

mission

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EDITORIAL

Have you ever met a child whose personality was so endearing on so many levels, you wished they could be part of your life forever? That's how I feel about Sebastian, a seven-year-old boy living in Santiago, Chile. He is sweet and caring and expresses maturity and earnestness about spiritual things I've never encountered in one so young.

I met Sebastian while collecting stories about people who had fallen in love with Jesus at an urban center of influence called the Lo Prado Life Hope Center. While taking soccer lessons there, he had met a Friend so precious, he yearned for his parents to know Him too.

Discover how Sebastian's dream came true in the story "Heaven Scored a Goal" on page 4 of this magazine.

Thank you for supporting the ministry of urban centers of influence through your Global Mission donations. Your gifts help people find hope and healing in Jesus and grow His kingdom through church planting. To learn more, please visit MissionToTheCities.org.

Laurie Falvo,
Editor



Sebastian telling me he wants all his family "to go to the sky with Jesus!"



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Heaven Scores a Goal



1



Ricky Oliveras,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

Seven-year-old Sebastian decided to give his life to Jesus in an unusual place—on the soccer field!

A few months before, he was excited when his parents, Moises and Angelica, signed him up for soccer lessons at the Lo Prado Life Hope Center, an urban center of influence in Santiago, Chile. Sebastian worked hard at his lessons, and his skills improved quickly. But he soon realized he was learning more than just soccer.

Sebastian met Jesus through the One Year in Mission volunteers serving at the Life Hope Center, and he wanted his parents to know Jesus too. So each day after soccer lessons, while walking home with his parents, he told them about his new Friend.

Around this time, Sebastian's grandmother became very sick. Sebastian was worried. Pastor Abraham Cabezas, who led the center's outreach programs, began visiting the family with his team of One Year in Mission volunteers to pray with and encourage them.

Sebastian's parents enjoyed these visits, and in time, they requested Bible studies. Eventually, the love of Jesus won their hearts, and they were baptized. And soon Sebastian's grandmother regained her strength.

The family is eternally grateful for the friendship and care showed by the One Year in Mission team. These volunteers continue to selflessly give their time to lead a variety of workshops and to be lights of hope in the community.

“Through these workshops, many people can mingle with Adventists, and through their service,



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in action at
m360.tv/s2026/



GLOBAL MISSION

they can know the Lord,” Pastor Cabezas says. “I want to express my gratitude to Global Mission for believing and trusting in these projects. At any moment, the King in heaven will return, and we will see the result of all of the effort from Chile and the whole world.”

Sebastian is very happy when he listens to his parents talk about their new lives. Thank you for supporting the ministry of urban centers of influence through your Global Mission donations and helping people fall in love with Jesus!

Urban Centers of Influence

Global Mission supports wholistic mission to the cities through the ministry of hundreds of urban centers of influence (UCIs). UCIs follow Christ’s method of ministry to meet people’s needs and start new groups of believers. To learn more, visit MissionToTheCities.org.

Please support urban centers of influence (Fund # 9730) by scanning this QR code with your phone’s camera or visiting Global-Mission.org/giving.



- 1 Sebastian at his soccer lesson
- 2 Sebastian and his parents with Pastor Abraham Cabezas, right.



One Year in Mission

One Year in Mission is a young adult urban missionary movement designed to take the three angels’ messages into the cities of the world. Learn more at youth.adventist.org/OYIM!



Greased Wheels and a Mission River

Through our giving, we're helping the church grow not only locally but also in areas we may not have heard of.

Brazilian missionaries Delmar and Natieli Reis (pictured with baby, Clara) are serving in Albania and running an urban center of influence because you give



When I met Nguerabaye, I was struck by the ritual cuts heavily scarred into his face, a reminder of his heritage and former life. Beads of perspiration lubricated his skin, made leathery by the hot African sun. A Global Mission pioneer, Nguerabaye was working in Moissala, a town in southern Chad. He was on a mission to share with the people of this town the good news about a Man named Jesus who could bring them peace, joy, and salvation.

In tough, unwelcoming conditions, Nguerabaye—a married man with four children—was planting a new group of believers. He had already led nearly 50 people to baptism. Among those new believers, I met former prostitutes and alcoholics who had found new lives through Jesus.

Nguerabaye told me how he and his Global Mission partner had been treated as if they were animals. Mistaken for an occult group, they weren't even permitted to buy produce at the market. But they just kept praying.

A boy in town had severe mental health challenges and was tied down with chains. The two pioneers came and prayed for him. After three days, he came to his senses and asked to be released. "I'm not sick, I'm healed," he said. After his full recovery, the people of Moissala decided the pioneers were magicians.

I then discovered that through some glitch in the system, Nguerabaye had not received his modest living stipend for more than 12 months. I was shocked. Global Mission pioneers sacrifice enough without this type of neglect. But at no stage did he complain to me about his situation.

Finally I asked him how he and his family were surviving, and he simply said, "It is hard."

"Why have you kept working?"

"I want to free people from guilt by telling them about the blood of Jesus."

On Sabbath morning, hundreds of townspeople gathered to hear the gospel preached. Nguerabaye,

leading from the front, was a proud parent looking out at his new children in the faith.

It was inspiring for me to meet Nguerabaye and several other pioneers working on the front-lines of mission in Chad. But they weren't there by accident. They were serving because of the way you and millions of other church members around the world have sacrificially given through the years.

Off the Beaten Path

When I first flew to N'djamena, Chad's capital, more than 20 years ago, I didn't really know what to expect. Of course I knew that Chad was, in a sense, one of the world's "forgotten" countries. The only people who seemed interested in the country were those exploiting its rich oil reserves.

Kind church leaders and members welcomed me like a long-lost family member. Leaders told me I was the first person from the General Conference to visit them. I don't know if that was true, but it was easy to believe. In the middle of Africa, Chad isn't often a logical stop-over destination; you have to make a deliberate decision to go there. Everywhere I went, people expressed joy that their church hadn't forgotten them.

I quickly saw that although Chad may have been rich in resources, the country's people weren't benefiting. It has one of the lowest per-capita incomes in the world, and the Adventist Church

was operating with meager resources. The Chad Mission had one old vehicle, and the secretary treasurer didn't even own a bicycle, yet the Seventh-day Adventist Church was alive and witnessing. They had programs and projects. They were reaching out to the community. People were finding hope in Jesus. There was a humble office for the Chad Mission, and there were churches, schools, and even a hospital. Throughout the country there were nearly 1,500 baptized Adventists, and a large team of Global Mission pioneers were planting new groups of believers.

How had that happened? I would suggest that it was through the work of the Holy Spirit and faithful church members around the world who had been systematically giving their tithes and offerings through the years, not knowing exactly where each dollar would end up. I think it's fair to say that Chad still doesn't loom large on the world church's radar, and the average Seventh-day Adventist probably doesn't give much thought to Chad or the church there. Many would have trouble finding it on a world map. And yet, thanks to the Adventist Church's system of tithes and offerings, mission in Chad was funded by faithful church members who know nothing about mission in Chad!

