



# CHILDREN'S MISSION

2018 • **QUARTER 1** • INTER-AMERICAN DIVISION



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**On the Cover:** Dalisa Makhwani, 10, has preached in churches since she was 7 in the Central American country of Belize. Read her story on page 28.

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# Your Offerings at Work

Three years ago, part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering helped repair the Good Samaritan Inn, a homeless shelter, and expand it to include a free health clinic, in Kingston, Jamaica. Read about a former gangster who found God here on page 10.



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## Dear Sabbath School Leader,

Andrew McChesney  
Editor



This quarter we feature the Inter-American Division, which includes countries and territories in the Caribbean Sea, Central America, and the northern part of South America. The region is home to nearly 300 million people and has a Seventh-day Adventist membership of 3.7 million. That's a ratio of one Adventist for every 81 people.

Three projects have been chosen to receive funds from the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering, and they are located in Puerto Rico, Trinidad, and Mexico.

In Puerto Rico, the funds will help construct a multi-purpose facility that will accommodate 1,000 people for religious and missional activities on the campus of Antillean Adventist University.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the University of the Southern Caribbean will receive its first church building, replacing an auditorium where people now gather for worship services. The new University Church will have seating for 1,700 people and be furnished with facilities for Sabbath School, children ministries,

a media ministry, a welfare ministry, mission outreach, a training center, and a fellowship hall.

In Mexico, Southeast Adventist Hospital will expand with a new seven-story building that offers health services and prevention classes to residents of the city of Villahermosa and the surrounding area.

You can watch a six-minute video about the projects at the link: [bit.ly/iad-projects-2018](http://bit.ly/iad-projects-2018).

### Special Features

If you want to make your Sabbath School class come alive in a new way this quarter, visit our Facebook page at the link: [facebook.com/missionquarterlies](https://facebook.com/missionquarterlies). Every week, we post additional photos and activities to go with each mission story. You could show the photos to the children on your computer or mobile device while you read the mission story, or you could print the photos to decorate your Sabbath School room or church bulletin board.

This quarterly contains just a sample of the latest mission stories from the Inter-American Division. For more great stories, visit [bit.ly/iad-archive](http://bit.ly/iad-archive), which will take you to all the division stories. At this link, you can also search for stories by country and theme.

You also can download the PDF version of the *Children's Mission* quarterly at [bit.ly/childrensmision](http://bit.ly/childrensmision), and *Mission Spotlight* videos at [bit.ly/missionspotlight](http://bit.ly/missionspotlight).

If you have found especially effective ways to share mission stories, please let me know at [mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org](mailto:mcchesneya@gc.adventist.org).

Thank you for encouraging children to be mission-minded!

### Opportunities

The Thirteenth Sabbath Offering this quarter will help build:

- Center of evangelism, Antillean Adventist University, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
- University church building, University of the Southern Caribbean, Maracas, Trinidad and Tobago
- Seven-story community center, Southeast Adventist Hospital, Villahermosa, Mexico



PUERTO RICO | January 6

## Praying for a Dog

Maria de la Paz Rodriguez, 38

Today's story comes from Puerto Rico.  
*[Find Puerto Rico on the map.]*

Little Nancy raised her hand when Teacher asked whether anyone in the first-grade class had a prayer request.

"Please pray for my dog," the girl said.

"We can include your dog in our prayer today," said Teacher.

After hearing all the children's prayer requests, Teacher prayed for Nancy's dog. Then she went to a piece of paper in the corner of the classroom chalkboard. The paper had two columns on it: "Reasons to Pray" and "Reasons to Say Thank You." Teacher took a black marker and wrote "Nancy's dog" under the column for "Reasons to Pray."

Teacher also prayed for the dog at the end of school when Nancy and the other children were ready to go home.

The next morning, Nancy raised her hand again.

"Please pray for my dog," she said.

The next morning, she said the same thing.

Every morning for two weeks, Nancy asked Teacher to pray for her dog. Finally, Teacher couldn't be quiet any longer. She was so curious to find out what was happening with the dog.

"Why I am praying so much for your dog?" Teacher asked.

"My dog died," Nancy said, sadly.

Teacher was surprised.

"Why are we praying for a dead dog?" she asked.

"I'm so sad," Nancy said.

Teacher didn't want Nancy to be sad, but she didn't think that praying for a dead dog was the answer. She suggested that Nancy change her prayer a little bit.

"We are going to change our prayer because your dog has already died," Teacher said, kindly. "In heaven, you can



## Fast Facts

- Christopher Columbus landed in Puerto Rico in 1493, one year after he arrived in the Americas. He named it San Juan Bautista after John the Baptist.
- The food of Puerto Rico is spicy and is a mixture of Spanish, American, British, and African influences.
- Although Puerto Rico is a territory of the United States, it competes individually in the Olympics and has won nine medals total. Six medals were won in boxing, one in athletics, one in tennis, and one in wrestling.
- The Puerto Rican Constitution grants its people freedom of religion. Seventy percent of the population identify as Catholic, with 25 percent being Protestant.

choose any animal that you want. But for now, let's ask Jesus to change your sadness into a better feeling."

Nancy liked that idea.

"Oh yes!" she exclaimed with a big smile. "That would be nice."

Teacher wasn't upset that Nancy wanted to pray for her dead dog. In fact, she was very happy because she saw that Nancy believes in the power of prayer.

Teacher has taught math and reading to first graders for many years, but she only recently started to teach the children to pray. She has turned her first-grade classroom into a special praying classroom after hearing a special sermon on Sabbath. The preacher read Colossians 1:25, which says, "I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you" (NKJV). The preacher said this verse means that every teacher should be a minister. This did not mean that Teacher should quit

her job and begin to preach in church every Sabbath. It means that she should be a minister in her classroom every day!

Teacher had never thought about being a minister in a classroom. She had always thought that she was just an ordinary teacher. How could she be a minister?

Teacher prayed to God for help. Then she told the first graders and their parents that her classroom was no longer an ordinary classroom. Instead of praying only at the beginning of school, she would now pray at the end, too. She made the special piece of paper for prayers and put it on the chalkboard.

The children and the parents liked the new praying classroom. Some parents immediately began to text their prayer requests to Teacher by cellphone. Soon the parents asked Teacher if she could meet and pray with them, too. The parents of three families are now preparing for baptism.

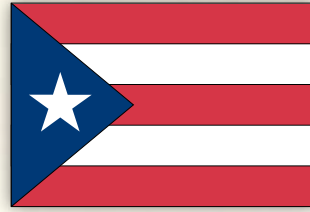
Teacher said prayer is an important part of first grade, and they will pray for anything—even a dead dog.

"I want the children not only to receive a diploma from school but also a crown from Jesus," she said.

Teacher's full name is Maria de la Paz Rodriguez, and many of the children in her classroom are not from Adventist homes. Let's pray for Teacher, her students, and the Adventist Church's work of telling others in Puerto Rico that Jesus is coming soon. Thank you for giving to the mission offering so more people can hear the good news. 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Watch a short YouTube video of Maria at the link: [bit.ly/maria-rodriguez](http://bit.ly/maria-rodriguez)



PUERTO RICO | January 13

Kermyt Torres Castellano, 39

# Rice and Beans

The university teacher gave Kermyt [pronounced: Kermit, as in “Kermit the Frog”] and the rest of his class a difficult homework assignment in Puerto Rico. *[Find Puerto Rico on the map.]* Kermyt and his classmates needed to find someone in need and then help that person.

Kermyt liked to help people, but he wondered what he could do for his homework assignment. *[Ask the children what they would tell Kermyt to do.]*

Kermyt spoke with several classmates, and they decided to team up to feed homeless people in their town. One student said, “I’ll bring rice and beans.” Another student offered to bring vegetarian meat, and others said they would bring salad and juice.

Finally, all the arrangements were made, and the students met in the town’s central square, where homeless people often sat. The students set up a table and placed

big platters of rice and beans, vegetarian meat, and salad on it. Someone brought a 150 paper plates to serve the food on.

Kermyt and his friends noticed that they had many more plates than food. They had 150 plates but only enough food for 50 people. They prayed for God to bless the meal.

“We asked the Lord’s blessing because we didn’t know how many people would come, but we wanted Him to guide everything that we did,” Kermyt said.

