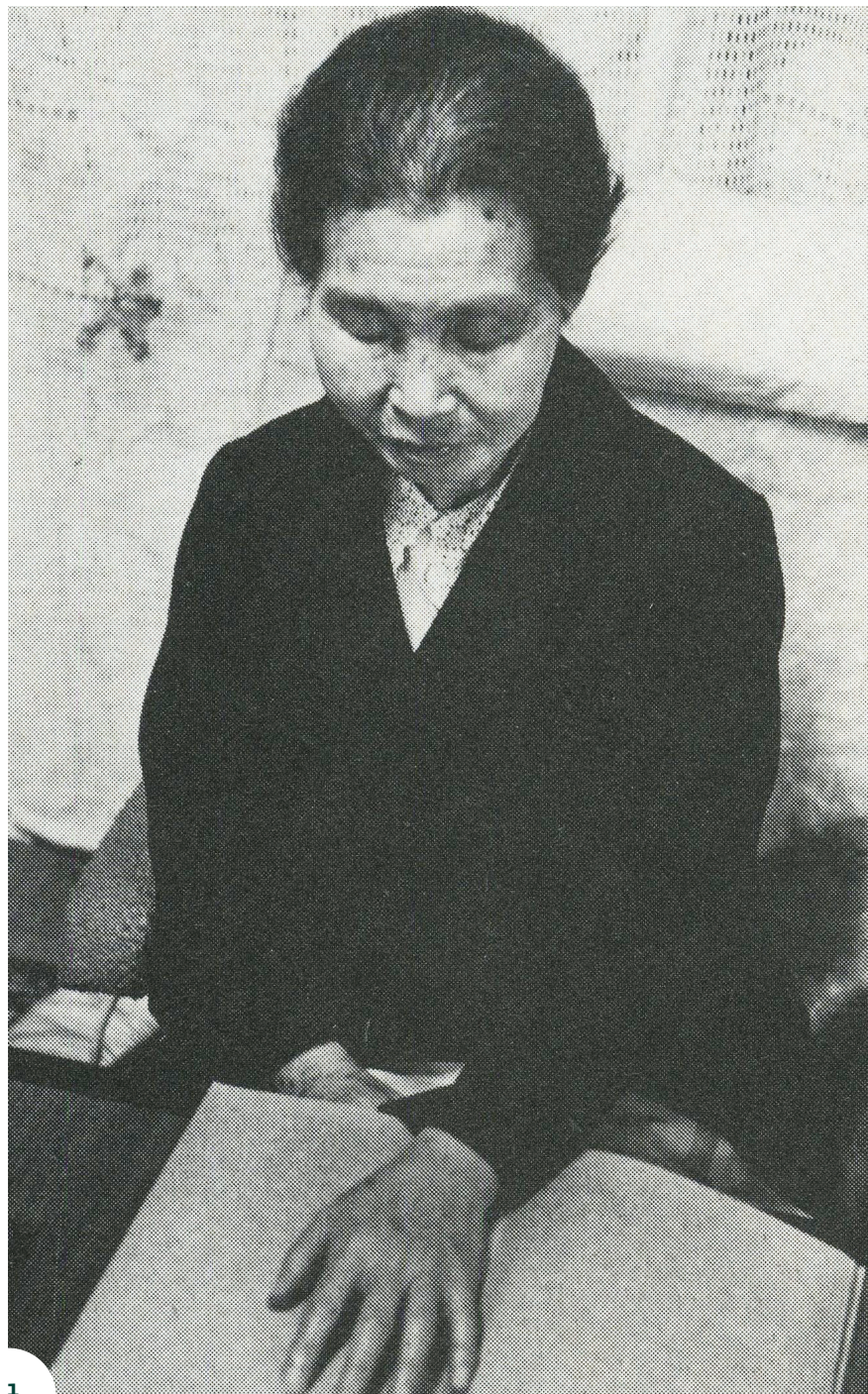
Photo by Ricky Oliveras

My heart melted when I met this little girl in Botswana. Her face immediately lit up when I told her about the plan to build an Adventist primary school in her city. Your mission offerings help change the lives of children just like her. Thank you for your dedicated support and prayers!