Through our giving, we're helping the church grow not only locally but also in areas we may not have heard of. We're helping missionaries we may



Gary Krause,
director of
Adventist
Mission



American missionaries Olen and Danae Netteburg (pictured with their children Lyol, Zane, Addison, and Juniper) serve at Bere Adventist Hospital in Chad because you give

never meet. We're building schools and clinics we'll probably never visit. We're helping plant churches we may never worship in. We're bringing life to the church's mission.

After that first visit, I began thinking about the old expression "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." Roughly translated it means that whoever makes the most noise gets the most funding. Today in the church some wheels squeak loudly and with great skill. And often it's the big-wheel organizations that have the most interesting pictures, the most compelling videos, the most heart-touching stories that get the big donations—"the grease," so to speak.

But what do we do about those parts of the world and those people groups that can't or don't "squeak"? Those that have no way to share heart-gripping pictures and stories with us? Do we just ignore them?

One of the beauties of the Adventist Church's system of regular and systematic tithes and offerings, which Stewardship Ministries calls "Promise," is that funds are pooled together to make sure the church also cares for areas of the world, such as Chad, that may not seem so "glamorous" or have the visibility of other areas. It's like we're adding life-giving water to a mission river that flows through parched lands around the world. We're making sure that wheels that can't squeak get attention.

Every time we return our tithes and give mission offerings, we're helping support schools, hospitals, publishing houses, media outreach, church planting, and so much more. We're helping the church stay alive in areas where many church members earn less than a dollar a day. We're making sure that wheels that can't squeak also get some grease.

A Worldwide Commitment

The Seventh-day Adventist Church finds its strength in mission. Through the years, Seventh-day Adventists have generously supported mission through their tithes and mission offerings because

they've believed the Gospel Commission. They believe we're called to help the less fortunate, the poor, the sick, and those who don't know about Jesus.

For decades now Adventists have talked longingly of "finishing the work." But declining mission offerings prevent the church from starting new work in new areas, reduce the number of missionaries, and restrict our mission.

In recent years, millions of people from challenging areas of the world have found salvation in Jesus and have joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thousands of new congregations have been established in new areas. How are these new believers nurtured? How do they receive resources, materials, and programs to strengthen their new faith? How do they receive ongoing pastoral care?

Life-giving mission offerings, given regularly and systematically, help sustain and grow new work around the world. And that is what the church is for!

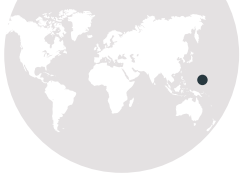
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Many Adventists generously give to specific mission projects (such as Global Mission projects in Chad) above their regular and systematic giving. But it's the regular and systematic giving that provides the foundation and framework for these projects to flourish.



Please give your weekly mission offerings during Sabbath School, by scanning this QR code with your phone's camera, or by visiting adventistmission.org/donate.





Fixing Leo



From the United States, **Rebecca Orozco** served as a volunteer fifth- and sixth-grade teacher at Yap Seventh-day Adventist School in Yap, Micronesia. She is earning a degree in social work at Walla Walla University.

We all know that one student who seems to thrive on creating chaos in class. Anyone who's been a teacher can tell you these children act out for a variety of reasons. They may struggle academically, find it difficult to focus, or simply resent authority. During my time as a volunteer teacher in Yap, I found effective ways to work with all my students, no matter what challenges they presented. Except for one. He rejected every attempt I made to help him. I'll call him Leo.

When I first met Leo, I simply saw a cute, lanky kid with a head full of curls and a wide, mischievous smile. However, I soon realized that he couldn't care less about school and found pleasure in causing commotion. I resolved to foster some kind of change in his mindset. But over time, I learned that his behavior was deeply rooted in other issues, and frustration and discouragement settled into my bones.

Leo was full of anger and indignation, pegging himself as one of the "bad kids" and coping by making jokes about his and others' failures and mishaps. Yet, he was a leader in the eyes of his peers, full of life and curiosity. Leo was also athletic and artistic. But he saw himself through the distorted lens of his negative labels.

During the second semester, there was a time when I felt that Leo and I were in a more positive place. He had told me in frustration that he couldn't do his math assignment until he understood division better. I was excited that he had somewhat asked for my help. So, that weekend, I made him his own division table flash cards and happily presented them to him on Monday. I felt defeated as he looked at the cards with disgust and embarrassment, immediately declaring that he wouldn't take them no matter how much I tried to persuade him.

I was vexed that evening but slightly put at ease when Leo sent me a Facebook message, apologizing for not taking the flash cards. Nevertheless, we continued to be at a standstill.

At the time, I wanted the situation with Leo to turn out like the redemption stories I'd heard of volunteer teachers tearing down the walls of an unreachable student. I wanted to have a sudden turnaround with Leo that would change everything. But that's not what God had planned for us.

God knew that Leo didn't need what I thought he needed and that I needed to learn more about His method of reaching people.

One afternoon, I gave my students free time for the last part of the school day. Everyone eagerly ran outside except Leo. He chose to finish an assignment that had been baffling him all afternoon. I decided to try to help him, pleased that he was opting to be responsible. While we worked together, I asked him about his home life, and we fell into casual conversation. I realized that it had been rare for us to talk about things other than his math assignments or why he should be more kind to his peers. I felt my heart opening more toward him, and his attitude toward me seemed to shift as well.

When the bell rang, I watched Leo join the blur of students rushing to board their buses. To my surprise, he paused mid-stride, turned around, and yelled, "Bye Teacherrrrr!" This was nothing remarkable in itself, but coming from Leo, it was huge! This acknowledgment was the closest thing to a hug he had given me all year.

I had tried to find ways to change Leo, but I finally realized that what he needed more than anything was for me to try to understand and love him as he was, not asking him to be anything different.

Unfortunately, I had to leave Yap early due to COVID-19, so I won't be able to see what God's doing in Leo's life or the lives of my other students. But I know my time there wasn't in vain. I had the opportunity to be part of the sowing, and I know God can be trusted to lead them in the growing.



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

Watch video stories about Adventist Volunteer Service missionaries at **m360.tv/avs**.

The End of the World and Beginning of Everything



From Peru, **Erick Sánchez** served in Argentina as a volunteer church planter and Bible worker.

I couldn't shake my professor's words; they churned in my mind for weeks. "We have to be missionaries to the world," he urged as he shared news with our theology class about the church's mission work. His counsel touched my heart, and that day, God planted a dream there to serve Him in a distant land.

One day, I saw an advertisement requesting a Bible instructor for a mission school in Argentina. I quickly contacted the school director, and to my joy, I was accepted for the job!

On the long flight to Argentina, I meditated on how God had worked in my life to make this experience possible. I was so excited. Everything was new to me! It was my first time leaving my

country. My first time traveling by plane. My first time being a missionary.

