

# mission360°

The official mission magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church VOLUME 6 • NUMBER 1

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# EDITORIAL

When Samuel opened up to me about a painful experience, I found it hard to believe he was the same man who had told me, a few minutes before, that he was very shy.

Samuel is a Global Mission pioneer in Egypt. I had asked if he would be willing to share stories about his ministry, and he had laughed nervously and replied that he couldn't think of any at the moment.

"What about a story of answered prayer?" I probed.

Samuel nodded enthusiastically and smiled. For the next few minutes, he told me how he had grappled with God for years without sensing a response to his pleas. "I poured out my heart with bitter tears," he said, "but nothing changed." Sometimes Samuel's faith was strong; sometimes it was weak. But he clung to Jesus just the same.

Eventually, Samuel received his request, but that was only the beginning of his story. "What I want to share is how this prayer

experience transformed my relationship with God," he said. "I believe more than ever that He is all powerful, but now I know with certainty that He is also good. He will never give me what is not best for me. No matter how He responds, I can trust His love and His plan."

Samuel is using his hard-won trust to minister to people in his community who are discouraged or don't believe in prayer. Most of them are desperately poor and face many challenges. Samuel helps provide for their physical needs, offers encouragement, prays for their concerns, and shares the promises of a loving and compassionate God.

He now sees his painful journey as a gift because he can empathize with those who are hurting. "There is no way I could have been a true missionary of God without going through that tough experience," he says.

Samuel's caring ministry has helped him plant a church that is steadily growing. He asked that you pray that the people in his community will come to trust God and the power of prayer and that he will continue to faithfully share the gospel.

You will find Samuel's story, "The Secret's Out," on page eight of this magazine.

**Laurie Falvo**  
Editor



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## ABOUT OUR COVER PHOTO . . .

Photo by Ricky Oliveras

I met the woman in this picture when I visited a Center of Influence in Taiwan. The local church had been struggling to get community members to attend. They decided to use Christ's method of ministry, so they began by assessing the needs of the community. Based on what they learned, they started a program called the All Generations Center, which offers the elderly opportunities to socialize, exercise, participate in activities, and enjoy a hot meal. God has blessed this project in incredible ways, and the church has grown beyond what they imagined. If you would like to know more about this story, watch the "All Generations Center – Taiwan" video at [M360.tv/s1526](http://M360.tv/s1526).



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of the Seventh-day Adventist® Church

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# A Little ENCOURAGEMENT

Last Tuesday, along with her crinkled coloring sheets and handwriting homework, my first-grader Anny pulled out a folded little note from her backpack. “My mom write this for you,” she said, handing it to me.

The week before, I’d been losing focus. I was getting frustrated about little things like my students’ innocent clumsiness and mispronounced words, which are very normal things to find in a first-grade classroom! Simple

tasks such as getting everyone to line up at the door were frequently interrupted by untied shoes, forgetting to push in a chair, or—just about when everyone was ready to go—a shy child raising his hand and asking if he could please go to the bathroom. I had a hard time being encouraging and patient and seeing past these common interruptions. I felt like I had no excuses. My students are smart, and they love school. No matter what mood I’m in, they are always

excited for whatever project or worksheet I set down on their desks. Their constant cooperation made me even more frustrated with myself. They deserved better from me.

Over the weekend after that frustrating week, I knew something had to change, and my mind flashed back to how earnestly I had prayed at the beginning of the school year. I had never taught before. I hadn’t known what to expect, and I was scared. I had prayed for patience, creativity, joy, and compassion, and the first week of the semester had been fantastic. So were the following weeks. With each school day, I became aware of opportunities to develop the things I had prayed for. Unfortunately, I’d begun to choose frustration over prayer.

I wanted things to be like that first week of school again. I wanted to regain awareness for moments of laughter and silliness instead of frustration. “God, I need patience,” I prayed. “Please help me to show more love, more compassion, and more joy.”

On Monday, my students were the silliest they had been



I'm grateful to my students for bringing to light the passion I have for teaching. The sense of purpose and joy I felt while volunteering helped determine my decision to study elementary education. I believe it's extremely valuable to experience life from a new angle and outside your comfort zone. You'll uncover truths about yourself, and learn how to fit in and give to this beautiful world we all share.

-Mindy



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- 1 Posing with my students Jack, Anny, and Alyssa after completing a super-reader scavenger hunt.
- 2 Enjoying the vibrant colors of Malawian art at a local shop.
- 3 Taking a break at one of the gorgeous waterfalls on Mount Mulanje during a holiday backpacking trip in the mountains.
- 4 With the Pulla family (Anada, Grace, Jack, and Anny) after sharing a delicious, home-cooked Indian meal together for Sabbath lunch.

the entire school year. They dropped colored pencils all over the floor, made crazy sound effects instead of the actual sounds of the alphabet, and laughed at almost anything I said. Instead of responding with exasperation, I saw it as an opportunity to laugh along with them. Their happiness was contagious. It had been all along; I just wasn't aware of it!

That Monday at school was especially fun. We still did the same math, handwriting, and spelling schoolwork as always, but opportunities for frustration turned into opportunities for patience. And that patience was rewarded with happy first-grader smiles.

The next day was when I read the note Anny handed me from her mom.

*"Hello, madam Mindy. Really we are very very happy and pleased by you. Jack, Anny are doing excellent. So God is with you otherwise no one teach kids like you. God bless you. Thanks a lot."*

I felt so humbled. This mother was thanking me when it was actually her kids, my students, who were doing the real teaching all along. Her words affirmed how important prayer needs to be in my life. It opened my eyes to the happiness and joy that had always been seated in the little wooden school desks across from mine. I'm excited for next Monday!

Originally from the United States, **Mindy Robinson** spent the past two years teaching at Kabula Hill School in Blantyre, Malawi. She is currently earning an elementary education degree at Walla Walla University.



Adventist Volunteer Service facilitates church members' volunteer missionary service around the world. Volunteers ages 18 to 80 may serve as pastors, teachers, medical professionals, computer technicians, orphanage workers, farmers, and more. To learn more, please visit [AdventistVolunteers.org](http://AdventistVolunteers.org).



# Teaching *the* Teacher

## Golden Rule

Whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. The gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.

## And Its Fruit

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a diseased tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

## I Never Knew You

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' Then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

## Build Your House on the Rock

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a man who built his house on the rock. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, and it fell, and he was lost. This is the will of my Father, that everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will have eternal life and will escape the wrath of the Father who is sending the Son. For the Son of Man will be betrayed to the Gentiles and will be crucified. After three days he will rise again, and will ascend into heaven, and will sit on the right hand of the Father, and will come with the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead. His kingdom will have no end.

## The Parable of the Sower

And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowd went on its way. He was teaching them in all the synagogues and was glorifying in their praise.

### Cleanses a Leper

When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately the leper was cleansed. And Jesus said to the crowd, 'See that you say nothing to anyone, but show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, for a proof to them.'

### Faith of a Centurion

When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, and my servant is lying paralyzed at home, and is dying terribly.' And he said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' But the centurion replied, 'I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.' For I too am a man under authority with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Come,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it.' When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, 'I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from the east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place they will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' And he said to the crowd, 'Go, let it be done for you as you have believed.' And the leper was healed at that very moment.

### Jesus Heals a Paralytic

When Jesus returned Peter's house, he saw a paralytic lying sick with a friend who had carried his bed, and the four left hand. Jesus said to him, 'Get up, take your bed, and go home.' And he got up and began to serve him. That day many were brought to him, so that he could not enter the house because of the crowd. And he said to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven.' But some of the scribes said to themselves, 'This man is blaspheming.' And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Why do you doubt? For the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, as he does in heaven.' So he said to the paralytic, 'Get up, take your bed, and go home.' And he got up and went home praising God. All the people were amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this today.'

### The Parable of the Growing Seed

Jesus said to the crowd, 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed seed on the soil. As he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and some on the rock, and some in the soil without soil, and some on good soil. The seed on the path was trampled and the birds of the air ate it. The seed on the rock sprang up and grew, but because it had no soil, it withered and died. The seed in the soil without soil sprang up and grew, but because it had no root, it withered and died. The seed on the good soil sprang up and grew, and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some a sixtyfold, and some a thirtyfold. Whoever has ears, let them hear.'

side. And a scribe came up and said to him, 'Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Another of the disciples said to him, 'Lord, let me first go and bury my father.' And Jesus said to him, 'Follow me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead.'