The homeless people started lining up to eat. While several friends spooned large portions of food onto paper plates, Kermyt walked around the town square, looking for people to invite to the meal. Then he saw something surprising. He saw a homeless man pull 12 old pairs of shoes out of a garbage can. Twelve pairs! Kermyt thought that the man would take all the shoes, but instead the man carefully chose

## Fast Facts

- The streets in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico, are paved with blue cobblestones.
- There are no predators native to Puerto Rico, so people imported mongoose from India to control the population of reptiles in the cane fields.
- In Puerto Rico, standing close to people during conversations and kissing them on their cheeks is considered a sign of respect.

a pair, tried the shoes on his feet, and put the rest back in the garbage can.

Kermyt invited the man to the meal and sat with him as he ate. He wanted to know why the man took only one pair of shoes. *[Ask children why they think the man only took one pair.]*

“Why don’t you take all the pairs of shoes if you need them?” Kermyt asked. “Anyone else would have taken them.”

The homeless man’s reply surprised him.

“I’m thinking about the person who will come after me,” the man said.

The man wanted to make sure that the next homeless person who looked in the garbage can would also find shoes to wear. Kermyt was amazed. He realized that the homeless man wasn’t just thinking about himself but he was thinking about others as well. Kermyt remembered that Jesus said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35; NKJV).

While Kermyt was still thinking about the unselfish act by the homeless man, he and his friends had an even bigger surprise. The food and the plates ran out at exactly the same time. The students didn’t notice immediately that all 150 plates were gone. But when they finished serving the last

rice and beans, they realized that they didn’t have any plates left. Even though they only had enough food for 50 people, they had fed 150 people!

“We saw a miracle from God!” Kermyt said. “God multiplied the food.”

The students were very happy, and they spoke excitedly about what had happened. Several remembered the miracle of the five loaves and two fish, when Jesus prayed for the small boy’s lunch and then used it to feed 5,000 people. *[See John 6:9-11.]*

“Jesus has performed the same miracle today!” the students said.

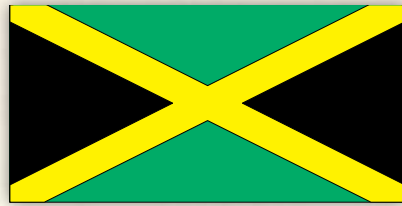
Kermyt Torres Castellano is now the pastor of four churches, but he has never forgotten his homework assignment to help others. “It has served as the pattern for my life, and it has motivated me to help people in need,” he said.

Today, one of Kermyt’s churches feeds rice and beans to 150 people every Sabbath. Another church feeds a similar number of people every Thursday. Through this food ministry, eight people have been baptized in three years.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go to Kermyt’s university, the Antillean Adventist University, so its students can help more people in their town. Our mission offering helps others learn about our wonderful Jesus, who fed 150 people with just a small meal of rice and beans! 🌍

By Andrew McChesney

Read Kermyt’s conversion story online at the link: [bit.ly/father-church-jeans](http://bit.ly/father-church-jeans) or in the adult and youth Mission quarterly, which can be downloaded at the link: [bit.ly/adultmission](http://bit.ly/adultmission)



JAMAICA | January 20

## A Good Example

Adrian Cotterell

Adrian had no interest in Christianity when he enrolled in eleventh grade at a Seventh-day Adventist boarding school in Jamaica. *[Find Jamaica on the map.]* He didn't believe that Jesus is coming soon, and he thought Adventists were foolish for worshipping on Saturday and refusing to eat pork.

Adrian chose West Indies High School, located on a hilltop in the central city of Mandeville, because he thought it was like other boarding schools where students could have parties.

"I wanted to party on Saturday night," Adrian said.

The 17-year-old teen soon learned that the school was owned by the Adventist Church and it practiced Bible teachings. For a short time, he tried to find a way to live off campus because he didn't like the cafeteria food. But he found that it was

more expensive to live off campus, and he couldn't quit the school because his father had already paid the tuition. So, he resolved to study but avoid Christianity.

"Christianity wasn't something that I wanted," he said. "I thought Christians were old, sick, and ready to die."

His initial impression of Adventist young people wasn't good. His new friends invited him to break the Sabbath by watching a soccer match in town on Sabbath. Another Adventist student tried to convince him to steal milk from the high school cafeteria. When Adrian refused to steal, the student made fun of him.

Adrian moved into a dormitory room with three other teens, one of whom was an Adventist. The Adventist student was named Leonard, and he lived Jesus in that room.

Adrian watched Leonard pray every



evening before he went to bed. He saw him pray in the same spot in front of the window when he got up in the morning. Before Leonard went to class, he bowed his head at the door and asked God to keep him during the day, and he prayed when he returned from classes. Every time he entered and left the room, he prayed. He also read his Bible and Sabbath School Study Guide every afternoon after classes, and he went into town on weekends to help people.

Adrian was impressed.

“It was attractive,” Adrian said. “I said to myself, ‘I would love to be like this guy, praying and studying and encouraging. I would love to be like him.’”

Leonard noticed that his roommate was watching him and invited him to study the Sabbath School lesson together. Leonard showed Adrian how to find verses in the Bible for the Sabbath School lesson. He told him about tithing and Ellen G. White, who helped start the Adventist Church. “I didn’t know who was this Sister White,” Adrian said. “I heard people mention Sister White in church. My roommate said she was a prophet, and he showed me the test of a true prophet from the Bible, so I saw her visions were from God.”

Within a few months of entering the high school, Adrian stopped eating pork and wanted to worship Christ on Saturday. He gave his heart to Jesus when a pastor asked who wanted to be baptized during the school’s week of prayer.

Leonard was delighted. He invited Adrian to join him on weekend outings to help people in the town, and he took Adrian colporteur during summer vacation, telling Adrian that Christians

## Mission Post

- Protestants make up 70 percent of the population of Jamaica. Seventh-day Adventists are the second-largest Protestant denomination after Church of God.
- One in every nine Jamaicans is a Seventh-day Adventist.

are strengthened by sharing their faith.

Adrian was the only Adventist in his family. His parents accepted his decision, but his old friends teased him by calling him a “girl child” for refusing to smoke and drink. They stopped making fun of him when they saw that he wasn’t going to change his mind.

Adrian went on to become a pastor and a church leader in Jamaica. Leonard also works as a pastor in Jamaica. Adrian and Leonard are still friends, and they like to remember their old days in high school.

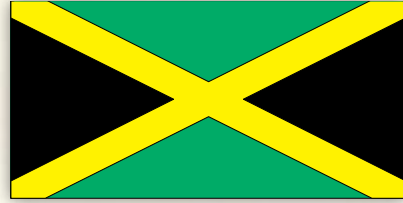
Adrian said Leonard’s example of being a kind, honest Christian was more powerful than a sermon.

“I wasn’t drawn to become an Adventist because of Ellen White, the Sabbath, or the sanctuary,” he said. “It was the lifestyle of my roommate. I wanted to be like him.”

*[Ask children: Do other children see that you are kind and honest, like Christ, and want to be like you?]* 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Watch a short YouTube video of Adrian at the link: [bit.ly/adrian-cotterell](http://bit.ly/adrian-cotterell)



JAMAICA | January 27

Andrew Carter, 51

## Gangster for God

Andrew first fired an automatic weapon at the age of 14, when he joined a street gang in Jamaica's capital, Kingston. *[Find Kingston, Jamaica, on the map.]*

He spent the next 15 years talking tough and shooting people as he rose through the ranks to become a leader of a gang.

Then one evening, several friends were chatting on the porch of Andrew's house, and one of them accidentally fired an automatic weapon into the roof. Nobody was injured, but the incident scared Andrew's girlfriend, Annette. She pleaded with Andrew to move with her to another town.

Around that time, Andrew's brother, who was in the same gang, was arrested for murder and received a 20-year sentence.

Andrew decided that it was time to leave the gang and start a new life.

"I gave it all up when my brother went to prison," Andrew said.

Andrew and his girlfriend moved to another town, and Andrew began to work for the first time in his life. *[Ask children: Can you guess his job?]* He found a job as a security guard, protecting a business.

Several years passed, and Annette left Andrew to marry a man in the United States. Andrew moved to another town where his sister and several other relatives lived. He found another job. *[Ask children: Can you guess his job?]* He found another business that needed a security guard.

Andrew's quiet life was shattered one day when one of his cousins inadvertently blurted out in a conversation with friends that Andrew used to be a gangster.

"Andrew isn't who he seems to be," the cousin said. "He used to be a gangster and shoot people."