Only the Eyes Were Lost: The Life of Ai Araki

Aiko Araki's birth in 1890 nearly coincided with the birth of Adventism in Japan. The year before, evangelist Abram La Rue shared the Advent message on mainland Japan by handing out publications; he is commonly held to be the first Adventist to do so. A year later—around the time Aiko entered the world—Stephen Haskell reported that in Japan one man had been baptized, “some of them [keep] the Sabbath,” and still more expressed interest. These earliest believers were almost certainly the fruits of Abram's diligent effort.

Aiko, or Ai, as she would be known throughout her life, would live through the fall of the Ottoman Empire, World Wars I and II, several crippling economic depressions, the rise of the United States and Russia as superpowers, and the ensuing Cold War. When she was born, the primary mode of transportation was horse and carriage, but she would live to witness a man on the moon.



1

Ai would experience trying times in her personal life as well. As a teenager, she went blind in the space of a few weeks. The doctors had no diagnosis. As an adherent of Tenrikyo, a sect of Shinto, Ai was assured that *hinokishin* (acts of gratitude) could restore her sight. But after she gave away all her money and

possessions, she still could not see. Next, Ai tried *tanno* (joyous acceptance) to cope with her loss. But she could find no peace. The young girl seriously contemplated ending her life.

Somehow, she carried on and life began looking up for her—for a time. A traditional occupation for the visually impaired in Japan

was massage therapy, and Ai determinedly trained in the art. She gained renown as a masseuse and also as a teacher in a school for the visually impaired. In her early twenties she married a man named Araki who had tuberculosis. They had a son, and shortly after, her husband passed away.

It may have seemed as if God had forsaken the blind, widowed, young mother, but He hadn't. As World War I commenced, Ai met Hide Kuniya, one of the first people in her country to be baptized and become an ordained Seventh-day Adventist Church pastor.

to her neighbors and ask them to read to her. The clever Ai always selected a particularly compelling passage, and, upon reading it, her neighbors' interest would be heightened, a conversation would ensue, and Ai would lead them to Christ.

In the interwar years, Ai became a significant church leader on the island of Kyushu—a licensed missionary and a member of the executive committee of the Kyushu Mission. Growth in the non-Christian country was never explosive, but progress was steady.

in on her. Government paranoia manifested itself in surveillance of any secret meetings, especially of Christian churches, which were seen as foreign and thus suspicious. Adventism in particular was viewed as an American export, and after Emperor Hirohito (Japan), Benito Mussolini (Italy), and Adolph Hitler (Germany) signed the Tripartite Pact in late 1940 and the Axis alliance was cemented, Adventism's foreign missionaries in Japan were persona non grata. In early 1941, the General Conference withdrew all missionaries from the nation.



1 Ai Araki reading her braille Bible (circa 1980).

2 Pastor D. A. Roth, right, congratulates Ai Araki for her many years of service to the church and to the Lord, while Pastor Tokuo Hatanaka serves as translator (1972).

A giant of a pioneer, Kuniya began the Adventist work in Korea. As he did with hundreds of others, the humble man led Ai to Jesus. She was baptized at age 26 and began working for the church as a Bible instructor.

Ai developed into an uncanny soul-winner. One of her tried and true techniques was to take a Bible

On the horizon, though, a more devastating war was fast approaching, destined to rock not only the globe but the fragile presence of Adventism in Northeast Asia. In the summer of 1937, Japan invaded China, thus initiating the war in the Pacific theater. With the onset of the Second Sino-Japanese War, Ai's world again began closing

Things got worse. While Ai quietly shared the truths of Scripture, the Seventh-day Adventist Church's official presence was almost completely eradicated in Japan in early 1943. One of the main reasons for this was the church's emphasis on the second coming of Jesus, which cut crosswise with the cult of

2

3 Japan Union Mission workers with some missionaries from China and Korea (April 1, 1951). Ai Araki is in the second row, eighth from the right.