### Jesus Calms a Storm

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, 'Save us, Lord; we are perishing.' And he said to them, 'Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?' Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. The men marveled, saying, 'What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?'

### Jesus Heals Two Men with Demons

And when he came to the other side, to the country of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men met him, coming out of the tombs, so fierce that no one could pass that way. And behold, they cried out, 'What have you to do with us, O Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?' Now a herd of many pigs was feeding at some distance from them. And the demons begged him, saying, 'If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.' And he said to them, 'Go.' So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. The herdsmen fled, and going into the city they told everything, especially what had happened to the demon-possessed men. And behold, all the city came out to meet Jesus, and when they saw him, they begged him to leave their region.

### Jesus Heals a Paralytic

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to the other city. And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed, and when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Take heart, my son, your sins are forgiven.' And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, 'This man is blaspheming.' And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Why do you doubt? For the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, as he does in heaven.' So he said to the paralytic, 'Get up, take your bed, and go home.' And he got up and went home praising God. All the people were amazed and glorified God, saying, 'We have never seen anything like this today.'



**K**aan\* studied Bruno and Natalia intently, wondering why this foreign couple wanted to learn his native language. “Are you guys Christians?” he finally asked.

The young gospel workers were taken aback. They’d recently arrived in the Middle East and planned to settle in a nearby country where it was forbidden to share Jesus openly. But first, they needed to learn the nation’s language. They’d contacted Kaan to see whether he might be willing to teach them.

Kaan had agreed to meet Bruno and Natalia in a public setting, and he’d seemed friendly and relaxed until now.

“We were afraid to answer his question,” Natalia said later, “but we couldn’t avoid it. We said yes, silently praying for God to take control.”

The couple were as unprepared for Kaan’s response as they had been for his question.

“I’d be happy to teach you,” he said quietly, “because I’m studying the Bible.”

The couple looked at each other in surprise. *Has God led us to Kaan for a reason?* they wondered. That night, they asked God to help them be a blessing to Kaan and to enable him to learn more about God’s Word.

During their second class, Kaan shocked Bruno and Natalia again when he opened his bag and took out a Bible. He asked Bruno to name his favorite Bible book and explain why it was special to him. Bruno did so happily.

During one class, Kaan asked Bruno what he did in his home country. Bruno said that he studied theology. Then Kaan asked, “What do you do here?” Bruno hesitantly told him that he was a pastor.

Kaan looked astonished and asked, “So you can help me learn more about the Bible?”

“I’d love to,” Bruno replied, thanking God for this answer to prayer. The new friends talked

about the Bible for several hours that day.

Bruno and Natalia began reading the Bible with Kaan for an hour after each class. They studied many topics, including the sanctuary, the prophecies in Daniel, and the book of Revelation. Kaan’s family even began studying the Bible!

Kaan started attending church on Sabbath with Bruno and Natalia and volunteered to serve as their translator.

One day, Bruno and Natalia learned that Kaan had lost his job because he wasn’t working on Saturday. They shared his situation with the leaders of the local mission field, and they hired Kaan as an official translator for the church.

During this time, the weekly sermons were about the 28 fundamental beliefs of the Adventist faith. Kaan and his family attended regularly. Bruno and Natalia could see the happiness on Kaan’s face as he learned more about the Bible.

After studying with Bruno and Natalia for several months, Kaan asked to be baptized. His new friends were delighted!

A few weeks later, their teacher became their brother in faith and gave his life to Jesus.

\* All names have been changed.

**Chanmin Chung** is the communication coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission.

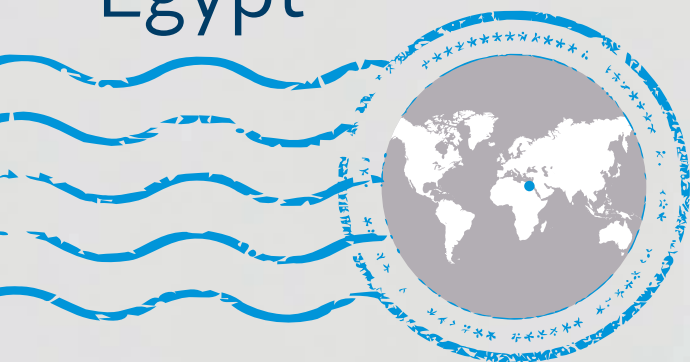


Bruno and Natalia participate in the “Waldensian Student” initiative, a frontline mission approach in which Seventh-day Adventist students live, study, and serve in secular universities in specific countries throughout the Middle East and North Africa. Following Christ’s example of outreach, they mingle with people, win their confidence, minister to their needs, and as opportunities arise, bid them to follow Jesus.

For information on how to become a “Waldensian Student” or how to sponsor their unique ministry, contact [info@adventistmena.org](mailto:info@adventistmena.org).

**Your weekly mission offerings help support the ministry of the Adventist Church in the Middle East and North Africa. Thank you!**

## Egypt



## The Secret's Out

It was an excruciating secret. I hid it deep in my heart, protected from shame and ridicule. Only Jesus knew it was there, but that was about to change.

My doctor had given me devastating news. I, who wanted so badly to have children, would never be a father.

I was brokenhearted. "How could you do this to me, Lord?" I railed. "Why?"

For years, I vacillated between doubt and faith, torture and peace.

Eventually, I met a woman whom I wanted to marry. I shared my secret, hoping that somehow my love could be enough for her.

"Why should I stay with you?" she seethed. "This is your problem, and I'm not going to make it mine. I never want to see you again!"

Suddenly, everyone in my town knew I couldn't have children. It was like she had grabbed a megaphone and shouted it to the world. In my culture, this condition is considered shameful, so imagine my humiliation. It was my worst nightmare come true!

I was surprised to find that her rejection drove me closer to God. I started to pray more, immerse myself in His Word, and hold onto His promises. I began to heal.

In time, I met another woman, Hanaa Eid, and the two of us fell in love. She accepted me as I was and happily became my wife.

Now, instead of me wrestling alone with God, Hanaa Eid and I petitioned His throne together, pleading that if it was His will, He would bless us with a child. Her faith was tenacious. She often

reminded me that "whatever is impossible in the eyes of the people can never be impossible in the sight of God."

Three years ago, we had a baby boy!

Prayer has become the most powerful force in my life, and not just because God eventually gave me the desire of my heart. He taught me to trust Him while in the throes of longing. I learned that if He didn't answer my prayers the way I wanted, it was because He had a better plan for me. I became certain that He listened, that He was good, and that He cared.

It was while I was still struggling with God about my desire for children that He called me to become a Global Mission pioneer. I began visiting families in my community and met people with





## GLOBAL MISSION

their own bitter secrets. My heart went out to them, and I found I could empathize with their pain because of my own experience.

Through God's grace, I planted a church and formed a prayer team with some of the new believers. When I visit community members, I ask them whether there's anything they'd like us to pray for. I also ask whether they have neighbors, friends, or family members who are facing challenges and if so, I visit them and we pray for them too. I try to keep a record of each person's needs so we can help meet them.

Never could I have imagined that God would take something so dark and painful and turn it into a wellspring of light and joy—reviving not only my own withered hopes but also those of my fellow sufferers.

I don't think there's any way that I could have become a true missionary without going through my painful experience. Never could I have imagined that God would take something so dark and painful and turn it into a wellspring of light and joy—reviving not only my own withered hopes but also those of my fellow sufferers.

The faith that God grew in me He now uses to bolster others. When they're too discouraged to bring their needs and longings to Jesus, our prayer team embraces them and lifts them to His throne.

My secret now sings His praise.

By **Samuel Zaka** as told to Laurie Falvo, Office of Adventist Mission

The Global Mission program was established by the 1990 General Conference Session to reach the unreached people groups of the world. It currently supports nearly 2,000 Global Mission pioneers.

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.

### Global Mission pioneers

- plant churches in areas or among people groups where there's no Adventist presence;
- are usually local people who already speak the language and understand the culture, enabling them to contextualize the gospel message for a lasting effect;
- receive a basic stipend, making them more affordable than traditional missionaries; and
- share the good news of Jesus through wholistic ministry, such as providing medical care, teaching agricultural skills, offering literacy programs, holding evangelistic meetings, and giving Bible studies.