As I neared my destination, I felt the excitement of undertaking this adventure with the assurance that God would guide my steps. Ushuaia, the capital city of Tierra del Fuego province, is the southernmost city on the globe. It's often referred to as the end of the world. I trusted Jesus would make my experience one of new beginnings as I shared His message of hope and salvation.

I found Ushuaia to be a land of raw, pristine beauty where fiery red sunsets merged with the deep blue of snow-capped mountains and the verdant, dense Patagonian forest. But its people were struggling. Many suffered a high level of addiction



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to cigarettes that was damaging their bodies and morale.

I wanted to help them, so I joined in organizing a community outreach program to enable people to quit smoking. I went from house to house, visiting the people and inviting them to attend our free seminar. As I did, I wrote down the names of those who expressed interest in attending.

This work wasn't easy because of the frequent snowstorms, wind, and cold. On one occasion, after hours of plodding through the snow, I felt exhausted and sought shelter at a hospital. I rested while the heat warmed my body, but I had no strength to continue my visitations. I knew I wouldn't have time to visit everyone, so I decided to leave a large number of invitations in the reception area.

On the opening night of the seminar, I was anxious about how many people would attend. But there was no need to worry. The hall

filled up quickly, and as it did, the pungent smell of tobacco flooded the entire room. There was no doubt, these were the people we were looking for!

We had been praying day and night for the Spirit to break the nicotine chains that bound these people. Many attended consistently and experienced success. On the final day of the meetings, the presenter handed out a survey, asking the attendees whether the course had been satisfactory and whether they wanted to receive a Bible and free Bible lessons. What a beautiful response we received!

One day, while following up on a request for studies, I visited the home of a man named Jonathan. He had attended the meetings with his

mother, Elena, and he and his family were eager to learn about God's Word.

"How is it that you came to the meetings?" I asked. A big smile erupted on Elena's face. "Some time ago, I went to the hospital, and while I was waiting, I noticed some fliers in the reception area," she explained. "I took one out of curiosity and noticed that it was an invitation to a course on how to stop smoking that would be given in a church. I kept the flier and decided to attend the course with my son." I couldn't believe it. God had reached this family even when my fatigue had prevented me from continuing to walk!

When Elena started the course, she smoked 60 cigarettes a day, and almost all her money fed this addiction. She had tried everything she could think of to break free from this habit, but nothing had helped, and she had slipped into deep despair.

By the grace of God, through the course, not only she but also her entire family began to know Jesus, in whom they found the way out of their affliction.

Soon an opportunity came to give their hearts and lives to Jesus. Pastor John Thomas, then General Conference director for Adventist Volunteer Service (AVS), and Elbert Kuhn, then AVS director for the South American Division, made a special invitation to the meeting attendees. As a result, through the work and power of the Holy Spirit, Elena and her entire family decided to be baptized and prepare for the imminent return of Jesus!

At the end of my year of volunteering, 26 people had given their lives to God, and now they live happily knowing that they have a Savior to trust and for whom to live. I feel so blessed to have been part of this.

If you have felt Jesus calling you to serve as a volunteer, please tell Him without hesitation you will go wherever He leads.



Would you like to help make a positive impact in the lives of others? If so, please consider volunteering through Adventist Volunteer Service, which facilitates church members' volunteer service around the world. Volunteers ages 18 to 80 may serve as pastors, teachers, medical professionals, computer technicians, orphanage workers, farmers, and more. To learn more, visit **AdventistVolunteers.org**.

Watch video stories about Adventist Volunteer Service missionaries at **m360.tv/avs**.



Finding Life's Essentials

1



Abigail Koo is director of the Battambang Music School at the Essential Life Center in Battambang, Cambodia.

Even before the first brick was laid, the Lord had His hands on the Essential Life Center, an urban center of influence (UCI) in Battambang, Cambodia's third largest city. A man named Phon was hired to do welding by Gary Rogers, the superintendent of the building project. Gary is the Global Mission director for the Cambodia Mission and also an Adventist missionary. Phon liked having a day and a half off each week to relax rather than the demanding seven-day weeks he had to put in at other companies. He also enjoyed the morning worships led by Gary.

One day as Phon sat down to take a break, he overheard Gary talking on the phone about not taking on a particular job on an upcoming Saturday. Phon knew Gary wanted to get the project done quickly, but he couldn't figure out why he wouldn't budge about that one particular day. "Why is Saturday so important?" he asked Gary pointedly. "I've been going to church for more than ten years, and no one has told me not to work on Saturdays." Gary seized the moment and gave Phon a brief Bible study on the Sabbath day. He also invited Phon to engage with him in a more in-depth study.

Phon believed the Bible to be the Word of God, so when Gary opened the Scripture and showed him about the Sabbath, tithe, the health message, and the true meaning of baptism, he accepted its teachings. He began keeping the Sabbath day holy from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown. He also decided to be baptized and become a member of the Adventist Church.

Around this time, the UCI nearly came to completion, and Phon became one of the first batch of students at its language center. Although in his 60s, he didn't shy away from learning in a classroom with teenagers. He also enrolled in the

music school at the center to learn to play the piano. On Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday nights, he actively participated in the evening Bible studies and joined young people at church to do door-to-door Bible work.

However, this was not enough for Phon. "I wanted to bring my whole family to this newly discovered, wonderful truth!" he said. A few months after Phon's baptism, he brought his wife to church. She clearly didn't enjoy it, yet over time, something inside her began to change.

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down all churches and schools in Cambodia, Phon spent more time with his family and gave them Bible studies. They, too, have accepted the Sabbath and dedicated their lives to Christ through baptism.

Many others have come to know Jesus through the UCI's ministries, and the Battambang Central Church is very thankful for the work the center is doing to connect seekers like Phon to its church family. People of all different backgrounds who wouldn't otherwise enter a church walk into the UCI and Battambang Central Church looking to better their lives. Whether through the language class, music classes, or the vegetarian restaurant, the UCI offers a perfect meeting place for people from different walks of life. Before the pandemic, more than 100 people were coming to the center each day, and trained members from the Battambang Central Church welcomed them with open arms and shared about Jesus. Some 20 people have already given their lives to Jesus through the joint ministry of the UCI and Battambang Central Church, and many more children and young people are studying the Bible.

Please continue to pray for this ministry in Battambang. Due to the stereotype of Christian

churches being a place where beggars get free rice, wealthy people or those who wish to associate with the rich social class often avoid church events. The UCI provides a comfortable meeting ground for all social classes and particularly attracts the upper economic class. Its vegetarian restaurant is known as the trendy place that sells the best vege-burger in town, and the language school attracts young people from nearby elite private schools wanting to better their foreign language skills by conversing with native speakers. The UCI's music school is the only school in the whole province that teaches classical music, and wealthy parents boast on social media by posting pictures and videos of their kids playing on the center's grand piano.