3

the emperor and the reign of the imperial house. On September 20, 1943, the government incarcerated 42 Adventists across the Japanese archipelago. With the majority of those imprisoned being Adventist leaders and the membership in Japan being fewer than 1,300, this seemed to be the deathblow. Ai was among those imprisoned, for she had been spreading Adventism in the country for a quarter of a century.

Ai had her treasured braille Bible confiscated by the police. She was closely interrogated, but because of her blindness, unimposing stature, and serene manner, she was released after

being commanded not to speak of Christianity again. That September morning the lone woman exited the prison building with nowhere to go (her home had been destroyed by air raids), nothing to eat, many of her fellow believers imprisoned, and the doors of her little modest church bolted.

As she did at every other time in her turbulent life, Ai persevered. She rallied the scattered and terrified believers throughout her seaport home of Kagoshima. With the church officers locked up, she became pastor, elder, deacon, and treasurer, stopping at this house, that apartment, praying, encouraging, and uplifting. The statement

she had made years earlier, "My life is always filled with prayer. In fact, my life *is* prayer," was never truer than during this time.

Ai rallied the 40-some Adventists in the seaport town. It is said that her very presence was like a jolt of courage to them. Under her leadership through the impossible war years, her church, those 40 believers, did not miss one Sabbath meeting. On this Sabbath they assembled in the mountain forests, on that Sabbath in a Japanese cemetery park where gatherings would raise no suspicion. At each meeting, the tiny figure of Ai could be spotted, whether wrapped in a blanket in winter or under an



umbrella in early summer. She was always marked by a patient determination that was stronger than all the power of the warring nations.

Periodically, Ai and her band of believers received word that an Adventist prisoner had died or certain members had been killed in blasts. When the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Ai's nation seemed on the brink of extinction. But she kept her eye on her flock. By the time the war was over, only a quarter of the Adventists in Japan could be found. But all Ai's group of 40 members was intact, the only congregation to emerge from the smoke of war.

Shortly after the war ended, Ai reported that 13 new converts had been baptized. The kingdom of God outlasted the most powerful kingdoms of this world. It was quiet, it appeared to suffer loss, but it would not be defeated. When the final round of ammunition rattled off in the distance, His truth marched on.

Benjamin Baker is the managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.



Japan is located within the 10/40 Window, a region of the world that presents mission with one of its toughest challenges. Stretching from northern Africa into the Middle East and Asia, this area is home to two-thirds of the world's population, most of the world's least-reached countries and people groups, and the fewest Christians. It's a high priority for Global Mission church planting. To help, please visit Giving.AdventistMission.org.



RUSSIA

Mashed Potato and Mushroom Patties

(Serves 4)

Made with simple ingredients, these patties are delicious as an entrée or as a side dish. You can personalize the recipe by adding your favorite herbs or spices.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons butter or oil
- 1 medium onion, minced
- 1 cup mushrooms, chopped
- 2 cups potatoes, cooked and mashed, still warm
- 1 egg
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups fine breadcrumbs, dried
- 3-4 tablespoons additional oil for frying

PREPARATION

1. In a small skillet melt the butter or oil over medium-high heat.
2. Add the onion and sauté for 4 minutes or until soft.
3. Add the mushrooms; sauté for 3 minutes.
4. In a medium bowl, combine the sautéed onions and mushrooms with the mashed potatoes, egg, and salt.
5. With your hands, shape the mixture into small, round patties. (Use about 3 tablespoons per patty.) The patties will be soft.
6. Roll the patties in the breadcrumbs.
7. In a large skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Add the patties and fry about 5 minutes or until patties are golden and crisp. Then turn patties over to cook the other side. (Do not let the edges of the patties touch each other in the pan; they will be easier to turn.)

SERVING OPTIONS

The patties are delicious just as they are, but they can also be served with gravy or tomato sauce.