In the past five years, pioneers have supported 5,200 church planting projects in 104 countries and have helped lead thousands of people to Jesus. Their ministry wouldn't be possible without your donations and prayers. Thank you for your support!

### Ways to Give

- **Online**  
Visit [Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org) to make a secure donation quickly.
- **Phone**  
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To learn more about Global Mission, please visit [Global-Mission.org](http://Global-Mission.org).



# The Church That BROUGHT ME BACK

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**M**yGen isn't your run-of-the-mill church. Instead of pews, round tables fill the space, and worship is led from a stage platform. Attendees come dressed formally or informally, the music is lively, the service is interactive, and Sabbath School happens over lunch following the worship service. This is Greater New York Conference's first Seventh-day Adventist café-style church.

MyGen was created by Ricardo Bain, pastor of the New Life and Tabernacle of Joy churches in New York. As he focused his doctoral studies on youth and young adult ministries, Bain wanted to organize a church that engaged young people in mission work in New York City. In 2014, he shared his vision with several people, and two years later, after much prayer, the organizing process began. Then in upper Manhattan, the MyGen

Seventh-day Adventist Church was born.

Yeiri Robert, a member of MyGen's organizing committee, believes that this church is a welcoming space for young people to talk about difficult issues that they may not be comfortable discussing at home. She said, "A church like MyGen allows young people to be themselves and find themselves and to make that ultimate choice to live for God." Though many young people were rapidly leaving her church, Robert is grateful for the safe, judgment-free environment that MyGen affords, making it one of the church's most attractive qualities.

For Chad Simmons, MyGen was the catalyst that reclaimed him to the Adventist Church. Before coming to MyGen, Simmons was an active member of an Adventist church, where he found his passion to work with youth.

He was excited about promoting programs for young people, but after feeling discouraged and unsupported with his ideas and programs, he eventually left the church. However, he didn't leave the faith. "For me, it was about spirituality versus being in religion," he explained.

Although he didn't attend church, Simmons still kept the Sabbath day holy and continued nurturing his relationship with God. At a homecoming service, he met Bain, who told him about MyGen church. When Simmons heard about MyGen's plans and goals, he wanted to be a part of it in every way. "It's bringing me back into Seventh-day Adventism," he said.

For members like Simmons, MyGen is a place where young people can worship God in an interactive environment while building relationships with uplifting and



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encouraging people, said leaders of the MyGen church team. They have also begun planning mission projects in New York City. They said, “This mission-driven church plant is a wonderful example of reaching millennials in Greater New York and beyond.”

Kerriann Hayman is a reporter for the Greater New York Conference Adventist News at [www.gnyc.org/news](http://www.gnyc.org/news).



Reprinted and adapted with permission from the *Atlantic Union Gleaner* June 2017 issue.



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- 1 MyGen Church founder Pastor Ricardo Bain (center) poses with his leadership team.
- 2 MyGen has an informal, relaxing atmosphere.
- 3 This unique church plant values building community in small groups.
- 4 MyGen members having fun at game night.



4

## MISSION to the CITIES

Ricardo Bain saw a need to engage young people in reaching New York City for Christ, so he used an out-of-the-box approach to meet that need. This is the core of Mission to the Cities. This world initiative seeks to plant new congregations in every city with a population greater than 1 million. This challenges “the way we’ve always done it,” calling for church planters to take unconventional routes to reach urban areas while still building on Christ’s method of ministry. It’s time to reach the cities. How will you be a part?

To learn more, visit [MissionToTheCities.org](http://MissionToTheCities.org).

### Christ’s Method of Ministry

“Christ’s method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, ‘Follow Me’” (*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 143).



# FROM Horrible TO Home

I don't remember what I thought it was going to be like to serve as a volunteer, but it certainly wasn't like the year I had. It started out horrible!

I missed my outgoing flight and ended up squished in the corner on a last-minute connection. Groggy, I arrived in the capital city in the middle of the night and woke up to pollution so thick, I thought my glasses were dirty. The train ride to my final destination wasn't too bad, but the hike up the stairs to my sixth-floor apartment was. This is what my pampered North American self observed during my first day. My only saving grace is that my mother taught me enough manners not to say any of this. But think I did, and as time went on, I found more and more to fuel my negative outlook.

When I started teaching, I was sure I'd been given the worst students on the planet. No matter what I did, they seemed to hate me. The first day of class, they took one look at me, screamed

"Foreigner," and ran and hid. I have no recollection of what I taught. I just remember that I stayed until the end of class, and I felt proud of myself for doing so.

Things didn't get better during the first month, and I considered going home. But ultimately, I have to admit, I had too much pride to leave. Plus, I'd committed to a year, and it's important to me to keep my word. So I determined to stay the full year even if it killed me, which I was sure it would.

Somehow I survived the first month. And then another. And another. The chaos kept coming, but I gradually began to notice the positive side of my experience: like my roommates, two amazing girls from different parts of the world who blessed me with warm friendship. My adopted "mommy" who picked me up for church each Sabbath morning. The teacher from my school who treated me to homemade dinners and made her home a second home for me. And my students who eventually warmed up to me, sitting on my lap with their arms wrapped around my neck, telling me about their weekend adventures.

At some point between the first and second semester, this trip that began as a disaster became an adventure, and this place that at first felt horrible began to feel like home.

At some point between the first and second semester, this trip that began as a disaster became an adventure, and this place that at first felt horrible began to feel like home.

God is funny sometimes. When I think about how things started out for me here, I feel like it was a test. It was like He was asking, "Are you really willing to do this? If you are, I'll be here for you 100 percent, but you have to commit." And God was there for me even in the most difficult times. I can see that now even though I couldn't see it then: the people He allowed me to meet, the path of peace He cleared for me in difficult times, and the occasions when He tapped me on the shoulder and told me to do something that later served as a huge benefit. All these things and more tell me that He was always by my side.

Being a volunteer has been one of the best experiences of my life, an experience I'm glad I didn't run away from. This may be an experience God is calling you to as well. If He is, it will change your life forever.

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Originally from the United States, the author served as a volunteer in a restricted-access country, teaching English to kindergarten and primary school students.



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





There was one little spot in the Pacific that was apparently missed by the Adventist Church for many years.

# WHERE NO MISSIONARIES' FEET HAVE TROD

There are many stories of how the gospel entered the islands of the Pacific. One of my favorites is about Mussau, one of New Guinea's outer islands and today part of Papua New Guinea.

In 1930, Captain G. McLaren and a crew of Fijians aboard the mission vessel *Veilomani* arrived at Mussau. They had been warned that they would not be welcome. When they dropped anchor, they were confronted by loud and threatening warriors who were intent on challenging them or chasing them away. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, McLaren called his crew together, and they began to sing hymns. The din died down, and the warriors listened to the harmony of the music. When the missionaries stopped singing, the warriors began threatening again, so McLaren and his crew sang again. So it went on and on until sunset, when the warriors left.

The missionaries' troubles, however, were not over. The next morning, the warriors came back, and this time they brought their chief. He was impressed with the Fijian missionaries. He asked, "What has made the change in your lives? How is it that your teeth are white, your skins are clean, and your bodies strong? You tell us what your people did, and

we will do the same." He invited them to stay, saying, "Give us a teacher who can teach us to sing." The door was opened. The people received the message, and Mussau became Adventist.

There was one little spot in the Pacific, however, that was apparently missed by the Adventist Church for many years. This place is the archipelago nation of Wallis and Futuna.

I had the opportunity to visit Wallis recently. Wallis itself has about 10,000 people. It is well-maintained and has Internet and phone services, good roads, nice houses, and an airport. There are 21 tribes with 21 chiefs, and Wallis has two kings.

Why two kings? Because one-half of the island doesn't like the king from the other half, so they created their own. Now there is a king of the north and a king of the south. Wallis is a French territory, so most people speak French, and they have strong links to Tonga. But there is no income generation. No exports. Ships come full and go away empty.

The Adventist work in Wallis has been hard going. The Seventh-day Adventist Church had been refused entry into this country for more than 40 years. After many attempts, the door was eventually opened in October

2008 through a man named Suane, who attended a series of meetings in New Caledonia.

Suane was so touched with our message that he begged the Adventist Church to bring the Advent message to his island. As Suane was the nephew of the king of Wallis, he made the impossible happen. With the right government protocols and Jesus leading the way, we finally entered the territory and started to do mission work.