## Fast Facts

- In 1988, Jamaica was the first tropical country to send a bobsledding team to the Winter Olympics.
- Jamaica is home to more than 200 species of exotic orchid, 73 of which are indigenous.
- Cricket is the most popular sport in Jamaica, and the country has produced some of the world's most famous cricketers, including George Headley, Courtney Walsh, and Michael Holding.
- Jamaica is home to the fastest man in the world, Usain Bolt.

The news quickly spread through the town. Everyone was scared, and several people wanted to kill Andrew. Thirteen men took guns and marched over to his house. Andrew looked out the window at them with disdain. He thought he was stronger than all 13 men together.

“They were simple country people, and I had grown up in a tough concrete city,” he said.

He went to get his guns.

Around that time, Andrew's sister heard about the standoff outside her brother's house and rushed over. She saw the guns in his house and begged him not to shoot anyone.

“If you shoot them, then I and your other relatives won't be able to live here anymore,” she said. “It would be best if you left town instead.”

Andrew didn't want to cause trouble for his family, so he threw some clothes into a backpack and walked out the front door. The armed men watched silently as Andrew walked past.

Andrew had nowhere to go, so he

returned to his birthplace, Kingston. Unable to find work, he slept at a bus station for 2 ½ months. **The once-powerful gangster was now poor and homeless.**

Then one day, another homeless man told him about a place called the Good Samaritan Inn. The man said it was run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church and offered free hot meals, a chance to bathe and do laundry, and a place to sleep.

Andrew couldn't believe his eyes when went to the Good Samaritan Inn and saw a crowd of 300 people lined up to eat.

“This is the first time that I had seen people fed like that,” he said.

Some nice people invited him to stay at the Good Samaritan Inn, and soon he began working there. *[Ask children: Can you guess his job?]* Yes, he became a security guard! He also took Bible studies, and he was baptized.

Andrew loves working at the Good Samaritan Inn.

“I want to help as much as I can,” he said. “I'm very happy that I'm alive and happier than I ever dreamed possible. It gives me a lot of joy to be able to give to others.”

Andrew has found a new girlfriend, and they are planning to get married. But the most important person in his life is God.

“I am trying to be very faithful and put my trust and faith in God,” he said.

Part of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering that children gave three years ago helped repair the Good Samaritan Inn so it could help more homeless people like Andrew. Thank you for your mission offering that helps people in Jamaica and all around the world learn about Jesus. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO | Feb. 3

Ronnel Nurse, 25

## Cartoons for Jesus

Would you give up cartoons for Jesus? *[Allow children to answer.]* Today, we will hear a story about Ronnel, who gave up cartoons for Jesus when he was 11 years old. Ronnel comes from an island nation called Trinidad and Tobago in the Caribbean Sea. *[Find Trinidad and Tobago on the map.]*

*[Ask an older boy to read this first-hand account.]*

My first real introduction to God came from my grandmother. She went to church every Sunday, and I never heard of Seventh-day Adventists. She taught me to pray and read the Bible. I spent most of my Sundays in Sunday School with my grandmother.

Then my mother sent me to study at the Maracas Seventh-day Adventist Primary School. The school had a week of prayer program when I was 11 years old, and I listened as the pastor spoke about his love for Jesus. I felt an emptiness inside

me that I never knew was there. When the pastor made a call for baptism, I knew that I had to step forward. So, I did.

But everything was new to me. I didn't know much about the Bible, so it was a good thing that the pastor insisted that everyone who wanted to be baptized had to attend a Bible study class first. With each Bible lesson, it became clearer to me that I had to be baptized. I saw that the Sabbath was on Saturday, not Sunday. I saw that God wants us to worship Him and not work and do other regular things on the Sabbath.

But if I were baptized, I would no longer go to Sunday School and church with my grandmother. Sabbath would become my main day of worship.

It wasn't easy to make the switch. At first, I missed watching Saturday morning cartoons on television. When Grandmother asked me to run an errand



or buy something at the store on Sabbath, I had to tell her, “Sorry, Granny, I can’t go because it is Sabbath.” [Ask children what they would say if someone asked them to break the Sabbath.]

Then my grandmother became seriously ill and went to the hospital. I visited her and encouraged her. I gave her hugs so she would know that I loved her. I prayed for God to heal her.

I read wonderful stories in my Sabbath School lesson about how God performed miracles for His people. [Ask the children to share some of the miracles that God performed in the Bible.]

I read about how the boy David defeated the giant Goliath with one small stone. I read about how God parted the Red Sea so Moses could lead the Israelites out of Egypt. I believed that if anyone could heal my grandmother, it would be Jesus. I thought everything would be fine with Grandmother if I mentioned her in my prayers every night before bed.

It came as a complete shock one day when I came home from school and I learned that my grandmother had passed away. A big part of my world was gone.

I felt that God had let me down. I had trusted Him to do a great miracle, but still Grandmother died. I was very sad and cried. I wondered if I had made a mistake in trusting God.

But as I thought about my grandmother’s life, I remembered all the times that I had seen her praying. She was a praying woman. She trusted God.

I still don’t understand why Grandmother died. But I know that Jesus also died—and He is no longer dead! Jesus lives today and promises everyone who believes in Him will live forever.

## Fast Facts

- Three of the top five hottest chili peppers in the world come from Trinidad—the Trinidad Moruga Scorpion, the Douglah, and the Trinidad Scorpion “Butch T.”
- The world’s largest piece of brain coral can be found at Speyside, Tobago. It measures 10 feet by 16 feet (3 meters by 5 meters), or the size of a truck.
- In 2006, Trinidad and Tobago became the smallest country ever to qualify for the soccer (football) World Cup.
- A Trinidadian doctor, Joseph Lennox Pawan, discovered the transmission of rabies by vampire bats to humans in 1933, leading to the development of a vaccine for the virus.

My grandmother’s death was the first time that I felt the sting of death. But I have hope. Romans 8:18 says, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” The verse means that bad things might make us feel sad now, but a great joy is coming. Jesus is coming soon! I can’t wait to see Jesus—and my grandmother—again!

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help build a church near the school where Ronnel was baptized after attending the week of prayer. Thank you for your mission offering, which will help other children learn about Jesus. 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Today, Ronnel is 25 years old and helps run computer systems at Trinidad and Tobago’s Ministry of National Security, which oversees the police force and emergency services.



MEXICO | February 10

Fermin Espinoza Marin, 52

# Drinking With God

Would God go into a bar? *[Wait for children to answer.]*

Fermin [pronounced: fehr-mIHn] says God would go into a bar.

Fermin grew up in a Seventh-day Adventist home in Mexico. *[Find Mexico on the map.]* But he left God as an adult. He drank and smoked. He hated his life so much that he wanted to die. He told his old friends, “If I am found dead one day, don’t blame anyone because I wanted it.”

Then Fermin looked for new friends. He hung out with thieves and other criminals, but he didn’t treat them like friends. He yelled at them. He called them bad names. He threatened them. He hoped that they would get angry with him and kill him.

“But,” he said, “God never let anyone hurt me.”

One day, a man knocked on Fermin’s door and offered Bible studies. Fermin was

alone and feeling sad, so he invited the man into his house. The man came every day for 15 days.

Then Fermin asked the visitor to explain Revelation 12:17. The verse says, “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (NKJV).

The visitor said he could explain the verse but he needed 15 days to prepare the answer.

After 15 days, the man returned and said, “The angry dragon in the verse is Satan and the woman is the church. To go to heaven, you need to find a church that keeps all the commandments of God.”

Fermin asked the man whether his church kept all the commandments.

The man hung his head. “No, it doesn’t,” he said. “But I can’t leave. I

## Fast Facts

- The official name of Mexico is the United Mexican States (Estados Unidos Mexicanos).
- The inhabitants of what is now Mexico were the first to grow corn, tomatoes, cocoa, chilies, and beans.
- Mexican food is known for its range of flavors and spices. Popular dishes include tacos, burritos, and enchiladas.
- The most popular sport in Mexico is soccer. Mexico hosted the World Cup in 1970 and 1986.
- 123 million people live in Mexico.

promised to help the church leaders, and I can't break my promise."

Fermin asked the man whether he knew of a church that kept all the commandments.

"I'm going to tell you the truth, but then I'll never come back to your house," the man replied. He lowered his voice to a whisper. "It's the Seventh-day Adventist Church," he said.

It so happened that there was an Adventist church near Fermin's house, but Fermin couldn't seem to find time to go.

One day, Fermin felt a huge urge to drink, and he went to the store to buy beer.