It is written that before the close of probation, the rocks will cry out. The building rocks of the Essential Life Center have brought Phon and many others to Jesus. Musical instruments, vegetarian foods, and merely speaking in English have helped bring souls to Jesus. What is in your hand that you can use for Jesus?

- 1 Phon's baptism, October 7, 2017
- 2 Phon and his family at their baptism on December 19, 2020. From left: Pastor M. C. Chin, director of the Essential Life Center; Phon's son, Kor; his wife, Chea Lomang; daughter, Kuy Vannak; and son-in-law, Rem Minuth, with their two children; and Phon
- 3 The Essential Life Center in Battambang, Cambodia

Population:
17,304,363
(July 2021 est.)

THE NEED IN CAMBODIA

- Buddhist (official) **97.9%**
- Muslim **1.1%**
- Christian **0.5%**
- Other **0.6%.***

* "East Asia/Southeast Asia: Cambodia," World Factbook, June 11, 2020, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/cambodia/#people-and-society>.

How you can help

Please further Adventist mission work in Cambodia and Southeast Asia through your mission offerings (adventistmission.org/donate) and by supporting Global Mission pioneers and Urban Centers of Influence in the 10/40 Window (Global-Mission.org/giving).



2



3



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Urban Centers of Influence

Global Mission supports urban centers of influence in providing long-term, on-the-ground ministry that helps meet people's needs and start new groups of believers. To learn more visit MissionToTheCities.org.

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Charting the Map

Children learn about prayer and mission



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

Elaine Steffen is the assistant primary Sabbath School leader at the Cashmere Seventh-day Adventist Church in Washington State. Late this fall, she came across an interesting article in the *Mission 360°* magazine she was reading. A teacher at an Adventist school in Wisconsin had been using the “Mission to the Cities” Prayer Map as a tool to help her students develop a deeper, more focused prayer life and draw attention to the needs of others around the world.

The Prayer Map, highlighting the more than 580 cities of one million or more worldwide, was created as part of the General Conference’s Mission to the Cities initiative. The poster is designed to look like a subway or metro system with tracks snaking here and there, representing the various regions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Stops on each line indicate cities of one million or more in specific world divisions.

Elaine had been brainstorming on how to involve the children more directly in mission. As she read the article, she felt inspired that the Sabbath School students would enjoy this project as a mission activity. She took her idea to Primary leader Angela Ford. Angela looked briefly at the Prayer Map and said, “Go for it!”

One Sabbath in early November 2020, Elaine tacked the Prayer Map poster to a bulletin board in the classroom and introduced the idea to her Sabbath School students. She explained that each subway line is a different region of the world and that the large circles on each track represent large cities in that country. She asked each child to choose a metro line and pray for one city on that line per week.

Realizing that young children don’t always know what to pray, Elaine and Angela prepared prayers on cards for the students to use if needed. More than simply asking God to “be with this city,” the cards point out specific areas of concern: educational opportunities, hunger, family dynamics, missionaries,

homelessness, those with addictions, and those who are persecuted for their religious beliefs. In this way, the children learn how to pray, what to pray for, and how to address certain issues in prayer.

Elaine says that the project has been fun for the students. “They can’t wait to get over to the corner, grab a marker, and see what their next city is,” she said, smiling. She does a bit of research in advance about the next city on their tracks so she can tell them about the region they are praying for. Angela also sends a text message to the parents, informing them of the city their child is praying for that week so that the whole family can pray together.

One little girl, whose family adopted her from China, chose to pray for the China Union Mission. The second stop on her metro line was her birth city. What an amazing experience for her to pray specifically for those in the city and country of her birth to know the love of Jesus! Another child chose to pray for the South American Division and came to a city on his track where his mother had served as a student missionary. The mission to that city suddenly became more real to him and his family.

Angela says that is exactly what they hope the children will take away from this experience. “I want them to see the importance of praying for world mission and be aware of the different needs in other countries. I want them to develop the ability to, or even desire for, praying for other people.”

Elaine adds, “I want them to learn that outreach is so important, whether it’s foreign missions or here in the United States. The bigger picture to me is not only their service but that they desire Jesus to come. This is a way they can help—whether it’s through their (mission) offerings or their prayers, they can get involved.”

If you would like more information on the Mission to the Cities Prayer Map or would like your own free copy, visit MissionToTheCities.org.



Elaine Steffen surrounded by children from the Cashmere Adventist Church's Primary Sabbath School. Photo credit, Angela Ford



Mission 360°
is now available
on the **issuu app**
and **issuu.com**

Life on a Floating Island



Laurie Falvo,
Adventist
Mission

How would you like to live on a floating island? For hundreds of years, the Uros people of Peru have done just that on Lake Titicaca.

They make their floating islands from naturally buoyant totora reeds, which grow in the shallow areas of the lake. First, they cut blocks of the roots and tie them together to form a platform that will serve as the island's base.

Next, they tie the platform to poles and drive the poles into the lake's bottom so the island won't float away.

Crisscrossed layers of dried totora reeds are then laid on top of the root base to form a walking surface. Because the layers closest to the roots are immersed in water, they rot quickly, so new layers must frequently be added. Reeds are harvested and laid out everywhere to dry so they are ready to supply the need for repairs. The reed surface is spongy and uneven. And when walking around the island, you must pay attention because there is nothing to keep you from falling over the edge into the cold water!

At any given time, there are between 70 and 120 islands on the lake. Most are about 50 feet long by 50 feet wide and house two or three families. If well maintained, they can last 30 years.

The Uros depend upon the totora reeds for survival. They also use them for fuel and medicine and to create their homes, sleeping mats, boats, furniture, and the crafts they sell to tourists. They even eat the tender shoots!

A number of the Uros people are Seventh-day Adventists, and on Sabbath mornings they make their way by motorboat to their floating church. During the week, their children study at a floating school.

But Uros children didn't always have an Adventist school to attend. In 1958, Wellesley and Evelyn Muir, Adventist missionaries in Peru, traveled to the floating islands. They noticed that the Uros lacked medical care, education, and proper food and clothing, and they lived in constant fear of evil spirits. The Muirs' hearts were touched, and they felt God calling them to help.

A local young Adventist man named Carlos Velasquez served as the Muir's translator, helping them create Bible studies to share the gospel with the Uros. When they started the first school in the area, Mr. Velasquez became the teacher!

When Mr. Velasquez was a boy, he loved to climb a big mountain near his home. When he reached the top, he would look across the bay at the floating islands and wonder what kind of people lived there. *Someday*, he thought, *I will visit those people that no one seems to know much about.*

Little did he dream that his wish would come true. His father wanted him to become a witch doctor, but God had other plans for Mr. Velasquez. He lived with the Uros on their floating islands for 14 years and helped lead many of them to Jesus.

Mission offerings made the work of Wellesley and Evelyn Muir and Mr. Velasquez possible long ago. Today, your mission offerings are urgently needed to share the gospel with those who haven't had an opportunity to hear it and provide health care and education to those who desperately need them.