ARMENIA

Baked Eggs and Green Beans

(Serves 4–6)

Perfect whenever fresh green beans are available, this dish adds color and texture to any meal.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups fresh green beans, stemmed and chopped
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons melted butter, or oil
- 2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice, optional

PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. In a medium pan, cook the green beans in salted water (enough water to cover the beans) over medium-high heat until tender, about 12 minutes. Drain.
3. Transfer the beans to a large bowl. Add the butter or oil, dill, parsley, nutmeg, eggs, and lemon juice, if using. Stir until the green bean mixture is combined well. Spread evenly in a baking dish.
4. Bake until the eggs are set, about 20 minutes.

SERVING OPTIONS

Top with chopped tomatoes, or serve with sliced tomatoes on the side.



GEORGIA

Sweet Honey Walnuts

(Yields 4 cups)

Glazed walnuts make an elegant impression and are so easy to make. Cook the nuts in the honey mixture for the full 12 minutes to achieve the beautiful caramelized color and texture.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- ½ cup honey
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 cups walnuts, shelled (not chopped)

PREPARATION

1. In a medium saucepan combine the butter, honey, lemon zest, and cinnamon over medium-high heat. Bring to a boil, and then stir in the walnuts.
2. Cook the mixture, stirring frequently for about 12 minutes, until the walnuts are coated and caramelized.
3. Remove from heat and spread the walnuts on foil. Cool.
4. Break into clumps and store in an airtight container.

SERVING SUGGESTION

Honey glazed walnuts can be eaten as a snack, added to green salads, served with fruit, or used as a topping for ice cream or cake.

Recently retired, Nancy Kyte served for 10 years as the marketing director of the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters.





JAMAICA

Lillie Grace Robinson Perrin, whose heartrending diary entries are published here, was a missionary to Jamaica. In 1895, she traveled from a rural Nebraska home to join her fiancé, Charles Perrin, who had gone to Jamaica for mission service two years earlier.

The Diary

Love, Service, and Suffering



October 28, 1895—Spent all night on the train. Could not sleep. Thought much of my old home, also of my new home and Charlie.

Oct. 30—Went on board ship about 4:00 P.M., steamed out of Chesapeake Bay into the mighty deep. We all stayed on deck watching America fade from sight. Many and great were the conflicting emotions that filled each breast as we gave the last farewell look at our native country.

Nov. 4—We go to bed tonight happier than usual, for they tell us in the morning we will sight Jamaica. Oh, how anxious I am.

Nov. 6—We were nearing the City of Kingston and Charlie; but my calm face did not give away the conflicting emotions inside me as I expected to meet in a few minutes the man I loved and had not seen for two long years. At 9:00 A.M., after driving through quite a portion of the city and admiring the beautiful flower gardens and quaint houses, our driver stopped at the mission house on 23 High Holderman Street. The carriage had hardly stopped when the door opened and Mr. Perrin came bounding down the steps. I leave the rest to surmise, but will say no one but lovers long parted can know the joy of that meeting. Charlie and I went down to see our new home.

Nov. 7—Charlie and I went to the park. He told me how the Sabbath before as he wondered if I would come, he opened his Bible and his eyes fell on this verse: "Thou has given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips" (Ps. 21:2). He knew then that I would come.

Nov. 8—Nettie and I went shopping. We bought me a white dress, as we did not know if my trunk would get in on time to get my wedding dress, and Charlie said he preferred white anyway. Said he thought a Lillie should be dressed in white.

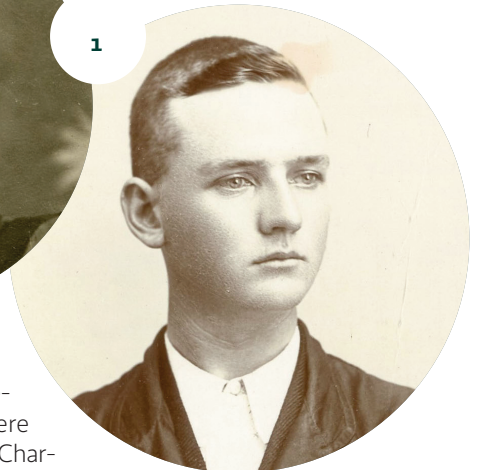
Nov. 9—We all went out to the mission hall to Sabbath school and

preaching. Charlie taught the class of big boys. I sat with him then as he was teaching. How good to see him and to know I was with him and he was mine. After SS we took our place again on the front seat. Brother Eastman spoke, and as he was repeating what God said—"It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18)—Charlie said, "Amen." All the joy and happiness and gratitude that filled his heart was expressed in that "Amen." It brought a smile to every lip.