As he looked at the bottles of beer, he prayed, "Please, Lord, I don't want to do this." Tears began to run down his cheeks, and he remembered a song from his childhood called, "God's Love." Fermin sang the song aloud right in the middle of the store. When he finished,

the desire for beer had vanished, and he went home empty-handed.

"That was a miracle," Fermin said. "It was very hard for me to resist the urge of alcohol."

Three months later, the desire to drink returned strongly. Fermin went to a bar and ordered a beer. As he sat there with the beer bottle in his hand, he felt like something was different. He felt like God was with him in the bar. He heard a voice in his head say, "Son, you don't belong here anymore. You don't have to be here anymore." The voice was so compelling that he couldn't hold the beer in his hand, and he set it down on the counter.

Fermin left the bar and never returned. Six months later, he was baptized. Many church members remembered him from when he was a small boy, and they welcomed him back with open arms.

Do you obey God's commandments? *[Wait for children to reply.]* When tempted to do wrong, it might seem hard to obey God. But God promises to help those who ask. James 1:12 says, "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (NKJV).

Fermin prayed for help, and God helped him overcome enormous temptations. "I see myself as a wonderful miracle of God," Fermin said, weeping as he told his story.

With God's help, Fermin now keeps all the commandments of Jesus. He is looking forward for Jesus to return to take him home.

Let's pray for God's help right now before we collect the mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



MEXICO | February 17

## Only a Miracle

Pedro Geronimo Montero, 50

Today's story is from Villahermosa, capital of Mexico's southern Tabasco state. *[Find Villahermosa on the map. It is near Cancun.]*

Father didn't know when he had been more worried. His newborn son, Abel, would eat and then throw up. He was getting weaker and weaker.

After a series of tests, doctors determined that Abel had been born with a deformed stomach. He simply could not digest any food. The 15-day-old child was rushed for emergency surgery to a government hospital.

"We were very worried about him," said Father.

At the hospital, the doctor solemnly asked Father and Mother whether they

were Christians.

"Yes, we are Christians," Father told the doctor.

"Good," the doctor said. "You should pray to God because only a miracle can save your son."

Father and Mother had joined the Adventist Church four years earlier. Father had listened to an Adventist radio station and grown convinced that God calls all people to worship on the seventh-day Sabbath. He and Mother had taken Bible studies and been baptized.

Now their baby boy was in trouble.

The doctor scheduled the operation for the next day. The parents prayed. They prayed all night.

In the morning, the doctor called over



## Fast Facts

- The emblem on the Mexican shows an eagle standing on a cactus with a snake in the beak. A legend says that the Aztec settled and built their capital city, Tenochtitlan (today's Mexico City) on the place where they saw an eagle sitting on a cactus, eating a snake.
- Mexico is the largest Spanish-speaking country in the world.
- Mexico is the world's largest producer of silver.

Mexico City is built on what was a lakebed and has sunk in some places up to 30 feet (9 meters) in the last 100 years.

Mexico produces the most automobiles of any North American nation.

Frida Kahlo is one of the most famous Mexican artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

the parents as he was about to take Abel into the operating room. He cautioned them that the surgery would be delicate.

"If I cut out too much, the boy will die," he said. "If I don't cut enough, the boy won't be able to digest food and he will die."

Then the boy went into surgery. Father and Mother prayed as they waited.

Several hours later, the doctor emerged from the operating room and declared the surgery a success. Everything was fixed, and he had stitched shut the boy's stomach.

"But," the doctor told Father, "don't allow any other doctor to take out the stitches. Only me."

Two days passed. Abel was recovering

well, and the nurses wondered who would remove the stitches. Finally, they prepared to remove the stitches themselves, but Father stopped them.

"I am waiting for the doctor," Father said. "The doctor said that no one else should remove the stitches."

The nurses asked for the name of the doctor. When Father identified the doctor as Daniel Hernandez, the nurses gasped. They said one of the best children's doctors in Mexico was named Daniel Hernandez and he once had worked at the hospital. But he had moved to a faraway city two months earlier.

"We don't have anyone named Daniel Hernandez working at this hospital now," a nurse said.

Father and Mother became excited.

"Then who did this surgery on my son?" Father asked. "It must have been the Lord!"

Mother began to weep with joy.

"This is a miracle of God," Father said.

In the end, a nurse had to remove the stitches. The baby made a full recovery.

Today, Abel is 6 years old and healthy, and the father, Pedro Geronimo Montero, tells everyone that Jesus answers prayer in an amazing way.

This story happened at a government hospital in the city of Villahermosa, which we saw on the map earlier. Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help another hospital in the city—the Southeast Adventist Hospital—build a new center to help more people learn about good health and Jesus. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



MEXICO | February 24

Robert Gonzalez Medina, 35

# Playing With Guns

Robert liked to tease his mother. Whenever gunshots were fired at their home, he would cry out, “Mom! Mom! They hit me!”

Mother was a good sport, and she played along with Robert’s game.

“Oh no!” she said every time. “What will we do?”

But the gang violence was no joking matter. Robert grew up in a violent neighborhood in Los Angeles, California. When he was five years old, his older brothers joined a street gang. People from other gangs drove by their house and shot at it, trying to scare his brothers.

“For me, the shooting was normal,” Robert said. “I took it as a game.”

The constant violence, however, caused his heart to become hard. As he grew older, he stopped teasing his mother. His smile was replaced by an angry scowl. He began to play with real guns.

When Robert was 14, his parents joined

the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Robert sometimes went to church with them, and they talked about the sermon around the dinner table.

Even though he acted like a tough guy, Robert grew tired of the violence. Finally, when he was an adult, he married a woman from Mexico and decided to go to Mexico to meet her family. *[Find Los Angeles and Mexico on the map so the children can see how far Robert traveled.]*

Robert liked the quieter life in Mexico, and he opened a store selling construction materials.

His wife, meanwhile, started going to the Adventist church every Sabbath. She had learned about the Sabbath from Robert’s parents, and she wanted to obey the Bible. She begged Robert to go to church with her.

After many days, Robert finally agreed to go to church, but under one condition: He would only go for the sermon. He

didn't want to go to Sabbath School.

As soon as the pastor began to preach on Sabbath, Robert's ears started ringing. His shirt and face became very wet. He was sweating terribly. For some reason, he was very nervous about being in church.

After 15 minutes, Robert whispered to his wife, "I'm leaving."

"But we just got here," his wife said.

"I know, but I'm leaving," he said.

Later at home, Robert couldn't explain to his wife what had happened. He felt sad. He remembered going to church with his parents and talking about the sermon at lunch. He worried that maybe he had sinned so much that he couldn't go to church anymore.

He prayed to God for help. He decided that he would try to go to church again, but this time he would go for Sabbath School *and* the sermon. He didn't tell his wife about the plan until Sabbath morning. "We're going to church together today!" he told her. She was so happy!

Everything went fine during Sabbath School, but then the preacher gave the sermon. Robert didn't sweat again, but he was surprised as he listened. It seemed like the preacher was talking directly to him.

On a Sabbath afternoon, Robert went to a relative's house to study the Bible. As they read about forgiveness, Robert began to wonder again whether he had sinned too much to go to church. He couldn't believe that God would forgive him for all the bad things that he had done. Suddenly, Robert heard a voice inside him say, "You are forgiven."

Robert was a big, tough man, but he started to cry like a little baby. He hadn't cried in many years, and he didn't even know that he still could cry.

## Fast Fact

- Mexico has a variety of climates, ranging from tropical to desert.
- The highest peak in Mexico is a volcano that is 18,491 feet (5,636 meters) high and called Pico Orizaba. It is the third largest in North America.
- Chitzen Itza is a Mayan pyramid and a World Heritage Site, visited by more than 1 million people every year.
- In Mexico, there are jaguars, pumas, and huge iguanas. In the jungles of southern Mexico, you can encounter various types of lizards, monkeys and colorful birds, such as parrots. Whales, manta rays and manatees are common in the oceans and can sometimes be spotted off the Yucatan coast.

"At that moment, I knew that God had forgiven my sins," he said.