Today, the good news is that there are 18 baptized Adventist members, and on a good Sabbath, there can be up to 30 people in attendance. And we now have a pastor permanently ministering there.

And what of Futuna? At the moment, there is no work on Futuna. There is no Seventh-day Adventist on this island of 4,000 people, and we have not been given permission to enter the island.

Today, these islands remain a frontier for Adventist mission work.

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**Brad Kemp** is the president of the New Zealand Pacific Union Conference.



Your weekly mission offerings and world budget offerings help support the ministry of more than 400 missionary families around the world.



# DRUMBEATS

1

reach into my pocket and rub my thumb and index finger back and forth along my knife.

"If I drain this pleural effusion and give her a few quick chest compressions, I can bring her back."

"No. Let her go. Bring her back to what end? To die tomorrow, next week?"

I know Rollin, my father-in-law, is right. He usually is. But something inside me wants so badly to slip my knife between Anne's ribs to save her life. I push. He holds his ground.

It goes against everything I trained for as an emergency physician to just give up, especially on a 17-year-old patient. But we can't save her. He knows it. I know it. And he does me a favor by making the decision, sternly, for me.

## The Past Few Months

Months go through my mind in an instant. Pierre, my church elder and former accountant, brought

his daughter Anne to the hospital with a swollen left leg and a bit of pain. I thought, *blood clot*, but the ultrasound was normal. I thought *abscess*, but none showed on the ultrasound, and I couldn't find one with a needle. So I went with cellulitis and put her on maximum doses of ciprofloxacin, cloxacillin, aspirin, and ibuprofen to cover all the bases.

It got worse, so I went with elephantiasis, even though it didn't really look like it, and put her on maximum doses of doxycycline and ivermectin. I treated all parasites.

It still got worse, so I asked my wife, Danae, to get involved. She did a skin biopsy on the wound that finally formed and determined that Anne had a rare bacterial disease called donovanosis. She put her on azithromycin, but the leg remained swollen. Finally, we hospitalized her.

A few days later, I was told that Anne was dead. I started over to

the private ward to give my condolences to her family. There I saw Ndilbe, my hard-working nurse, hustling her in a stretcher toward the operating room. He told me that he had administered atropine and that she had a heartbeat. He also told me she hadn't been urinating.

In the operating room, we threaded a tube into Anne's kidney and evacuated the urine that had built up there. I saw that her pelvis was full of a huge, cancerous tumor and that now her right leg was swollen. We figured her infection had turned into an aggressive cancer, which donovanosis can occasionally do. I administered an aggressive dose of chemotherapy, but she was completely unresponsive, still not urinating, and requiring injections just to keep her heart beating.

The next day, Anne was sitting up and laughing. The tumor in her pelvis was smaller. It was unreal. A few days later, she started urinating



2



from her bladder. I decided to repeat the aggressive dose of chemotherapy a week later. The pelvic mass completely disappeared as well as the swelling in her legs.

But Danae and Rollin and I knew this was not a cancer we could cure with chemotherapy. We had bought Anne a little time, but that's about it. I let her go home.

She came back in Saturday night with trouble breathing; her heart beating wildly. My gut told me it was a pulmonary embolism. My gut is right two-thirds of the time, and I had no labs or imaging to go against my gut. A cancer patient who has been immobile for

a long time; it made decent sense. I ran home to get enoxaparin and asked the nurse to administer it subcutaneously.

I had just finished my rounds Sunday morning when I saw Anne struggling. Her oxygen monitor read 70 percent. Not good. There were no breath sounds on her right. I ran for the ultrasound. Her right chest was full of fluid. I poked her with a needle to confirm and aspirated straw-colored fluid.

### The Right Call

Now her heart has stopped for a full minute. My right hand has a death grip on the knife in my

- 1 Olen with his wife, Danae, and four children in Chad.
- 2 Among Olen's responsibilities at the hospital, visiting the children is one of his favorites.
- 3 Pierre, the church elder, in front of his house.
- 4 Olen assisting his father-in-law, Rollin, who is also the hospital's surgeon.
- 5 Danae and Olen are standing in the back row on the right with the hospital's 50 plus employees.

3



pocket. Slip it between the ribs and give a little twist—that's all it would take to bring Anne back. But Rollin's right. There's a reason she has a chest full of fluid, and that reason is cancer.

I know Rollin has made the right call. I loosen my grip on the knife. I pull my hand from my pocket. I send the nurse to get her dad. I tell her dad that she's dead.

I drive the family home and sit under a makeshift thatch hangar, watching the women prepare the body for burial. Then I drive the body to the church. I sit by myself,

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## The 10/40 Window

Chad is located within the 10/40 Window, a region of the world that represents one of the church's toughest mission challenges. Stretching from northern Africa into the Middle East and Asia, it 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 learn more about the 10/40 Window, please visit [M360.tv/s1814](https://M360.tv/s1814).

To help, please visit [Giving.AdventistMission.org](https://Giving.AdventistMission.org).

the only foreigner, while the congregation sings. And I weep. I see the mothers and sisters and friends come in. I see the father stay strong. I see the choir singing for their lost friend, a fellow member whose voice will never again be heard on this earth.

From the church, it's another drive to the burial site. Men have been hard at work chiseling the dry earth six feet down. The Pathfinders stand to sing. Anne's best friend starts, a cappella, her brave voice quivering. Gradually, the others join in, tears streaming down their faces, the palpable and heavy pain of youth having to bury one of their own.

Anne is lowered into the ground. The first handful of dirt tarnishes the white drape. There are a few more handfuls, and then the shovels come out. Scoop after scoop, the men work at a frenetic pace, filling the hole in a matter of minutes. Then they smash down the dirt with the blades of the shovels. She's buried. I drive the family home.

Tonight I'll hear the heartbeat of Africa continue on in the mourning of the drums. They beat each night that someone dies. They beat regularly here. They typically don't keep me awake.

But tonight will be different. They will beat for my 17-year-old patient, daughter of my elder and friend. I reluctantly pull the knife from my pocket and toss it in the drawer. While my head knows Anne had nothing but suffering ahead if I intervened and that we made the right decision to let her go, my heart wonders.

And tonight, I'll hear the drums.

Originally from the United States, **Olen and Danae Netteburg**

have served as missionaries in Chad for the past seven years. Olen is an emergency physician, and Danae is an obstetrician and gynecologist. They have four children, Lyol, 8; Zane, 6; Addison, 4; and Juniper, 1.





## JAPAN

Kurihara  
Kimiyoshi  
(Kimi), with his  
wife, Haejoo,  
and daughters,  
Miu, on right,  
and Seika.

### CHILDREN'S STORY

# Kimi's Prayer



**K**imi and his wife traveled twice a year by ferry between South Korea and Japan. Kimi is from Japan, and he worked as a teacher in South Korea. For vacation, he and his wife took the ferry to his home in Japan.

Every time they took the ferry, they sailed past a big island located right between South Korea and Japan. The island had lots of green trees and beautiful mountains. Kimi wondered whether people on the island knew Jesus.

Kimi learned that the island is called Tsushima and is part of Japan. He also learned that no Seventh-day Adventists lived there. He thought about becoming a missionary and telling the people about Jesus, but he was worried. He thought to himself, *How would my wife and I survive there?*

As Kimi read the Bible for his personal devotions every morning, he saw promises that God would help him if he moved to the island. He especially liked Philippians 4:19, which says, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (NKJV).

Kimi and his wife decided to become Global Mission pioneers. Global Mission pioneers are a special kind of missionary who live in places where there aren't any other Adventists. Kimi and his wife moved to the island, and Kimi opened a school to teach English to children for free.

Many parents wanted their children to learn English, and they liked the free lessons. But they were scared to send their children to the school because they had never met a Christian. Kimi told the parents that he would pray to Jesus at every English lesson.

Only two children came to Kimi's first lesson, but more started coming after a while. They liked Kimi. He was very kind, and he had a friendly smile. The children also liked the Bible stories that he told during the lessons.

Then one day, a student told her mother that Kimi had prayed to Jesus. Somehow the mother hadn't understood that Kimi was a Christian, and she became very angry. She forbade her daughter from going to the English lessons. She also told other parents bad things about Kimi that weren't true. So all the parents told their children that they couldn't go to English lessons anymore.