Please give generously and regularly to the mission offering to make a difference in people's lives all around the world. You can give your offerings during Sabbath School, by scanning this QR code with your phone's camera, or by visiting adventistmission.org/donate.



- 1 A floating island on Lake Titicaca. Photo credit: meunier/Shutterstock.com
- 2 The Uros people demonstrate how they create their floating islands from totora reeds, using blocks of roots as the base, topped with crisscrossed layers of reeds
- 3 A Uros stove placed on flat stones to keep nearby reeds from catching on fire
- 4 The interior of a reed hut. Photo credit: Aleksandar Todorovic/Shutterstock.com
- 5 A boat made of reeds, called a balsa
- 6 A Uros boy relaxing in the sunshine on a cold, windy day





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7 Uros Seventh-day Adventists attending a floating church

8 Carlos Velasquez and family

9 Wellesley and Evelyn Muir with their daughters Gail and Gladys in a typical reed sailboat on Lake Titicaca.

10 Adventist Uros children attending their floating school

11 Crafts made from reeds by the Uros people

Lake Titicaca fun facts

- Lake Titicaca is a large, deep lake located 12,500 feet (3,810 meters) above sea level between Peru and Bolivia.
- It's 120 miles (190 km) long, 50 miles (80 km) across at its widest point, and averages between 460 and 600 feet (140 and 183 m) deep.



11



The Start of Something New



From Brazil, **Vanessa Bezerra** served as a volunteer English teacher at an Adventist elementary school in Poland. She currently works in marketing at a robotics and technology company.

When I accepted a call to volunteer in Poland, I thought my work there would be a piece of cake.

After all, I'd be serving in a European country, and I wouldn't have to worry about disease or discomfort. But I had no idea of the immensity of the work awaiting me.

I knew I'd be teaching English to little children. But I didn't know until I arrived that I would be teaching during the first year of the country's first and only Adventist elementary school! I'm from Brazil, where I took Adventist education for granted. We had Adventist schools everywhere. Suddenly, the job that was supposed to be easy had become a huge responsibility. I wanted to do everything I could to ensure its success.

The project started with three women who decided it was about time for children in the Podkowa Lesna area to have an opportunity to receive an Adventist education. The school year started with eight children, four in preschool and four in first grade. I've seen these women praying every day for each of these children and pleading with God for more students.

After being here for eight months, I've started seeing changes in the children. Some of them were

difficult to deal with and didn't quite know how to interact with others. I've seen them start to bloom, to be kind and, of course, to start speaking some sentences in English!

I've taught the children some of my culture, and they've taught me how to ride a sled. (Imagine, it was my first time seeing snow!). How can it be



that the children could feel and receive my love and attention and give back, even though sometimes we couldn't understand each other? I've seen some of them learn to pray for the first time. It brought me tears.

I believe that through education, the church can reach people—not only the students but their parents, who see their children change and feel that there is something special about our teachings, the Bible stories that we tell, and the way we live our lives.

The school is growing. More children have already registered for the next school year, and I pray to God that this project never dies, that it may grow and spread like it did in Brazil long ago.

Sometimes it seems that being a volunteer has to be a pure sacrifice to help people who have nothing to eat or who live in terrible conditions. But what I've come to realize is that no matter where I am, people are thirsty for love and for God and that I can help change a life by simply being kind.

These past months have changed the way I see the service of God, and I pray that other people can also see that no matter where you are called to go, God will use you there.



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



Hear from other volunteers at **m360.tv/avs**

From Dogs to Jesus



Ricky Oliveras,
Office of
Adventist
Mission

Dogs and their owners in Ecuador’s capital city, Quito, are thrilled that One Year in Mission volunteers have become part of their community. The young volunteers went to the city to share the love of Jesus—and surprisingly, this includes taking care of dogs.

The story began when a Global Mission pioneer couple, Christian and Maribel, moved into the community and found no Adventists living there.

“We wanted to reach a group of professional people who, for various reasons, haven’t included the church in their hearts and lives,” Christian said.

In this upper-middle-class neighborhood, people seemed to have everything they needed, like nice houses and cars.

“The challenge in this place is that people don’t open their hearts easily,” Maribel said. “First, we wanted them to open the doors to their homes.”

Christian and Maribel started by finding out what the people truly needed. Since this was a large community, they recruited a team of One Year in Mission volunteers to help them.

“There were quite a few people who wanted their dogs to be walked,” Christian said, “and the One Year in Mission team helped with this. . . . They even held a health fair for pets!”

By taking care of the dogs, the team got to know the owners.

“Our objective is to reach people by making friends, visiting them, and going to the park with them,” Maribel said.

Because of these new friendships, community members started scheduling Bible studies when planning walks for their dogs. Over time, several people gave their hearts to Jesus.

“I feel happy when someone accepts Jesus,” Maribel said. “It’s gratifying to know that they know and believe in a God of hope and love.”

Now, because of walking dogs and building

- 1 Global Mission pioneers Christian and Maribel
- 2 One Year in Mission volunteers walking dogs in Quito, Ecuador
- 3 Some dog owners have asked for Bible studies and prayer
- 4 Because of walking dogs and building relationships, a new congregation of believers meets each Sabbath

relationships, a new congregation of believers meets each Sabbath and is still growing!

Please pray for this group as they share the love of Jesus in this large city. Pray for Global Mission pioneers such as Christian and Maribel as well as the One Year in Mission team as God uses them to change lives in Ecuador.



Watch this story at [m360.tv/s2113!](https://m360.tv/s2113)

One Year in Mission (OYIM) is a young adult urban missionary movement designed to take the three angels’ messages into



the cities of the world. Learn more at <https://youth.adventist.org/OYIM!>



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GLOBAL MISSION

Please help support Global Mission pioneers in starting new groups of believers among people groups who don't know Jesus.

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Into the Promising Field

The Story of the First Adventist Pioneers to Western China

Francis Arthur Allum (1883–1948) and his wife, Evaline (1883–1961), spent 17 years as missionaries in China, focusing mainly on publishing work and education. Known as Arthur and Eva, they had six children and were instrumental in leading many Chinese to Jesus. The following story was adapted from a longer article in the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA).