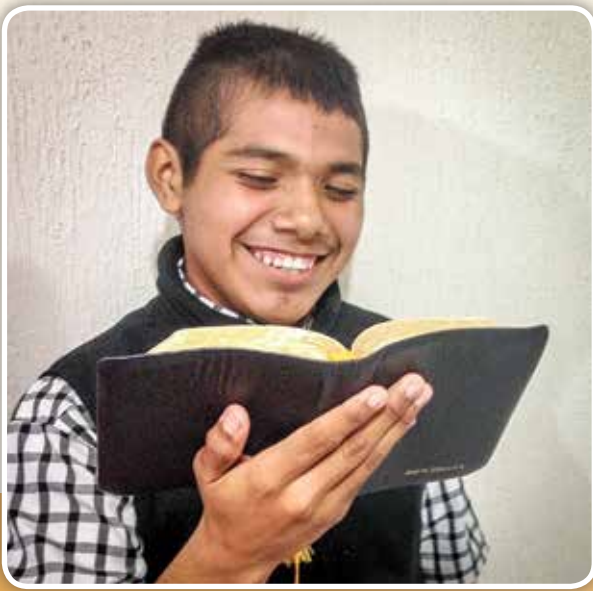
Robert's tough face melted away. He began to smile through the tears. He was forgiven of his sins!

Robert gave his heart to Jesus. Today Robert is the father of two little boys, and he is glad that they have never heard shooting like he did when he was a boy.

"When my kids fight, they fight over who will pray first at a meal," he said. "I feel that God is taking care of me, and I am grateful."

Part of this quarter's Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help the Southeast Adventist Hospital, where Robert works as the chief financial officer. He is responsible for all the hospital's money. Your offering will help the hospital teach more people in Mexico about good health and the Creator of health, Jesus. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



MEXICO | March 3

Uriel Arodi Albino Ramos, 15

# Miracle in Mexico

Uriel [pronounced: YER-ee-ehl] was born a very sick boy in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo. *[Find Mexico and then the state of Quintana Roo on the map. The state's best-known city is Cancun.]*

When Uriel was six months old, the doctor diagnosed him with hyperthyroidism, a disorder that caused him to feel tired all the time. A few years later, Uriel developed an illness that made his leg muscles hurt dreadfully. Because of this illness, his feet grew in the wrong direction, and he could barely walk. Uriel had to wear special shoes to correct his feet.

If this wasn't bad enough, the doctor then found a tumor in his brain. But the doctor didn't want to operate on the tumor because he was worried that Uriel would grow worse.

Uriel went to the hospital many times

with his mother and grandmother, but nothing could be done to stop the pain. Mother felt sorry for Uriel. Grandmother felt sorry for Uriel. The doctor felt sorry for Uriel.

When Uriel was 11 years old, the doctor told him, "Maybe we can't do much to help, but let's at least operate on your legs so you can walk normally. Maybe some of the pain will go away."

The hospital in Uriel's town was too small to carry out the operation, so Uriel had to travel two days by car to a bigger hospital in another Mexican state. Mother and Grandmother went with him.

Two days before the operation, Grandmother told Uriel's mother to pray.

Mother didn't usually pray, and she didn't know what to say to God. But she knew that she didn't want her boy to be in pain any longer, so she prayed an unusual



prayer. “Dear God,” she prayed. “If You are going to take my child away from me, just do it. I don’t want him to suffer.”

Then the doctor announced that if he was going to operate on Uriel’s legs, he might as well try to remove the tumor from his brain as well.

The night before the operation, Mother went with Grandmother to church for prayer meeting. Mother told the church members about Uriel, and they prayed for the boy.

The next morning was the day of the big operation. When the doctor checked Uriel’s legs one last time, he couldn’t believe what he saw. Uriel’s legs and feet were in the right position, and he could walk just fine.

The doctor was shocked. He thought someone had made a mistake in ordering the operation. He ordered an X-ray, and the results showed nothing was wrong with Uriel’s legs. The doctor still couldn’t believe it, so he ordered a second X-ray. Again, the results showed that Uriel’s legs were fine.

The doctor then sent the boy for a brain scan. The tumor was gone.

The doctor started screaming. “This is a miracle!” he said. “This child was terribly sick, but now he doesn’t need surgery. This is truly a miracle because no one other than God could have healed him.”

Everyone in the hospital was shocked. They had never seen anything like this before. The doctor canceled Uriel’s operations.

After returning home, Uriel and his mother wanted to learn more about God, and they started studying the Bible with an Adventist pastor. A year later, both Uriel and Mother were baptized.

## Fast Facts

- The National University of Mexico is the oldest university in North America. It was founded in 1551 by Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor.
- The Chihuahua, the smallest breed of dog in the world, is named after a Mexican state.
- Spanish conquerors introduced bullfighting to Mexico. Plaza Mexico in Mexico City is the largest bullring in the world, with more than 41,000 seats.
- Artists in the country can pay their taxes using artwork.
- Mexico City has the biggest number of museums in the world.

Now, Uriel is a 15-year-old high school student who runs and plays soccer.

“I praise God and gave Him thanks because I couldn’t play sports or even walk before this miracle,” he said.

Uriel also gives Bible studies and preaches in church. Five people have been baptized through his Bible studies.

“I want people everywhere to know that nothing is impossible for God,” Uriel said.

Part of this quarter’s Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will help a Seventh-day Adventist hospital near Uriel’s home build a new health center so it can assist many children and parents. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney



BELIZE | March 10

Angel Sabal, 24

## Do You Know God?

Angel was baptized when he was 12 years old in Belize. *[Find Belize on the map.]*

But he stopped going to church while he was in high school. He was busy with his studies and with his friends. He didn't think that he had time for God.

After graduating, Angel landed a job with an airline called Maya Island Air. Every day, he went to the airport to load cargo on airplanes and to help customers at the front desk. He also got married, and soon he and his wife, Jonell, were expecting a baby.

One day, Angel became upset while talking with a Seventh-day Adventist relative. The relative asked him directly, "Do you know God?"

Angel actually didn't know God. He didn't want to lie, but he was too embarrassed to tell the truth. So, he argued with his relative instead. He

changed the topic from God and told her that it wasn't important to keep the Sabbath. He said that the Sabbath was only mentioned in the Old Testament and never in the New Testament.

Angel felt miserable that night. He was unhappy that he had argued with his relative. He found a Bible and began to read it. He wanted to know God.

As Angel read, he was surprised to find that the Sabbath was mentioned in the New Testament. He read in Hebrews 3 and 4 that God wants His people to keep the Sabbath.

He read three times the words, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7-8, 15; 4:7).

Angel felt like God was speaking directly to him and saying, "Angel, you are hearing My voice. Do not harden your heart. Keep the Sabbath."

Angel decided that he had to obey God.

## Fast Facts

- English is the official language of Belize, and Belizean Kriol (Creole) is the unofficial language, although Spanish is the second-most common spoken language.
- The Cross-Country Cycling Classic is one of the most important sports events in Belize. This one-day sports event is for amateur cyclists and has gained worldwide popularity. A government official, Monrad Metzgen, came up with the idea when he saw people from a small village on the Northern Highway covering long distances, on terrible roads, on their bicycles, to attend the weekly game of cricket.

He knew that he wouldn't be able to work at the airline and keep the Sabbath at the same time. So, he prayed three times that night for God to give him the courage to quit work in the morning.

"I worried that when morning came, I would change my mind," he said. "That's why I prayed three times."

His wife, Jonell, supported his decision, even though they were expecting the baby and the only money that they had came from his job.

In the morning, Angel announced to his supervisor that he was going to quit. The supervisor urged him to stay and forget about keeping the Sabbath. But Angel's mind was made up. He was going to keep God's law.

Angel had to work three days before he could quit. On his last day, he suddenly became very worried. He realized that he couldn't return to work once he walked out the door. He wouldn't receive a salary to feed his family. He didn't know

what would happen next.

As he sat in a chair at the airport, the back of his neck got really tight with stress. Angel bowed his head and prayed for God's help. As soon as he finished praying, he felt his neck muscles relax and the stress disappear.


God started answering Angel's prayer immediately. The airline gave him a bonus—quite a lot of money—to say "thank you" for his two years of work.

Angel was surprised. "I didn't deserve it because I quit, so I know it was from God," he said.

The money helped Angel take care of his wife and new baby for several months.

Eventually, the money ran out, and Angel and Jonell had no money for two months as they looked for work. But they never ran out of food. Somehow, they always had food in their house—and Angel believes this was a miracle from God.

Finally, Jonell got a job, working as a teacher at a high school. A month later, Angel became a teacher at another high school. Angel's school even provided him with training so he could receive a teaching license.

Angel now makes more money than he did at the airport—and he gets to keep the Sabbath, too. Angel is glad that he decided to show his love for Jesus by obeying His commandments. "The Sabbath is the day that I look forward to every week," he said. "I don't worry about anything on the Sabbath. I can put aside the whole world and focus on God." 