When Kimi arrived to teach English the next day, he found the

classroom empty. Kimi felt sad. He wondered why God would want him to be a missionary if he didn't have any students. He felt even sadder when he saw the children on the street. The children used to smile and wave when they saw him, but now they looked sad and ran away.

Kimi prayed to God for help. He prayed, "Dear God, if it is Your will, please send the students back to school."

Three months passed, and nothing happened. Kimi kept praying.

Then one day, one child came back to school. Kimi was so happy! Then two more students returned. Eventually, all the students came back to the school. It was a miracle!

Kimi didn't do anything to persuade the children to return. He just prayed and waited patiently for God to answer his prayer. God can do all kinds of miracles when we pray and wait patiently.

When we give to the mission offering, we help missionaries like Kimi share Jesus with others. Let's pray and ask God to bless Kimi so that many children will know about Jesus on his island.

By **Kurihara Kimiyoshi** as told to Andrew McChesney, Office of Adventist Mission

For more mission stories for children, please visit [AdventistMission.org/mission-quarterlies](http://AdventistMission.org/mission-quarterlies).



# THE SOLDIER Who Became a Missionary

**B**olorgege “Gege” Saran was sick as a small boy, and his Mongolian mother fed him heartily, hoping that the food would strengthen him.

Gege grew stronger, but he also grew fat. When he entered ninth grade, he was short and weighed 200 pounds (90 kilograms). Even though he was only 16 years old, students mistook him

for the teacher.

That same year, his legs began to ache dreadfully. Gege had to use crutches to hobble to classes.

Finally, his mother took him to the doctor, who made a shocking diagnosis: Gege had an illness that required the amputation of both legs. Otherwise, the doctor said, the disease would spread to his heart and he would die.

Gege didn’t wait to hear more. He fled the doctor’s office. Later at home, he told his mother that Jesus would heal him.

“What Jesus are you talking about?” his mother asked. “What kind of nonsense is this?”

But his mother knew what Gege was talking about. Gege had been going to a Seventh-day Adventist church since he was 10

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years old. She had spanked him repeatedly for going, but he had only grown more determined to go. Hoping to make him stop, she had destroyed a Bible he had received from the church. However, she didn't know that the church had given Gege a second Bible and that he was reading it secretly.

Even though Gege's mother didn't believe in Jesus, she loved Gege and wanted him to live. So she pleaded with Gege to go back to the doctor. He refused. He had read many stories in the Bible about people who had been healed.

That summer, Gege and his mother moved to another city. Gege found the local Adventist church and began to work in the church's vegetable garden. The garden was located 9 miles (15 kilometers) from Gege's house, but he walked there every day. It hurt his legs to walk such a far distance, but the pastor told him that exercise is important for good health. He also liked to tend to the carrots, potatoes, and cabbage in the garden.

All summer, Gege prayed every day for God to heal his legs.

Three months passed, and Gege lost 65 pounds (30 kilograms) from all that exercise. His leg pains vanished.

"It was a miracle and an answer to prayer!" Gege said.

His mother wasn't so sure. She saw that Gege was fit and strong, but she wanted to know what the doctor would say. Gege didn't see a doctor until he was called up for compulsory military service. After giving him a full checkup, the doctor gave him a clean bill of health.

When Gege's mother heard the news, she said, "Jesus healed you." She now believes in Jesus.

Gege, meanwhile, grew stronger and stronger. He participated in military competitions, where he successfully ran 19 miles (30 kilometers) carrying a 65-pound (30-kilogram) sack of sand. The military commanders liked the

young soldier who was polite and didn't drink alcohol, and they asked him to represent Mongolia as a United Nations (UN) peacekeeper in Afghanistan. After that, Gege served as a UN peacekeeper in South Sudan. He also served as an honor guard, dressing in traditional Mongolian military attire and greeting presidents and prime ministers when they visited Mongolia.

Life wasn't always easy in the military, especially during his first year. The older soldiers made fun of him for being a Christian. Every night for one month, the soldiers beat him after supper for his beliefs. The beatings reminded Gege of how his mother used to spank him for going to church. He grew more determined to be faithful to Jesus.

"I read Bible stories about Joseph and others who endured terrible things for their faith," Gege said. "Hebrews 12:6 says God disciplines those whom He loves. I knew if I was disciplined enough, it would make my faith stronger."

After some time in the army, Gege decided that he wanted to work as a missionary even more than as a soldier.

Two years ago, he got married, and Adventist leaders asked him whether he and his new wife would like to be Global Mission pioneers in a remote corner of Mongolia. Global Mission pioneers are missionaries who work in communities where there are no Adventists.

Today, Gege, 28, oversees the only Adventist church in Bulgan, an isolated town of 12,000 people located a seven-hour drive from Mongolia's capital. One of the first things Gege did upon arriving was start a Pathfinder club. The children love learning drills and wilderness survival skills from a real soldier! Gege loves teaching them about Jesus.

"God gave me my health," Gege said. "I will serve Him."

**Andrew McChesney**, Office of Adventist Mission



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1 Gege Saran with his wife and daughter outside the Adventist church in Bulgan, an isolated town located a seven-hour drive from Mongolia's capital.

2 Gege, left, serving as a UN peacekeeper in South Sudan.

3 Gege, left, marching with the Mongolian honor guard in the nation's capital, Ulaanbaatar.



## GLOBAL MISSION

Your donations to Global Mission and the Annual Sacrifice Offering supports Global Mission pioneers and church planting projects around the world.

To donate, visit **[Giving.AdventistMission.org](http://Giving.AdventistMission.org)**. To learn more about Global Mission, please visit **[Global-Mission.org](http://Global-Mission.org)**.



# THE LAST HOUSE

It was the summer of 1993. “Scorching” is the word I would use to describe the weather. Have you ever stepped into a sauna when someone has poured a whole bucket of water onto the hot rocks, and it’s so steamy you can barely breathe? That’s how hot it seemed in the American Deep South that July.

It was my first summer working as a colporteur. I had memorized the script, perfected the at-the-door smile, and become pretty good at praying while I spoke—just as they taught us. In my right hand and resting against my forearm lay a cookbook, *Bible Answers*, *The Great Controversy*, *He Taught Love (The Desire of Ages)*, two children’s books, and *Steps to Christ*. On my left shoulder was a bag bulky with backup books and a side pocket for the money I earned.

The first couple of weeks had gone well. Everyone on the team told me that I was a natural. But on my fourth week, I hit the metaphorical wall so hard that I almost didn’t get back up.

## Hitting the Wall

On Sunday, there was pep in my step; my script was crisp and fresh. But the dozens of times I was turned down drained me.

On Monday, I hopped out of the van and started off with the belief that Sunday had simply been an off day. This day would be different. Well, it was different—much more brutal! People weren’t even opening their doors!

On Tuesday, the temperature rose so high that when this really nice couple let me into their air-conditioned house and served me lemonade, I stalled so that I wouldn’t have to go back out into the heat. They kept asking me what I was doing outside in weather like this. I was beginning to wonder the same thing!

Still on Wednesday, no one was buying books, but I received bottles of water on a consistent basis. People felt sorry for me.

After we had finished for the day, my team members were in the van counting their day’s earnings. It seemed as though everyone else was having a good week, flush with sales money and testimonies. A kind friend handed me 20 dollars, explaining that she knew I was having a tough time and wanted to help me out.

## Questioning the Calling

That night, I began asking myself questions. *Why am I here? Is there something amiss in my*

*spiritual walk? Is God showing His displeasure with something I’m doing? Is my script bad?* I couldn’t come up with any answers.

Thursday was the last working day of the week for us. Before I stepped out of the van, my team leader prayed with me and promised to accompany me to a few homes. He had done that on Tuesday with no success. I may have been a “trooper,” a “soldier,” and all that, but I was not stupid. If this day were as dismal as the others, I would take the hint and spend my summer in other pursuits.

That morning, it was the usual heat and rejection, but I was growing immune to it. Plus, I took comfort from the fact that this would be my final day “in the field.” Yet after lunch, it was starting to grate on me again. After hours of work, I had gotten only a couple dollars for a single *Steps to Christ*. My leader called me on the walkie-talkie periodically, asking whether I needed more books. “No” was my pitiful response each time.