Arthur and Eva were born in England and immigrated with their families to Australia when they were young children.¹ Arthur joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the age of 18 and a year later went to study at Avondale College.² There he met Eva, who became his wife and mission partner. He also made contact with Dr. Harry Miller, a pioneer Adventist missionary in China, and Dr. Miller encouraged the young man to join him.³

Arthur and Eva felt a burden for the Chinese people, so one month after their wedding in 1906, they sailed for Shanghai.⁴ It was a long and arduous trip. From Shanghai, they traveled by boat up the Yangtze River, journeyed 180 miles by train, and then spent all night trekking by donkey cart.⁵ Finally, they reached their destination, the Shang Tsai Hsien (now Shangcai County) mission station, where they assisted Dr. Miller at the health clinic and printing office.⁶

The Allums immediately adopted two practices that had long-lasting effects on their missionary service. They donned Chinese dress and learned Mandarin. “This is the most difficult study we have ever undertaken, but the Lord is with us, and we believe He will give us success,” Arthur commented.⁷



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For a short time after the Allums' arrival, the mission station at Shang Tsai Hsien was the hub of the fledgling publishing work in China. An edition of *Signs of the Times* was produced with Dr. Miller as editor, Arthur as manager, and Eva as proofreader. However, it was realized that the facilities were inadequate, and the press was relocated to Sin Yang Cheo (now Xinyang), also in Honan Province (now Henan Province).

At Sin Yang Cheo, the Allums began experiencing health issues. “Malaria is very prevalent in Honan just now, and we have not escaped it,” Eva wrote. “Arthur is just recovering from the third attack. He has been in quite a serious condition this last time, but the Lord has raised him up, and he is now much better. I had just a slight touch of it for one day.”⁸



Barry Oliver, retired in 2015 as president of the South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists. An Australian by birth, Oliver has served the church as a pastor, evangelist, missionary, college teacher, and administrator. In retirement, he is a conjoint associate professor at Avondale College of Higher Education.

At the end of 1907, the Allums were appointed to set up a mission station at Cheo-Chia-K'Ou (now Zhoujiakou), the largest city in Honan Province.⁹ While there, they often ventured out into the surrounding countryside, taking their baby son, Wallace, with them. On one of their trips, Eva reported, "We would have been comfortable . . . if it had not been for the rats, which took advantage of the darkness to scamper in and out of the bins, and then across our bed and up the wall."¹⁰

In 1909, a General Meeting of the China Union convened in Shanghai and voted several significant actions, including the division of China into 10 mission fields and Arthur's ordination and appointment as the first superintendent of the Western China Mission.¹¹

Arthur longed to move to Szechuan Province (now Sichuan Province) to begin the work in Western China, but it would be five years before he would have that opportunity. He would write in 1911, "For two years now the writer has been under appointment for Szechuen [*sic*] to open that province to the message, but I am unable to proceed because we are unable to man properly the stations we have already opened."¹²

In the meantime, he did what he could to spread the gospel, including traveling with a

Chinese evangelist named Lui eight days through snow and wind to visit a Christian pastor in eastern China. On arriving in the evening, the men studied with him until three o'clock in the morning. The pastor chose to be baptized, and through him, many of his friends also became Seventh-day Adventists.¹³

In 1910, Arthur was appointed superintendent of the North Central China Mission with headquarters at Cheo-Chia-K'Ou.¹⁴ God blessed his ministry there. In 1911 he reported that "at the close of 1910 we had sixty-four church-members in the North Central China Mission. Now, August 16, we have one hundred four, and expect to have more before the end of the year."¹⁵ These gains were made in difficult circumstances during violent uprisings.

By 1912, it was becoming increasingly obvious that the challenges of working in such difficult circumstances were impacting Arthur's health, and in 1913, he and his family were granted a



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much-needed furlough of one year.¹⁶ In July of that year, Arthur attended the General Conference Session in Washington, DC, where I. H. Evans, the general superintendent of the Asiatic Division of the General Conference, gave a report. “In the great empire of China we have undertaken work in only seven of the eighteen provinces, to say nothing of the four dependencies,” he said. “In the western part of China is one province with a population of seventy million, in which so far as we know not a foreigner who believes this message has ever put foot. . . . For four years we have been hoping and planning each coming year to enter this promising field, but so far we have been unable to send a worker.”¹⁷ Arthur and Eva Allum together with Merritt C. Warren and his wife, Wilma, were within a year to be the first to enter that “promising field.”

Upon returning from furlough in 1914, Arthur learned that his dream of reaching Western China was to be realized, and within several months he and his family were settled in Chungking (now Chongqing), the capital of Szechuan Province.

In Chungking, Eva continued to be involved in the church’s work as much as she possibly could. She had three young boys to care for now, but she held Bible classes with women, taught Sabbath School, and led the young people’s society, the forerunner of Pathfinders.¹⁸

Arthur worked unrelentingly. The first native believer in Western China was welcomed in January 1915, and by September 1916, the membership had grown to 30.¹⁹ Arthur was not satisfied, however. His eyes were always fixed on new territories further beyond. Now Tibet captured Arthur’s imagination. He wrote, “Today we have had a new experience. Three Tibetan priests came to our chapel. . . . We spoke to them about the message and gave them a liberal supply of tracts to take back to their people. . . . This is interesting in that it is the first time as far as I know that the message has touched that people.”²⁰

Ill health intervened in Arthur’s tenure in Chungking, and toward the end of 1916, he was invited back to Shanghai to become the principal of the Chinese Training School.²¹ Shortly after the Allums arrived, the Asiatic Division Session convened and, among other reorganizational changes, appointed Arthur the first president of the North China Union Conference.²² The North China Union had a population of 290 million (nearly 1/5 earth’s population in 1917) and only 1,296 church members.²³

In April 1919, the division’s administrative structure underwent another reorganization, and Arthur was elected as superintendent of the Central China Union Mission. Eva served from 1920 to 1922 as the union’s Sabbath School secretary.²⁴



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In 1922, Arthur again attended the General Conference Session, this time in San Francisco. His report to the delegates concluded with a note of hope and praise: “We long for power to stir the multitudes of China as they have never been stirred in days past. We are seeking with you for a fresh baptism of the Holy Spirit for service; and with you we unite today in earnest supplication to the Lord Jesus, while magnifying His name for mercies already received.”²⁵

After the session, Arthur returned to China, but his health could not be sustained. The China Division Executive Committee voted to repatriate the family to Australia, where Arthur held several key positions in the church.²⁶

Reflecting on their 17 years of service, Arthur concluded, “I can . . . bear witness to the joyous experience it is to face life and sickness and threat of death with Christ. . . .

“After years of trial and affliction I wish to bear witness to the Saviour’s love. Christ has been near and dear.”²⁷

1 Arthur and Eva Allum in 1906, four weeks before they sailed for China. Photo courtesy of Merian Richardson. All other photos courtesy of Julie and Barry Oliver

2 The Allums in China in 1906, where they immediately adopted Chinese dress

3 Eva and Arthur (*center*) with their six children in 1935

4 Evaline Allum, 1920

5 Francis Arthur Allum c. 1930

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Watch a video story about the Allums at m360.tv/s2123.



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Launched by the Seventh-day Adventist Church General Conference, the Encyclopedia of Seventh-day Adventists (ESDA) is available at encyclopedia.adventist.org. It features nearly 3,000 articles on the history and structure, culture, theology, and more of the Adventist Church around the world and includes 6,000 photographs and other historically significant documents. Hundreds of new articles and photographs will be added to the encyclopedia in the upcoming weeks, months, and years. The ESDA draws on the expertise of hundreds of authors and editors worldwide from many cultures and ethnicities. It is a great tool for those seeking to learn more about the Adventist Church and those looking to witness to others.