By Andrew McChesney

Watch a short YouTube video of Angel at the link: [bit.ly/angel-sabal](http://bit.ly/angel-sabal)



BELIZE | March 17

## A Shy Missionary

Sadie McKenzie, 63

Sadie [pronounced: SAY-dee] McKenzie stood on the porch of her house in a village in Belize. *[Find Belize on the map.]* The strangest thing was happening.

A young white man walked through an alley toward her. Then he stopped, turned around, and walked away. A few minutes later, the man reappeared and slowly made his way toward her again. Then he stopped, turned around, and walked away.

Sadie decided that if he did the same thing a third time, she would stop him and demand to know why he kept turning back.

But when the man approached her the third time, he walked all the way to the porch.

“We are having an evangelistic meeting,” he said softly. Sadie could tell that he was a missionary from the United States.

“Would you come to the meeting?” the man said, shyly.

Sadie had heard about the planned evangelistic campaign in her village, and she did not want to go. She and her husband were busy. During the day, they grew plantains, cocoa beans, cassava, papaya, oranges, and grapefruit on their farm. At night, they drank beer and danced at parties.

“No,” Sadie crossly told the visitor. “It is Seventh-day Adventist, and I’m not interested.”

The man sadly walked away.

Sadie couldn’t get him out of her mind for the rest of the day. His soft voice had caught her attention. She wondered why she had spoken to him so angrily. She decided to go to the meeting that evening.

The young man was shocked to see her, but he welcomed her warmly and gave her a new Bible.

“We will have a 30-minute Bible study up front before the meeting



starts,” he said. “Come up.”

Sadie will never forget the Bible study. The preacher read from John 13 about Jesus washing the disciples’ feet in a basin of water. The description of the foot washing reminded Sadie of her grandmother, who had been an Adventist. Sadie remembered that her grandmother used to take a brush and vigorously scrub her feet the day before the communion service because she didn’t want to make the water dirty at church.

Sadie used to laugh at her grandmother. “Tell the people at church that you have bathed already,” she said. “You don’t need to wash your feet at church again.”

Grandmother was very patient with Sadie. “You will understand one day,” she said. “This is from the Bible.”

Sadie began to understand the meaning of foot washing as she listened to the Bible study at the evangelistic meeting. She realized that Jesus washed His disciples’ feet as an example for all Christians. Jesus was showing Christians that they should serve others humbly.

Sadie attended the evangelistic meetings every night because she wanted to know more about the Bible. One night, the preacher asked for those who wanted to be baptized to come forward. Sadie went to the front, but she had a major dilemma. She didn’t want to give up beer and dancing.

That night, she couldn’t sleep. Finally, she got up and prayed, “God, You know I want to serve You, but You know that I’m thinking about the world.”

After praying, she felt at peace and fell asleep. In the morning, she had lost all desire to go to parties. She only wanted to serve Jesus.

## Mission Post

- According to the last national census, 40.1 percent of Belizeans are Roman Catholics and 31.8 percent are Protestants.
- The Adventist Church has about 43,500 members worshipping in 92 churches and 40 companies in Belize. With a total population of 388,000, 11 percent of Belizeans are Adventist.

Sadie is still a farmer, but these days she plants more than plantains and papayas. She plants the Word of God in people’s hearts. Sadie has preached at six evangelistic campaigns and led more than 50 people to baptism. She is happy that the shy young man returned to her house and invited her to the evangelistic meeting.

How can you be like that young man and Sadie and share Jesus with others this week? *[Wait for the children to answer.]* One way we can share Jesus today is by giving to the mission offering, which helps spread the gospel in Sadie’s country of Belize and around the world. Thank you for your mission offering. 🌍

By Andrew McChesney

Watch a short YouTube video of Sadie at the link: [bit.ly/sadie-mckenzie](http://bit.ly/sadie-mckenzie)

Play a matching game with the food grown on Sadie’s farm on page 31.

Read about how Sadie’s husband accepted the Sabbath in the adult and youth Mission quarterly, which can be downloaded at the link: [bit.ly/adultmission](http://bit.ly/adultmission).



BELIZE | March 24

Tenira Smith, 14

# Who Are Adventists?

Tenira [pronounced: ten-ERA] is a girl who lives in Belize. *[Find Belize on the map.]*

*Knock, knock.*

Eleven-year-old Tenira opened the front door of her house. Outside stood two men, and they asked to speak with her mother. When Mother came to the door, the men introduced themselves as Seventh-day Adventists. They prayed with Tenira and Mother and invited them to evangelistic meetings at their church.

After the men left, Tenira asked her mother, “Who are Seventh-day Adventists?”

Mother looked embarrassed. She had been raised an Adventist but no longer was a member of the church.

“But who are Adventists?” Tenira persisted.

“Adventists go to church on Saturday, the seventh day of the week,” Mother said. “They don’t wear jewelry, and they are careful to distinguish

between clean and unclean food.”

Those ideas sounded unusual and interesting to Tenira. She had only gone to church a few times—when friends had invited her on Sundays. She and her mother wore jewelry. They had never discussed whether their food was clean or unclean. *[Ask children to identify unclean food.]* Mother sometimes cooked pork—that’s an unclean pig!

Tenira wondered where Adventists got their beliefs from, and she wanted to go to the evangelistic meetings to learn more.

She and her mother went to the meetings every night. She liked the meetings. The preacher only spoke from the Bible. Every time he presented a belief, he showed that the belief came straight from the Bible. The preacher said God doesn’t want people to eat pork, and he read Leviticus 11:7, which says, “The pig ... is unclean for you” (NIV).

The preacher said doing good deeds

is what makes people beautiful, not wearing jewelry such as earrings and necklaces. He read 1 Timothy 2:9-10, which says, “I also want women to dress modestly ... not with ... gold or pearls ... but with good works.”

The preacher said God’s Sabbath is on Saturday, not Sunday, and he read the Fourth Commandment in Exodus 20:8, which says, “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”

After two weeks of meetings, the preacher asked Tenira if she wanted to give her life to Jesus and be baptized. Tenira wanted to follow Jesus, and she was baptized.

Mother respected her decision, and she stopped cooking pork for Tenira to eat.

## School Trouble

But after a while, Tenira had some trouble at school with the Sabbath. When she was in eighth grade, she needed to take a special exam to enter high school. The exam was very difficult, and her school offered extra classes to help the eighth graders prepare. But the extra classes were only on Saturdays.

Tenira prayed about the problem and explained to her teacher that she could not attend the extra classes because she went to church on Saturdays. To her joy, the teacher excused her from the classes. Tenira thanked God for answering her prayer. But then she began to worry that she might fail the exam because she hadn’t taken the extra classes. She prayed about that problem, too. God answered her prayer, and she received excellent marks on the exam.

## A Young Leader

Today, Tenira is 14 years old and the youth leader at her church. As youth

## Fast Facts

- Belize’s national flower is the black orchid, and the national bird is the keel-billed toucan.
- Belize has the only jaguar reserve in the world, known as Cockscomb Basin Wildlife sanctuary.
- Spanning the length of Belize is the second-biggest barrier reef in the world, and the largest in the Western Hemisphere.

There are no fast-food chains, like McDonald’s, KFC, and Burger King, in Belize

It is considered rude to greet Belizeans by their first name, but thumb locking is a sign of greeting.

leader, she plans special programs for about 30 children every week, and they also do missionary work such as picking up trash on the street and visiting people in the hospital.

“My desire is to continue working for the Lord because I know I have a purpose in His house,” Tenira said.

She is praying that her mother will be baptized, and she is certain that God will answer this prayer soon.

“I have great faith in God because I knew that He cares for His own,” she said.

Let’s pray for Tenira and her mother, and that many people in their country of Belize will hear about Jesus. We can also help share the gospel in Belize by giving to the mission offering. 🌐

By Andrew McChesney

Watch a short YouTube video of Tenira at the link: [bit.ly/tenira-smith](http://bit.ly/tenira-smith)

# Thirteenth Sabbath Program

If your class will present the Thirteenth Sabbath program for the adults:

- Practice singing “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands” in Spanish to perform during the program (see page 31).

If your class will not join the adults for a special program:

- Present the following story during the mission time. You can invite Juniors or Earliteens to help present the program if you wish. This will help older children to become more comfortable in front of an audience, and give the younger children different people to watch and listen to during the presentation.