We went on home and to dinner and I can truly say I spent the happiest day of my life. The future looks so bright, not a cloud.

Nov. 10—Nettie and I went down to the mission hall to sew. When we came back, Charlie was sick. Had fainted while walking across the yard. Was carried in the

married, as arrangements were all made. Charley [sic] and Mr. Gordon walked down to the magistrate's office and Mrs. Gordon and I took a bus. At 3:00 P.M. Charles Perrin and Lillie Robinson were united in marriage.



house and suffered dreadfully for several hours, then felt better in the evening.

Nov. 11—Charlie felt quite well, and we thought best to be

We then got into a bus and drove to the mission hall, where a reception was given us. There were about 60 guests in all. Charley [sic] thanked all for the presents and

- 1 Partners in mission: Charles and Lillie Robinson Perrin, from Nebraska, United States, were married in Kingston, Jamaica, after a two-year, long-distance courtship.
- 2 Lillie Grace with her sister and brothers.

for their kindness to him in so many ways.

Charlie and I then went to our new home on 6 Lawson St. Oh, how proud and happy we were.



Evening—Mr. and Mrs. Gordon came in, and we all had worship together. We all prayed, and as Charlie was thanking God for the seeming realization of all our hopes and joys, he asked His blessing upon “me and my wife.” It seemed a solemn time, and God was near. Charlie arose and stayed up until after worship, then went to bed.

widow, formerly Miss Lillie Robinson, who left Cedar Rapids a few weeks ago to become the wife of Mr. Perrin, and with him engage in the missionary work of the Seventh-day Adventists on that island.

“She arrived at Kingston on the 6th of November and found Mr. Perrin indisposed. The Sunday following he fainted and was carried into the house. Monday he was able to dress himself and they were married, as previously arranged, but on the evening of his wedding day he was again forced to take to his bed with the fever. He had every possible care, and the services of the best native physicians were also secured.

“When it became evident that human skill would not avail, he called for the elders of the church, and they prayed and anointed him. He was conscious to the end and, having submitted all to the Lord, died in peace. His death is greatly lamented by his fellow laborers, among whom he was known as a courageous Christian worker.”

Nov. 21—Charles was buried at 4:00 P.M. at May Penburning Ground, Kingston, Jamaica.

Dec. 25—Spent Christmas at home. This is the first green Christmas I ever saw. In fact it did not seem like Christmas at

Jan. 1, 1896—The first day of another year has ended, and I am alone . . .

Jan. 14—Want my mother. Felt lonesome, am going to cry. I want Charlie, I long for the time when we can all go home and then there will be no more parting. Oh, Charlie, my own darling, you will be mine then, and you will never be taken from me anymore. I do so pray that the Lord will help me to be comforted wherever I am, and to be willing to live and do the work He has for me on this earth. Oh, I can’t begin to think of living for months and years alone. I would be willing to endure anything—hunger, or anything—if only *he* were with me. But Jesus helps.

Jan. 28—Haven’t been feeling well so have been home.

Jan. 31—Could do nothing in the afternoon, felt so discontented. I asked the Lord to give me the right feelings as would be more help to other people and would honor Him most.

Feb. 15—This has been a hard week. . . . I missed Charlie so much, and it seemed to me so hard that he should be taken from me. Then when I could endure it no longer, I went alone to God and as I was telling Him of my grievances I saw as never before the goodness of God in all His dealings with me.

He, in His mercy had spared my life and had guided me happily through so many dangers, and had sustained me by His grace through the darkest hours.