## Meeting Grace

Serendipitously, as the sun was setting, I was just finishing up a block. It was a “dead” neighborhood, with either no one home





or no one answering their doors. The last house sat about 50 yards from the street and had a dignified austerity, with ferns and ivy growing on its brick walls. I squinted to see whether I could catch a glimpse of a car in the driveway; I had probably walked 10 miles that day and didn't want to take another step if it wasn't necessary. But there was a car there, a gray Lincoln, so I begrudgingly walked up to the door.

Trekking up the meandering driveway, I was buoyed by the thought that this was the last house I would ever canvass. As I neared the front door, the trees in the yard afforded me shade from the heat. Drenched and spent, I pressed the doorbell, momentarily hearing chimes ring throughout the house. Ten seconds ticked by, then I rang it again. I had just

started to trudge back down the walkway when I heard the mechanisms of a door moving. *Great*, I thought, *one more rejection for the road*.

I did an about-face, and in the doorway stood an old woman. She was tiny but with a feistiness expressed in the lines on her face.

"Hi, ma'am," I said, gearing up for my final spiel. "I'm—"

"Are you going to stand there or come in?" she interrupted, gesturing with one arm.

As I stepped inside, the air-conditioning enveloped me like a cool sheet. *Praise God!* I thought as she closed the door behind me.

"Ma'am, I am—" I began again.

"Oh, have a seat!" she commanded. "You've got to be tired." I plunked down on a very comfortable couch; a tall glass of orange juice was soon in my hand.

Her name was Grace. Before I knew it, 30 minutes had passed. We had talked about everything from the weather to school, to family, and even to religion (she was a nondenominational Christian). I had broken some of the rules I had been taught—not to stay too long in a house, not to reveal your religion lest prejudice arise. I also broke a rule that I hadn't yet heard but somehow knew was a no-no: when she asked me how selling the books was going, I confided that it had been a bad week. When I told her that, she commiserated; her husband of 56 years had died two weeks before, and the funeral had been on Sunday. Suddenly my "bad" week was put into perspective.

## Time to Go

After an hour of talking, I sensed it was time to leave, if for



no other reason than to let my leader know that I was OK. It was well after dark now, and I hadn't phoned in yet because we were told not to use the walkie-talkie in someone's home. I felt strangely refreshed by this last visit because I had been more interested in making a connection with a new friend than in making a sale.

Grace and I arose and, in a touching moment, embraced. She walked me to the door, and, once I stepped out, she asked offhandedly, "Aren't you going to ask me if I want to buy your books?" That had actually crossed my mind early in the visit, but I had dismissed it after hearing about her husband.

"I will give you the most beautiful book I have ever read," I told her, selecting *He Taught Love* from my bag.

"Bless your heart," she whispered, a tear welling up and slowly trickling down her cheek as she accepted the book from me.

In the van that night, everyone was again counting their money. I didn't have much to count, but I felt that I had had an experience that was much more valuable than all the money in the world. Money wouldn't be my primary motive anymore; it would be making real connections with people to complement the books about Christ that I sold. I knew that I would not quit working as a colporteur that summer no matter how bad it got. In fact, I worked as a colporteur for two more summers after that one. It was that night that I truly became a literature evangelist.

## A Surprise Guest

The next day, Friday, was one of much-needed relaxation and recreation. Our literature evangelism team cleaned up for the Sabbath, did some shopping, ate at a nice restaurant, and spent some time in nature. At church on Sabbath, we participated in the service. I was slated to give the Scripture reading. When I reached the pulpit, I announced the text,

waited as the pages turned, and scanned the congregation of the medium-sized church. My eyes stopped on an elderly woman smiling and waving at me in the back row. It was Grace.

All through the rest of the service, I tried to figure out what Grace was doing at the Adventist church. She had told me she was nondenominational, so she probably didn't attend here. Was it because I said I was a Seventh-day Adventist? Had she come on a hunch and found me here?

After the service, as I stood shaking hands with the members who were spilling out of the sanctuary, Grace finally appeared. She smiled up at me, and we embraced. I asked her what she was doing here. Her smile got wider as she handed me a white envelope. "I forgot to pay you for your book." Slightly embarrassed, I said, "No—that's not necessary," and attempted to give her back the envelope. But she had moved on to grasp the hand of the man who had taken up the tithes and offerings, and another person took my hand to shake.

By the time I had shaken the final hand, Grace was nowhere in sight. I stepped back into the sanctuary and sat in the last row, removing the envelope from my pocket. On the front in neat cursive handwriting was written "Benjamin Baker." Inside a note, also handwritten, read: "Dear Benjamin, Your visit was the first time I have felt joy in my heart since my husband died. Thank you so much for the beautiful book

you gave me. We have a friend in Jesus. I can never pay you for your gift, but here is a little token of my appreciation. Sincerely, Grace."

Folded into the note was a check for \$1,000.

## In Awe of God

Well, as colporteur groups do, we moved on to the next city. I ended up having an extraordinary summer doing God's work. As I said earlier, I did this work for two more summers after that. I sold thousands of books and had as many experiences. But I never forgot Grace.

Two decades later, I was on the computer doing some research, perusing the Seventh-day Adventist obituary index, a database of obituaries of church members in Adventist periodicals. There are thousands of names in the database. I can't tell you exactly how this happened, but I came upon an obituary entry that sent a chill up and down my spine. I quickly clicked my way to the site where I could view the actual entry. It was a very brief column from 17 years before. "A widow . . . in a Southern town . . . converted to Adventism near the end of her life . . . from a book . . . now rests, awaiting the last trump."

I am in awe of God's grace.

At the time of publication, **Benjamin Baker** was the managing editor of the *Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists* project.



Ben's outreach to Grace is a perfect example of Total Member Involvement (TMI). TMI is a full-scale, world-church evangelistic thrust that involves every member, every church, every administrative entity, and every type of public outreach ministry, as well as personal and institutional outreach. To learn more about TMI, please visit [tmi.adventist.org](http://tmi.adventist.org).



## NOT UNDER A MANGO TREE!

**T**o be a woman in Africa, I was told, you must be strong. Not just the strength needed to handle the obvious tasks of carrying children on your back, balancing five-gallon water containers on your head on the long walk home,

cooking over an open fire, or keeping your family's clothes immaculately clean amid ever-present clouds of red dust. Rather, the tenacity that's required to have a vision and make it happen.

At first glance, Martha Kasoi Ndulu and her daughter, Esther, seemed quiet and a bit shy, somewhat unlikely examples of such drive. But then I heard their story.

On a trip to meet Adventist World Radio (AWR) listeners in central Kenya a few months ago, I met them in Nzantani town. Esther was the first in her village to begin listening to the Adventist radio station, Wikwatyo FM, located a considerable distance away in the small city of Kitui. From the very beginning, she took notes on every program along with the questions she had about the topics. She was happy to show me her stack of notebooks dating back to 2009.

Esther soon told her mother about the programs, and they both continued listening. When the station manager, Pastor Silas Kioko, came to their area, Martha and Esther gathered their whole village to meet with him. They were leaders in their local church, and they sternly questioned the

pastor about the points they disagreed with. The pastor was used to such energetic interaction and remained unflustered.

Although Esther had only a primary school education, she was in the habit of summarizing each radio program and sharing the information with people around her. She and many others began studying *Voice of Prophecy* Bible lessons. The people who asked the hardest questions turned out to be the ones who decided to be baptized. After only two months, 94 people joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, including Martha and Esther. The conference purchased land a short distance from the women's home and made plans to put up a church building.

But Martha thought, *Hmmm, three miles [five kilometers] away? How will I make it? I'm not good with motorbikes, and at my age I can't walk far. But let's see what the Lord can do.* So she began to pray.

A while later, Martha again thought to herself, *I'm a widow, I have given my life to the Lord, I have joined the Adventist Church, and they have bought land five kilometers away. But I may not make it there regularly because of my age and health. What can I do?*

So she told God, "Lord, I'm praying. I don't know what you want me to do, but I just feel I have a burden."

Martha had had two sons, but one had died, and the other one had disappeared and had never been found, so she was living at home alone with Esther. She did have land, however, and she felt impressed to give part of it for a church.

But then her thoughts shifted. "No, I'm not going to do it," she told God. "You know that I lost one son, and I have no idea where my other one is." However, every time Martha told God no, she felt a strong impression to donate the land.