Before Thirteenth Sabbath:

- Send home a note to remind parents of the program and to encourage the children to bring their Thirteenth Sabbath Offering on March 31.
- Remind everyone that mission offerings spread God’s Word around the world and that one-fourth of our Thirteenth Sabbath Offering goes directly to help people in the Inter-American Division. The projects are listed on page 3 and can be viewed at [bit.ly/iad-projects-2018](http://bit.ly/iad-projects-2018)

*[Ask three children to present this program. They don’t have to memorize their parts, but encourage them to read through their part several times so that their presentation is smooth and comfortable. The format is a Q&A interview.]*

## Why I Preach

**Interviewer:** This quarter we have met people from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and Belize, which are all countries in the Inter-American Division. Today we will meet two special children from Belize.

Jerson [pronounced: herr-SON] is 12 years old, and he can’t decide whether he wants to be a medical doctor or a preacher. But he already has more experience as a preacher than a doctor. He has been preaching for five years.

Dalisa [pronounced: da-LISA] is his

10-year-old sister. She has been preaching for three years.

Jerson and Dalisa preach in English and Spanish. Tell us, Jerson, how did you start preaching?

**Jerson:** Several pastors came to my church when I was seven years old and asked the children whether they wanted to learn to preach. My grandma volunteered me, and I said, “I’ll give it a try.” All the children who wanted to preach were sent to a special training



camp. We learned how to speak and how to gesture. The pastors wrote sermons for us, and we practiced preaching in front of the other children.

I was so nervous the first time that I stood up to speak in church. I went to the front, looked down at all the people, and started shaking. My knees wobbled the whole time that I spoke. When I came down, my grandma asked me if I was sick because my knees had wobbled so much!

But it was an awesome experience. Preaching made me feel near to Jesus. The pastors who trained me said I had done a good job, and that made me want to try harder.

**Dalisa:** I also started preaching at the age of seven at my grandma's suggestion, and I also went to a training camp.

My first sermon was at the Central Seventh-day Adventist Church in Corozal Town. At first I was really nervous because it was a big church and people came from other churches to worship. When I went up front, I was trembling. But as I started talking, I felt the nerves go away.

**Interviewer:** You both were nervous the first time. What about now?

**Jerson:** My second sermon was at a different church, and I spoke about the death of Christ, the Lamb that was slain. That sermon had a great impact on people. I saw people's faces beaming as I spoke, and they wanted to shake my hand afterward. But God deserves all the praise because He helped me preach.

**Dalisa:** I preach because it is something that I like to do. In addition to preaching on Sabbath, my brother and I have led several evangelistic campaigns. We just

finished a campaign where Jerson preached three nights a week, I preached three nights a week, and a cousin who is our age preached one night a week. Over the past year, my brother and I have led 30 people to baptism, including our mother.

**Interviewer:** Tell us about your parents.

**Jerson:** My father is from India and travels a lot, so he doesn't hear our sermons. I think that is why he isn't an Adventist.

Mom is from Belize and lives in Belize City, the biggest city in Belize. She was very busy as a teacher when we were born, so she sent us to live with our grandmother in another town. She visits us nearly every weekend.

**Dalisa:** Our grandma used to belong to a Sunday church, but she liked to party more than go to church. When she grew older, she became a Seventh-day Adventist. Our parents sent my brother and me to live with her when we were small, so we grew up in the Adventist Church. Mom has helped us prepare our sermons for a long time, but she kept thinking, "I have two children who preach, and I'm not baptized." Last Easter, she decided to be baptized when she heard my brother preach.

**Jerson:** When Mom came forward during my altar call, I honestly felt like I wanted to cry. But I told myself, "I'm at the pulpit. I will not cry. I will not cry. I will not cry." I gave Mom a big hug.

**Interviewer:** How do you prepare for a sermon?

**Jerson:** I always pray first. I ask God for wisdom and knowledge and the voice to

express the message clearly. I ask God to let me be His instrument.

Then I find a Bible verse that has had an impact on me. I take the verse and develop it into a sermon. I find related verses while keeping the main verse at the center. One of my favorite sermons is titled, “Your Teacher Is a Child” and comes from Matthew 19:14, where Jesus says, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven” (NKJV). I like to preach about how adults should be more like children.

**Dalisa:** The pastor prepares the text of my sermons, and then I revise so I can speak only small words. I practice the sermon every day, and I pray. I also work on my hand gestures and the intonation of my voice.

**Interviewer:** Why do you preach?

**Jerson:** I preach because God gave me my life and cleansed me of sin. Shouldn’t I do something in return? Preaching is something that I do to give thanks to God.

**Dalisa:** I know that when I preach, I am helping other people go to Jesus and receive His help. Preaching is a way of praising God.

**Interviewer:** What do you want to be when you grow up?

**Jerson:** For a long time, I’ve wanted to be a medical doctor because I thought that is how I could be like Christ to others. Now I am thinking about becoming a pastor. My mother says I can be both a doctor and a preacher.

**Interviewer:** What advice would you give

to other children who love Jesus?

**Jerson:** Read your Bible and pray every day. The Bible is the message of Christ. If God has given us the Bible, we should not just read it for fun. If God has sent us this book, He didn’t send it to us for nothing. It is the word of Jesus who died for us. It is the most precious book in the world.

**Dalisa:** And if you want to preach, pray to God first. Feel confident, and know that you can do it with God’s help. If it isn’t your talent to preach, God will tell you. But if it is your calling, God will help you.

**Interviewer:** Thank you Dalisa and Jerson. Children and adults alike are sharing the gospel in Belize and across the Inter-American Division. Let’s give a big Thirteenth Sabbath Offering so more people can hear the good news that Jesus is coming soon!

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By Andrew McChesney

*[Offering]*

*Watch a YouTube video of Jerson preaching at the link: [bit.ly/jerson-makhwani](http://bit.ly/jerson-makhwani)*

*Jerson Makhwani, 12, and Dalisa Makhwani, 10*



# Sing in Spanish

## “EL TIENE EL MUNDO ENTERO EN SUS MANOS” “HE’S GOT THE WHOLE WORLD IN HIS HANDS”

El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos

El tiene tu y yo hermano en Sus manos  
El tiene tu y yo hermana en Sus manos  
El tiene tu y yo hermano en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos

El tiene el pequeno bebe en Sus manos  
El tiene el pequeno bebe en Sus manos  
El tiene el pequeno bebe en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos

El tiene todos aqui en Sus manos  
El tiene todos aqui en Sus manos  
El tiene todos aqui en Sus manos  
El tiene el mundo entero en Sus manos

Watch the song on YouTube: [bit.ly/hands-spanish](http://bit.ly/hands-spanish)

## Matching Game

Can you identify the crops that Sadie grows on her farm? Match the picture to the name.



\_\_\_ Oranges

\_\_\_ Plantains

\_\_\_ Cocoa beans

\_\_\_ Grapefruit

\_\_\_ Papaya

\_\_\_ Cassava



Answers: 1. Cocoa beans, 2. Grapefruit, 3. Cassava, 4. Plantains, 5. Oranges, 6. Papaya

# Color The Flags

Color the flags from the countries in the Inter-American Division that we are featuring this quarter.

## BELIZE



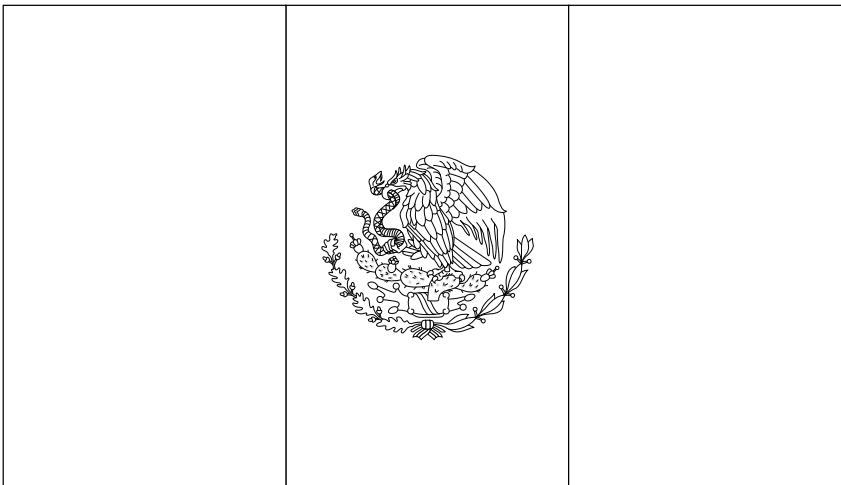
### DIRECTIONS

The main part of the flag is dark blue.

The stripes at top and bottom are red.