Well, I humbly acknowledged my sin and asked God to forgive me and to help me to not sin against Him. . . . Then I remembered that text that says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

He says He will remove our sins from us as far even as the east is from the west. When I believed this promise, then peace, sweet peace, filled my heart. All evening I sang praises to God for His goodness and mercy to me.

“One year ago tonight I was in my happy home, amid parents and friends, a light-headed carefree girl. Now I am a widow in a strange land, but the Lord is good.”

Newspaper Clipping Pasted in Diary:

“The following sad news from Jamaica will be read with deep interest by the people of this community:

“Died, at Kingston, Jamaica, November 20, 1895, Charles N. Perrin. This is the sad news brought by a letter from his

all, but just like the Fourth of July.

1895 Closes—In this year have been the happiest days of my life, also the saddest. What a change a short year has made. One year ago tonight I was in my happy home, amid parents and friends, a light-headed carefree girl. Now I am a widow in a strange land, but the Lord is good.

April 4—Went for another walk on the beach, cried.

August—Haven't felt well this month. Hattie and I went to Kingston. Got a letter while there, that Mother was sick. I felt so bad to think my little mother was sick and I couldn't see her or do anything for her.

Sept. 21—Got a letter from Mother; she said she was better and they were starting for the Fremont camp meeting. I felt so relieved. Did pretty well canvassing.

Sept. 24—My twenty-first birthday. Spent the day walking up and down the dirty streets of Brown's Town. Quite a contrast to my last, which was spent in my pleasant home with Father, Mother, brothers, sisters, and friends, and writing to Charlie.

Sept. 28—Silva woke me up saying she had been to the post office and got two letters for me. One from Clark [brother]. First words were, "I have the saddest news to write you: Mother is dead."

Mother died September 14, but I did not get news till the 28th. She died at camp meeting.

I was ill-prepared to stand the shock of Mother's death, but I see more and more how good Jesus has been to me.

Nov. 7—The anniversary of the happiest day I ever spent.

Nov. 11—One year ago today I was married to Charles Perrin. It seems a long year, but the Lord has mercifully preserved me. Today I have begun canvassing. Have been walking the hot, dusty streets of Montego Bay since morning, and I am tired and lonely. Oh, it is such a change from one year ago. How little we all thought that the then-happy bride would in nine days be left a widow, alone in a foreign land.

One year ago I was a child. Had never tasted but the sweetest in life. Today I am a woman and have tasted to the full the bitter. The Lord has done much for me in this year that has gone. He has shown me how to lean on Him. But it has been a lonely year.

How I wonder what the year before me has for me. My only prayer is that those things that will purify me and fit me for an eternal home may come to me.

Nov. 20—One year ago my Charlie died. Oh, I miss him. I lost my protector and my mother in the same year, but I am glad my Savior is mine, and I know He will stay, for He has promised to be with me always.

Lillie Grace lived fewer than four more years, dying of typhoid fever on August 3, 1900, in Grannis, Arkansas. She would be astonished to know that the church first organized in 1894 with 37 members now counts more than 285,000 across the island country of Jamaica.

This article is a condensed version of "The Diary" which was published in the May 2014 *Adventist World*. Reprinted and adapted with permission.

William Robinson lives in Washington, United States, with his wife, VelmaJean. Lillie Grace was his great-aunt.



Photos courtesy of the author and the Office of Archives, Research, and Statistics at the Seventh-day Adventist world headquarters.

- 3 Lillie's father, John Samuel Robinson.
- 4 Lillie's mother, Mary Ann Redman Robinson.





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

Sandy

“Please, come quickly, Mrs. Peggy!”

The call came just as my fellow student missionaries and I were sitting down to dinner at Mrs. Peggy's home, as we did each Friday evening.

Mrs. Peggy, our campus nurse practitioner, was still holding the phone when several students burst through her door. “Mrs. Peggy, please come to the dorm right away to see Sandy!”

Mrs. Peggy and I rushed to the girls' dormitory, where we found Sandy in critical condition. We did everything we could to save her life, but in the end, we lost her to unknown causes. Sandy was 17 and admired by her classmates for her friendliness, leadership, integrity, and relationship with Jesus.