Finally one morning, Martha woke up and said, "OK, Lord, I'll walk around my piece of land, and



Adventist World Radio (AWR) is the international broadcast ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Programs are currently available in more than 100 languages via shortwave, AM/FM, on demand, podcasts, Call-to-Listen service, and solar audio players. AWR's mission is to bring the gospel to the hardest-to-reach people of the world in their own languages. The "AWR360" approach to outreach encompasses the entire journey of listeners from broadcast to baptism.

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To watch AWR mission stories, visit [M360.tv/awr](http://M360.tv/awr).

you'll show me which part you want me to give you because I don't know." So she started pacing around her small farm. Her neighbor saw her and also saw that she was troubled. He said, "What is it? What are you looking for?" Martha told him and kept walking. She said, "Lord, just show me! I'm so disturbed, I can't sleep, I can't eat, I don't know what's happening." Then she heard a voice: "Here." She wanted the voice to repeat the message, but it didn't come again.

Martha quickly grabbed her phone and called Pastor Kioko. "I want you to come now!" she exclaimed.

"Are you sick? What's happening?" he asked.

"Pastor, just come!"

So the pastor drove 40 miles (64 kilometers) on bad roads until he got to Martha's house. She said, "I just want to tell you, I'm going to give a piece of my land here. I'd like to be paid only 100,000 shillings [US\$982]. But I'll just keep 90,000, and the other 10,000 will be for tithe."

But then Martha added some conditions: "We had better start thinking about building right away. I am moving from an established church with a permanent structure, and you want people to meet outdoors under a tree? I don't want to embarrass this new church I have come to. People in my community would not like to sit and worship under a mango tree for too long." She knew that if visitors had to keep meeting under the mango tree, they would soon leave, saying what a shame it was that the Adventists could not offer their people something better.

So she said to the church leaders, "If you are not doing it, I'm going to build this church myself."

As I listened to the story unfold, the East Kenya Union Conference communication director, Catherine Nyameino, told me, "You have to understand: in the African context, decisions are made by men. But here was this lady and her daughter being very firm."

The conference decided to proceed with building the church, but soon a problem arose. The pastor for the district had been feeling a bit lonely in this corner of the country, so he left for another town. Martha said to the church leaders, "Look here, your pastor has left us like orphans. He's not even here to supervise the construction. So I'm doing it."

That's how Martha became the project foreman and singlehandedly supervised the entire project. She even spent some of her own savings—another 100,000 shillings—so that the work wouldn't stop. (The conference did refund her money.)

At the time of my visit, the structure was complete, but there were still a few unfinished details. Of course, Martha was once again standing firm: "There are no floor tiles yet, so I'm not taking possession of the building. I want a church with tiles, with beautiful plastic chairs, with lighting. There are many, many people who are just waiting for the church to be complete, and they will come."

Esther continues to be an active witness, distributing Bible lessons in the area and collecting and marking them. Church leaders have talked to her about possibly going back to school and becoming a literature evangelist.

After we toured the church building, took photos under the mango tree—which was actually a very majestic specimen—and thanked Martha and Esther for their hospitality, we drove off into the twilight.

After a few miles, Nyameino said thoughtfully, "I wonder if I could listen to the radio and make such a significant decision that would affect my life. But Martha did it, and today she's about to open a church with her daughter."

**Shelley Nolan Freesland** is the communication director for Adventist World Radio.



2



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4

- 1 Martha made her dream of having a church within walking distance a reality: she built it on her own property.
- 2 Esther developed the habit of taking notes on each program and sharing them with her neighbors.
- 3 Although the massive mango tree on Martha's property is majestic, she felt it didn't offer a proper meeting place for the new Adventist members.
- 4 Staff at Wikwatyo FM radio are highly engaged with their listeners, hosting many call-in shows, organizing events, and even chatting along the roadside.



# Simply Delicious Dips, Sauces, and Sides

There are endless ways to perk up any menu through the use of dips, sauces, or sides. They enhance fruits, vegetables, main dishes, and all types of bread and crackers. Sometimes they steal the limelight and take center stage! Here are a few selections to add to your global repertoire.

## PANAMA

### Super Simple Guacamole

*(Serves 4 to 6)*

This recipe for guacamole contains no garlic, onions, or jalapeño peppers. It simply highlights the smooth taste and creamy texture of avocados at their prime. Fresh lime and cilantro are essential to the final result.

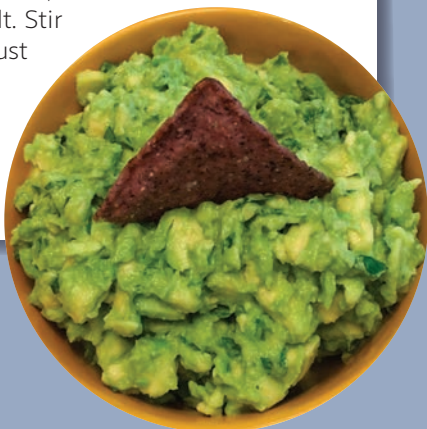
#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large avocados
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh lime juice
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

#### PREPARATION

1. Cut the avocados in half and discard the pits. Scoop out the insides and place in a medium-sized bowl. Mash to a chunky consistency.
2. Add the cilantro, lime juice, and salt. Stir lightly until just combined.

Serve immediately.



## JORDAN

### Baba Ghanoush

*(Serves 6 to 8)*

Made with eggplant, baba ghanoush is a tasty spread for pita bread or sandwiches.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 2 large eggplants
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons tahini (sesame seed paste)
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- Paprika to garnish
- Cilantro to garnish, optional

#### PREPARATION

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Lightly grease a large baking pan with a little oil.
2. Place the eggplants in the baking pan. Do not let the eggplants touch each other. Use a fork to pierce the skin of each eggplant 4 or 5 times.
3. Roast for 35 to 45 minutes, turning occasionally or until soft. (The skin may or may not be charred.) Remove from the oven and let sit until the skin is cool enough to peel.
4. Place the peeled eggplants, lemon juice, tahini, sesame seeds, and garlic in a blender or food processor, and puree until smooth. Stir in salt and olive oil.
5. Refrigerate for three hours before serving.
6. Garnish with paprika. If desired, top with a sprig of cilantro.



## ITALY



# Presto Marinara Spread

(Serves 8 to 10)

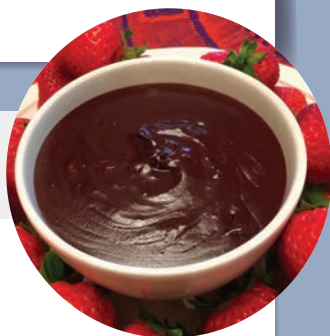
Try this spread on toast or thick slices of bread.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 jar of marinara sauce
- Sliced olives for garnish
- Shredded Parmesan cheese for garnish

### PREPARATION

1. Heat marinara sauce until hot. Transfer to a small bowl.
2. Garnish with sliced olives and shredded Parmesan cheese.



## FRANCE

# Deep Dark Chocolate Sauce

(Serves 4 to 6)

So easy, so rich, and so good—whip up a batch and discover for yourself that you don't have to pay a fortune for fancy sauce.

### INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 pinch of salt

### PREPARATION

1. Place sugar, flour, and cocoa in a bowl. Whisk together to remove any lumps.
2. Heat the milk, butter, and vanilla extract in a saucepan over medium heat until the butter melts.
3. Whisk the dry ingredients into the milk mixture a little at a time.
4. Increase heat to medium high until mixture comes to a simmer. Cook for 6 minutes, stirring constantly. Then stir in a pinch of salt. Remove from heat.

Serve hot over ice cream, cake, or fruit. Leftovers may be served cold.