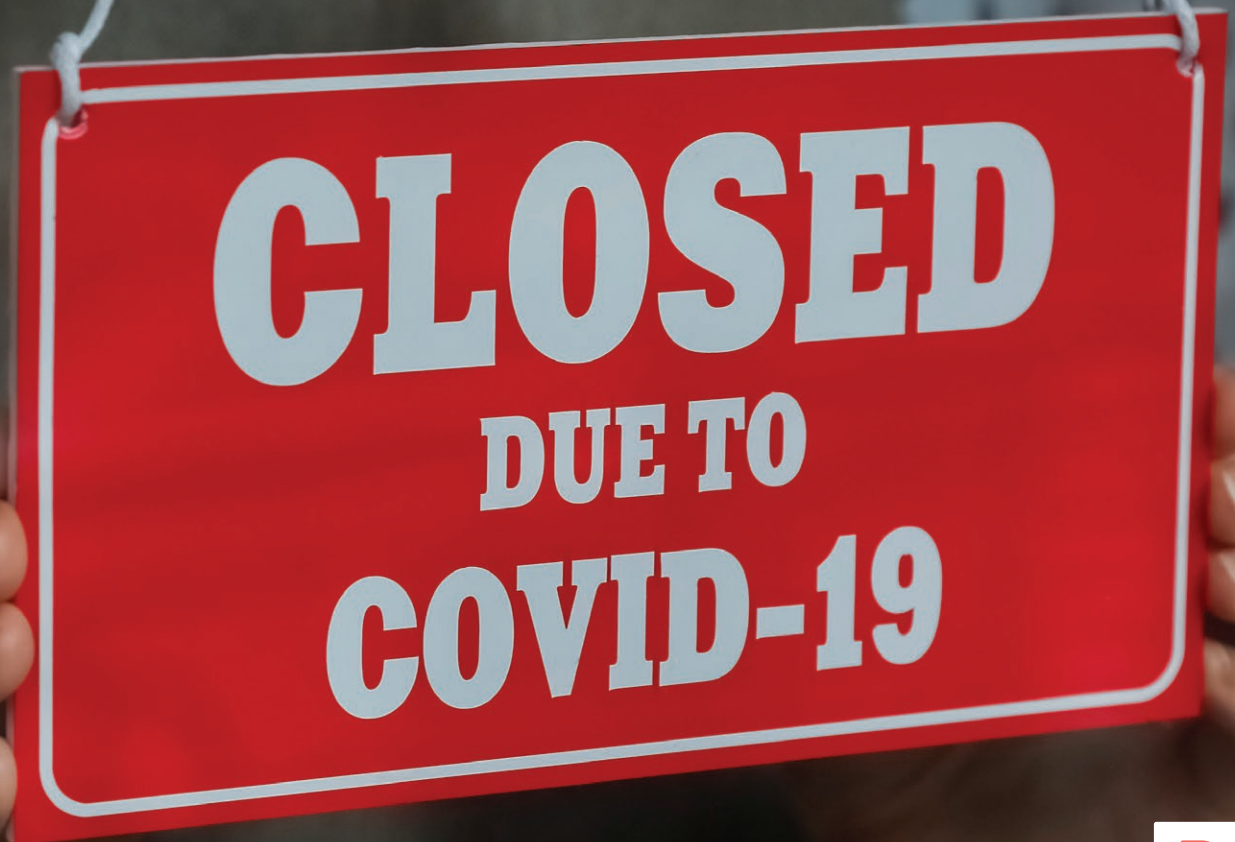
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These Are the Days of Elias



Did you know that you can find *Mission 360°* on the issuu app or issuu.com?

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes.”

—Malachi 4:5, ESV

This year God blessed my husband and me with our first child, a son. We named him Elias, a variant of the name Elijah in many languages, including the one spoken in the country where we serve.

In the *Southern Watchman*, March 21, 1905, Ellen White wrote, “The work of John the Baptist, and the work of those who in the last days go forth in the spirit and power of Elijah to arouse the people from their apathy, are in many respects the same.” She continued, “With the earnestness that characterized Elijah the prophet and John the Baptist, we are to strive to prepare the way for Christ’s second advent.” As missionaries in the 10/40 Window, we’re raising our son with one thought in mind: these are the days of Elias, and this is our task.

The lyrics of a popular Christian song say that “these are the days of Elijah, declaring the word of the Lord.” But how do we declare the Word of the Lord in places where we can’t openly share the good news? I’ve found that at the urban center of influence (UCI) where I serve as director, my actions speak louder than words. Because I’m a foreigner, everyone’s watching how I conduct my business and personal life. My neighbors see that I don’t work on my day of prayer. My workers and customers observe how I treat them with respect. And my friends see how I help refugees with genuine love and compassion.

COVID-19 hit this country especially hard, and the government instituted strict lockdown policies. My UCI has been no exception to the current reality of a global pandemic. We’ve moved all our services online. As my business partner and I talk with our clients, we hear comments such as, “Thank you for your positive personality,” and “I feel like we’re family and I can speak openly.” They’ve continued to access our services in part because we offer something they aren’t getting from our competitors: genuine friendship.

Last week, we invited a customer over for lunch. Because her health is poor, she has been mostly confined to her home. She was so thankful to meet with us and have an uplifting conversation. We spoke positively about the country and how it had become our home. We shared how God

was blessing us during these difficult times. We promised to pray for her, and she left encouraged. Our lifestyle and our business are declaring the Word of the Lord.

When my husband and I decided to come here, I had no idea we would stay so long. But I find myself here six years later, blessed beyond measure. A church has been planted in our city, our refugee ministry has borne fruit, and I’m learning how to be successful at business as mission.

When Elias was born a few months ago, God brought a song to mind that I sang as a child. The chorus goes like this:

Good morning Lord, I love you.
I just wanted you to know.
Here’s my heart, my life, my will, myself,
I give it all to you.
Take my life today and use it,
Guide my feet along the way.
May Your words my mind renew,
Your Spirit fill me I pray.

Every morning I sing this song to Elias. I pray that every day his life will be a blessing to those around us, that he’ll grow to love and serve God. The first objective of the I Will Go strategic plan is “to revive the concept of worldwide mission and sacrifice for mission as a way of life involving not only pastors but every church member, young and old, in the joy of witnessing for Christ and making disciples.” I encourage you to prayerfully consider how you can make mission a way of life for you and your family. We can all be Elias, preparing the way of the Lord!

I Will Go

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

The Great Commission in Matthew 28 is clear: Jesus’ followers are to go and make disciples of all nations. The gospel must be shared with the hundreds of unreached people groups around the world. I Will Go outlines specific objectives and ways to accomplish this task. Explore the I Will Go plan at IWillGO2020.org and find your place in this global movement!