School was canceled for the next week, providing me with an opportunity to reflect and spend time with the other missionaries. We were still grieving a bus accident that had killed one of our students and injured several others. For me, Sandy's death was the straw that broke the camel's back.

One day that week we watched the movie *Cast Away* about a man whose plane crashes, leaving him stranded on an island for several years. While parts of the movie are emotive and thought provoking, I'd have never called it sob-worthy. But as I watched it, emotions welled up within me, and the floodgates could not have opened wider in a room full of dry-eyed, confused friends. I tried to explain that there were several reasons I was crying, but really it was because

things aren't as they're supposed to be.

Romans 8 speaks of *all* creation groaning and laboring with birth pangs, waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. I had become aware of the bondage all around me. It was in the empty bags and trash being blown by the wind. It was in the emaciated stray dogs scoping out piles of burning garbage for food. It was in the woman sitting under the stairs of an overpass in the middle of the night, rocking an infant on her lap while her two other children slept nearby. She was selling packets of tissues for the equivalent of US\$0.07. People limped up and down the aisles of the train selling pens or passing out tracts, hoping for a donation. Others sat barefoot on the ground, begging for money. These things were not new to me, nor had I been unaffected by them before. But I had had enough. How far all this was from what God had wanted for us!

I ached for the broken heart of God, knowing that I had seen the least of His pain. How long, O Lord, until all things are made right again? How long until every person and animal has food and shelter? How long until we are no longer afraid? Until no one is lonely and everyone is



Sandy at 17.

understood? Until the water is pure and the air is fresh? Until the last tear falls? How long until Sandy is raised to meet her best Friend in the clouds of glory?

I long for that day when we'll begin to spend eternity experiencing life the way God intended it to be from the beginning. Come, Lord Jesus!

Sara Reichert served as a volunteer nurse and teacher for two years at Nile Union Academy in Egypt. She and her husband, Jordan, currently live in Indiana, United States, where she works as a nurse in an intensive care unit of a local hospital.





CHILDREN'S STORY

The Snooker Hut Girl

My name is Ngatia Rezelda Apa. I'm 11 years old and in the sixth grade. I live at Betikama Adventist College in the Solomon Islands, where my dad works as a teacher.

Here at the Betikama church, the children's ministry department looks after the children and organizes programs that help us follow in the steps of Jesus.

Of all the days of the week, I love Sabbath the best because that's when, early in the morning, we children and our leaders walk to a nearby neighborhood to share Jesus with the children there.

I love to tell the children stories from the *My Bible Friends* books. Watching them enjoy the stories, songs, and prayer brings me great joy.

The first time we went to this neighborhood, only six children came, and we worshipped under the shade trees. We prayed with them, sang songs, and told Bible stories. The children were so excited to learn more about Jesus. Week after week, our little group has grown so that we now have at least 16 children attending along with some parents.

Everything was going well until one Sabbath. When we got to our meeting place, the trees where we had been worshipping were cut down!

Fortunately, the dad of one of the girls said that we could worship in his snooker hut.*

When we got to the snooker hut, drunken men were still lying around inside from the night before. The owner assured us that everything would be OK. He woke up the men, and to our surprise, they stayed and enjoyed the music and stories!

From that Sabbath on, we have been meeting in the snooker hut, not only with the children but with their parents, who are coming to listen to the messages that we share about God's love in the songs and Bible stories. We pray that God will keep on using us to share His love with other children that they too may one day give their lives to Jesus and be ready to meet Him when He comes to take us home.

* A snooker hut is a place where people play a billiards game called "snooker." Usually there is a bar serving alcoholic drinks.



Ngatia Rezelda Apa with Gina Wahlen.



Ngatia lives in the Solomon Islands. Gina Wahlen is the editor of the *Mission* quarterlies for the Office of Adventist Mission at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters. You can read more stories at AdventistMission.org/mision-quarterlies.

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Photo credit: Rick Kajiura

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