## INDIA



# Pineapple and Mango Chutney

(Serves 4 to 6)

Chutney is a spicy condiment made from fruits or vegetables with spices and sugar. Use chutney to dress up main dishes or as a sandwich spread.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup fresh pineapple, finely chopped
- 1 medium fresh mango, finely chopped
- 3 tablespoons raisins
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons oil
- 1/8 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1/8 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 1/8 teaspoon fennel seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon crushed red chili pepper
- 1 cinnamon stick, broken into two pieces
- 2 cloves
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

### PREPARATION

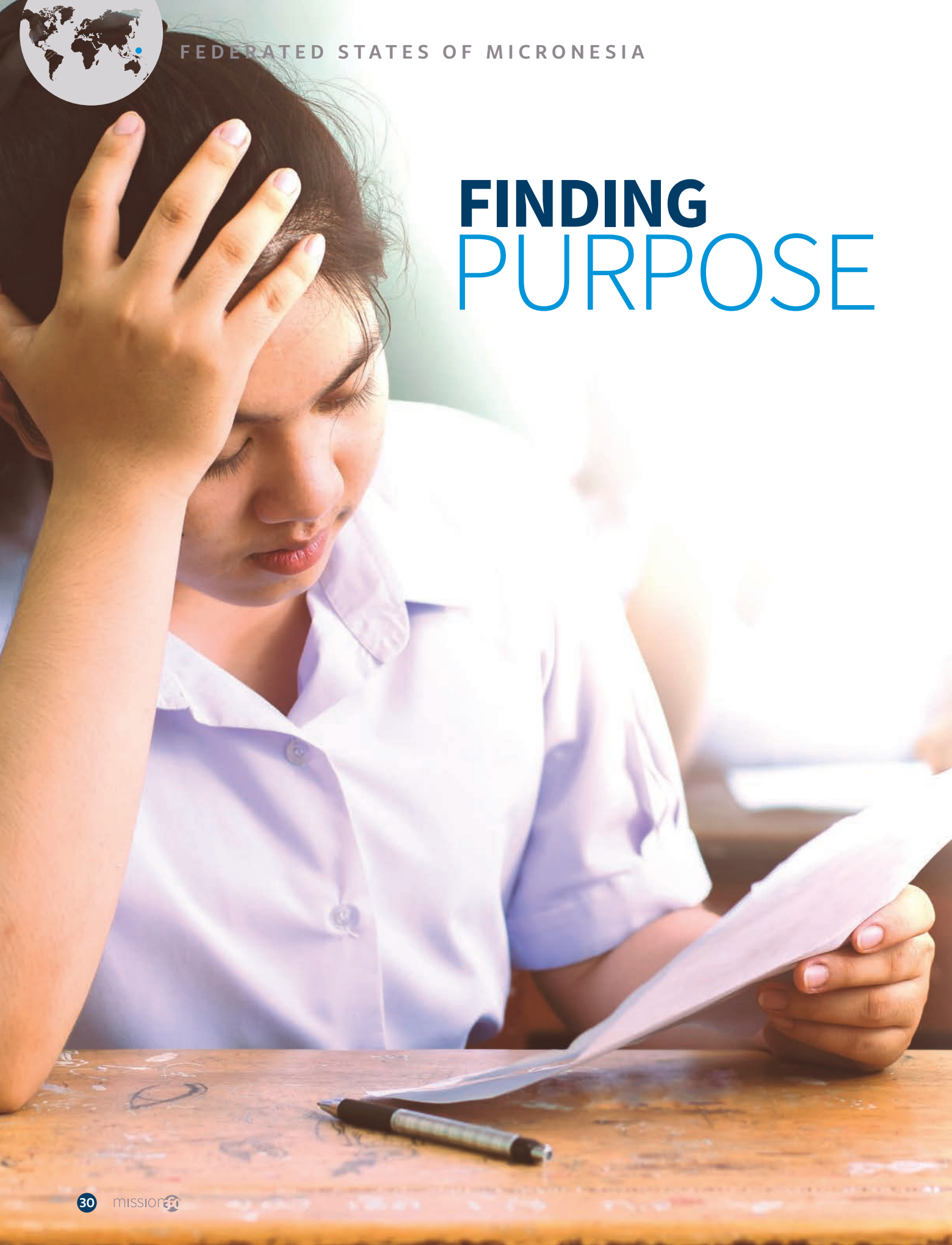
1. Combine pineapple, mango, raisins, and sugar in a medium-sized bowl; set aside.
2. In a nonstick pan, add the oil, mustard seeds, cumin seeds, fennel seeds, chili pepper, cinnamon pieces, and cloves. Heat over medium high heat, stirring frequently so that the spices don't scorch, until the mustard seeds start to sputter.
3. Add the pineapple mixture to the pan and mix well. Reduce heat to medium and cook for three to four minutes.
4. Add the water and salt; bring the mixture to a boil.
5. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep the mixture from sticking. Remove from heat when the pineapple pieces become soft and tender. Discard the cinnamon pieces and the cloves.

Now retired, **Nancy Kyte** served for 10 years as the marketing director of the Office of Adventist Mission.





# FINDING PURPOSE



I felt the hot air slap my face as I stepped off of the plane and gazed at my new home. Part of Micronesia, the island of Chuuk was lush and green and cradled by a blue sea. I felt sick. I'd just been evacuated from my mission work in Chad, Africa, due to potential political unrest, and I didn't want to be here.

Her innocence and gentle spirit warmed my heart, and I couldn't understand why I'd been so selfish for the past several months.

As I waited for my luggage, I thought about my experience in Chad and why I'd volunteered to go.

I'd felt that God was no longer present for me in the routine I'd created for myself in America: sitting in class, studying, eating, and sleeping and then getting up and doing the same thing the next day and the next. I wanted to find purpose for my life—God's purpose.

When I signed up to spend 10 months in Chad, I knew nothing about the country's people or culture. Pushing myself to dive into the unfamiliar was both frightening and thrilling!



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

Once there, I learned bits and pieces of French, gave Bible studies to children and adults, and participated in food distribution and women's ministries. Every single day, I saw the power of God working in people's lives no matter their circumstances. He let me be part of that! I finally began to feel the sense of purpose that I'd longed for. But after only six weeks, it was yanked away from me.

I was greeted at the airport by a friendly Chuukese Seventh-day Adventist pastor, and we hurried to his car in a downpour. As we traveled to the school where I would teach, he talked glowingly about his island home, but I was too tired to listen and couldn't stop thinking about Chad. *Why did God bring me here? Why did he take me away from Africa? Why am I even doing this?*

When I stepped out of the car at the school, the children ran out of their classrooms and surrounded me.

I felt a tug on my arm. "Hi! I'm Scarlett! I'm in sixth grade. Are you going to be my teacher? Please tell me you're going to be my teacher!" The children led me to the seventh-grade classroom where they had prepared a show for me.

They performed a cultural dance and sang with voices that sounded like angels. They placed flower crowns on my head and flashed their bright smiles.

Their welcome was very sweet, but I couldn't share their enthusiasm.

That night, the heat kept me awake, and I tossed and turned in bed, frustrated, sweating, and determined to go home. Tears streamed down my face, and I cried out to God.

"God, help me," I prayed. "Show me my purpose here. Teach me what to do. Give me a reason to stay here and fulfill your plan."

This was my prayer every night for at least two months. I taught multiple grades and subjects every day, and I felt exhausted

and discouraged. I didn't think I was making any difference in the lives of my students until one day an eighth grader named Susiann approached me after our English class.

"Miss," she started, "I need your help." The concerned look on her face worried me. Despite my opposition to living in Chuuk, I loved my students, and I wanted to help her.

"Sure, Susiann. How can I help you?" I asked.

"Miss," she whispered, "I want to learn how to write better."

Her innocence and gentle spirit warmed my heart, and I couldn't understand why I'd been so selfish for the past several months. I felt guilty because I was teaching without passion, not really investing my time and effort into the students whom I'd come to serve.

I took Susiann's hand and told her, "Of course I'll help you! Meet me at the lunch tables after school."

Susiann and I worked on grammar and writing essays every day after school. Her willingness to learn and her trust in me to teach her gave me much-needed inspiration.

"I'm finished teacher," she said excitedly one afternoon, handing me her paper and grabbing her books. "Now I can go play!"

I watched Susiann run through the coconut trees, her long hair whipping behind her in the island breeze. *There goes my answer to prayer, I thought, my purpose for being here.* "Thank you, Father," I prayed, "for bringing me to Susiann."

From the United States, **Vianay Valadez** served as a volunteer hospital assistant at Bere Adventist Hospital in Chad, Africa, and as a teacher at the Chuuk SDA School in Micronesia. She is a senior liberal studies major with a concentration in English at La Sierra University.



# Start the year right with a gift to mission.

*“Dear Lord, we want to be good stewards.  
Help us to be faithful in our giving to  
the world mission offerings to help send  
missionaries and support the work of  
hospitals, clinics, and schools.”*

*“...for the prosperity of the home work  
depends largely, under God, upon the  
reflex influence of the evangelical  
work done in countries afar off.”*

*—Gospel Workers, 465, 466.*

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