The circle in the middle is white, with green leaves and grass. The man on the left is light brown and the man on the right is dark brown. Their pants are white.

## MEXICO



### DIRECTIONS

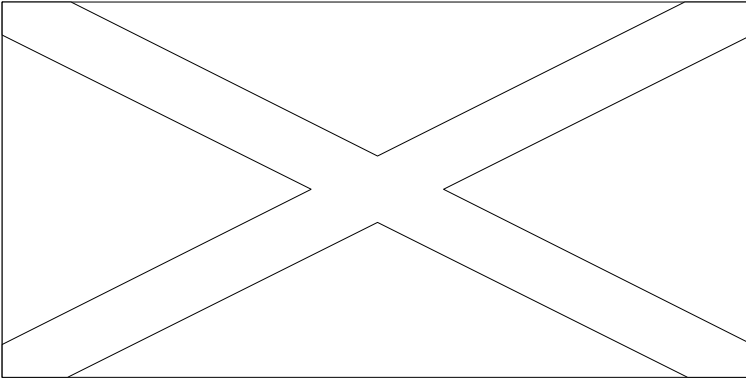
The left third is green, the middle is white, and the right is red.

The eagle is yellow and the snake, cactus and wreath are green.



# Color The Flags

## JAMAICA

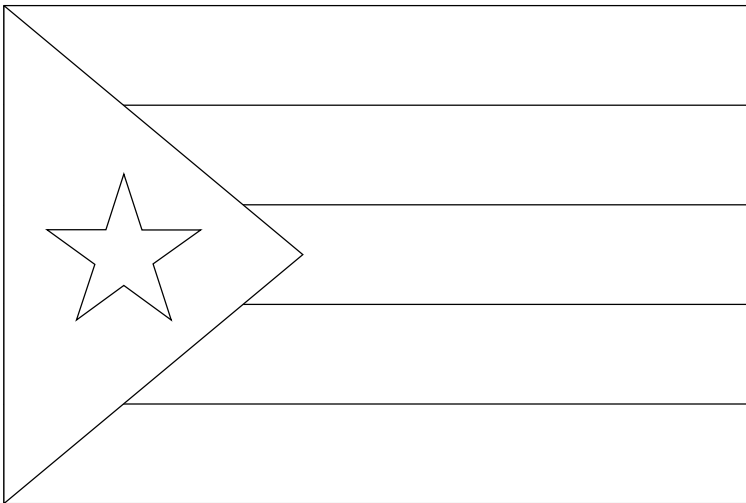


### DIRECTIONS

The cross is yellow.

The triangles at the top and bottom are green, and the triangles on the sides are black.

## PUERTO RICO



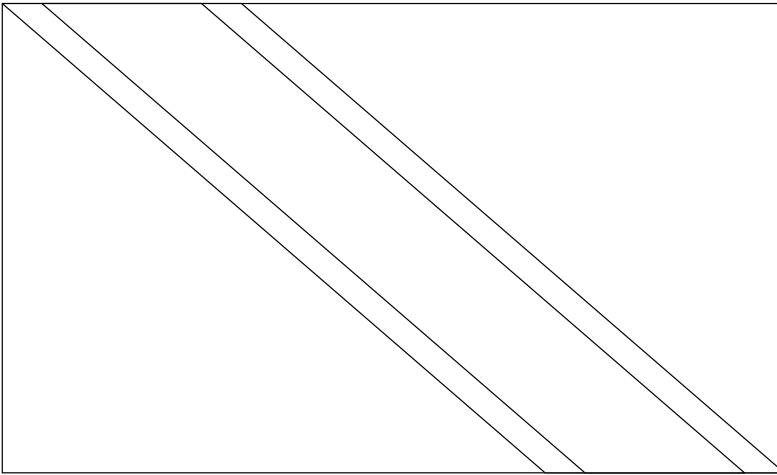
### DIRECTIONS

The stripes are red and white, starting with red at the top.

The triangle is dark blue and the star is white.

# Color The Flags

## TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



### DIRECTIONS

The two small diagonal stripes are white, and the large stripe between them is black. The rest of the flag is red.

## Future Thirteenth Sabbath Projects



### NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION

- New Life Center, Holbrook SDA Indian School, Arizona, U.S.A
- Mamawi Atosketan Native School, Alberta, Canada
- Ebeye Mission School, Marshal Islands, U.S.A.

# Leader's Resources

Be sure to download your free **Mission Spotlight** video, featuring video reports from around the Inter-American Division and beyond. Download or stream from the Adventist Mission website at [bit.ly/missionspotlight](http://bit.ly/missionspotlight).

## Online Information

Following are sources of information that may be helpful in preparing for the mission segment of Sabbath School. For more information on the cultures and history of the countries featured in this quarterly, visit your local library or a travel agency, or visit the websites listed below.

### Belize

government website [bit.ly/BelizeGov](http://bit.ly/BelizeGov)  
Lonely Planet [bit.ly/LPBelize](http://bit.ly/LPBelize)

### Jamaica

government website [bit.ly/JamaicaGov](http://bit.ly/JamaicaGov)  
Wikitravel [bit.ly/WikiJamaica](http://bit.ly/WikiJamaica)

### Mexico

government website [bit.ly/MexicoGov](http://bit.ly/MexicoGov)  
Visit Mexico [bit.ly/MexicoVisit](http://bit.ly/MexicoVisit)

### Puerto Rico

government website [bit.ly/PRGov](http://bit.ly/PRGov)  
Trip Advisor [bit.ly/TripAdvisorPR](http://bit.ly/TripAdvisorPR)

### Trinidad and Tobago

government website [news.gov.tt](http://news.gov.tt)  
Fodor [bit.ly/FodorTT](http://bit.ly/FodorTT)

### Seventh-day Adventist

Inter-American Division: [interamerica.org](http://interamerica.org)  
Jamaica Union Conference [jmunion.org](http://jmunion.org)  
Puerto Rican Union Conference [upasd.org](http://upasd.org)  
Caribbean Union Conference [bit.ly/CaribUnionC](http://bit.ly/CaribUnionC)  
Inter-Oceanic Mexican Union Conference [asd-umi.org](http://asd-umi.org)  
North Mexican Union Conference [adventistasumn.org](http://adventistasumn.org)  
Southeast Mexican Union Mission [unionsureste.org.mx](http://unionsureste.org.mx)

**An offering goal device** will help focus attention on world missions and increase weekly mission giving. Determine a goal for your class's weekly mission offering. Multiply it by 14, allowing a double goal for the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering.

Remind your Sabbath School members that their regular weekly mission offerings will help the missionary work of the world church and that one quarter of the Thirteenth Sabbath Offering will go directly to the projects in the Inter-American Division. On the Twelfth Sabbath, report on mission giving during the quarter. Encourage members to double or triple their normal mission giving on Thirteenth Sabbath. Count the offering and record the amount given at the end of Sabbath School.

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# Inter-American Division



UNION	CHURCHES	MEMBERSHIP	POPULATION
Division	1	144	0
Atlantic Caribbean	85	32,344	482,000
Belize	91	42,814	378,000
Caribbean	620	236,257	3,768,000
Central Mexican	227	80,179	44,802,526
Chiapas Mexican	1,113	217,729	6,611,685
Cuban	325	33,158	11,208,000
Dominican	792	313,245	10,630,000
Dutch Caribbean	38	8,970	291,000
East Venezuela	559	160,639	15,787,555
El Salvador	754	198,124	6,408,000
French Antilles-Guiana	147	31,763	1,085,000
Guatemala	896	247,997	16,554,000
Haitian	573	442,913	11,093,000
Honduras	459	172,123	8,200,000
Inter-Oceanic Mexican	1,509	200,872	30,022,709
Jamaica	677	296,793	2,732,000
North Colombian	886	100,015	20,811,622
North Mexican	632	148,877	41,393,778
Panama	324	73,459	4,041,000
Puerto Rican	310	32,875	3,415,000
South Central American	511	215,942	11,218,000
South Colombian	716	158,597	27,950,378
Southeast Mexican	516	92,151	5,801,303
West Venezuela	599	153,970	15,241,445
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13,360</b>	<b>3,691,950</b>	<b>299,926,000</b>

- PROJECTS:**
- 1 Center of evangelism, Antillean Adventist University, Mayaguez, Puerto Rico
  - 2 University church building, University of the Southern Caribbean, Maracaib, Trinidad and Tobago
  - 3 Seven-story community center, Southeast Adventist Hospital, Villahermosa, Mexico