The author is a director of an urban center of influence in a veiled country, where she can’t openly share the gospel. She and her family have a passion for global mission and reaching the unreached with the love of Jesus.



Yes, I Believe

The following story was written by a tentmaker working in the Middle East North Africa region. We've withheld her identity to protect her and the Adventist work there.

As soon as I stepped into Jamal's* room, I felt the hopelessness. I had taken care of him before; he was waiting for a lung transplant. He was very sick—on oxygen, struggling to breathe. His wife and two young children weren't even allowed to see him.

Jamal was propped upright so that as much air as possible could get into his lungs. His head hung awkwardly to one side as he gasped for air. Instinctively, I fluffed his pillows and repositioned him, trying to make him more comfortable in some way. He mouthed a breathless, "Thank you."

As I did his assessment, I tried to figure out how I could possibly relate to him. He was in such need, but he seemed so out of reach.

"How are you doing today?" I asked. It was a senseless question, but it was the only thing that came to mind.

"My wife, my children. I'm worried." He couldn't talk much.

What could I do to carry the whole conversation each time I saw him? Suddenly, I had an idea. "Jamal, I need to see several other patients, but when I return, would you like me to tell you a story? You know I'm a Christian," I warned, "so I only have Christian stories to tell."

He nodded weakly.

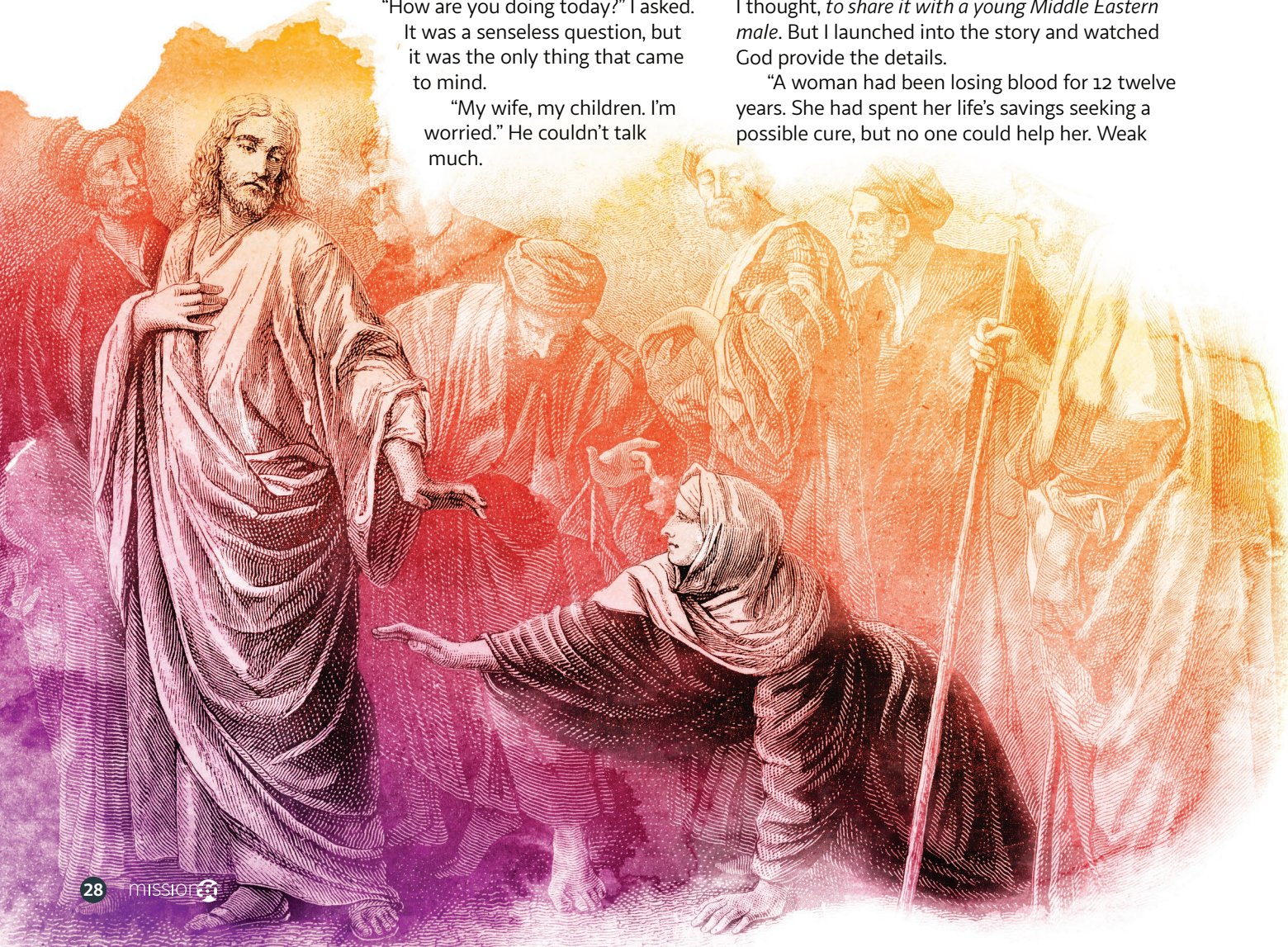
I was so busy that I didn't see Jamal for the rest of the morning. Another nurse covered his call for me, but he didn't want to see her. As I returned to the floor, I got the message, "Room 263 wants you. Only you."

I rushed to Jamal's room to see what the problem was. "The story?" he mouthed almost silently.

I laughed with relief, "You really want to hear it?" "Yah."

Knowing that Jamal's recovery was impossible without a lung transplant, I immediately prayed that God would inspire me to share what he needed to hear. Instantly, the story of the woman with an issue of blood came to mind. *How strange*, I thought, *to share it with a young Middle Eastern male*. But I launched into the story and watched God provide the details.

"A woman had been losing blood for 12 twelve years. She had spent her life's savings seeking a possible cure, but no one could help her. Weak





GLOBAL MISSION

and discouraged, she noticed one day that her neighbors were celebrating. Someone who had been blind could now see. Others who hadn't been able to walk were running around. And a man who hadn't been able to speak his entire life was talking. 'Jesus is in the neighborhood,' they told her. 'If you go to Him, He can heal you too!'

"Oh, Jamal," I continued, realizing he was fully engaged. "Hope welled up inside her. She wanted healing so much that she determined to find Him."

I noticed the expression on Jamal's face change. He reached out with his eyes; his face was the picture of anticipation. He motioned for me to go on. I prayed silently as I proceeded, knowing the Lord could touch him as well.

"So many people were pressing around Jesus that it seemed impossible for her to reach Him. *Maybe if I just touch His garment, that will be enough, she thought.*"

I explained to Jamal that Jesus knew the woman's heart's desire, just like Jesus knew his. "He knows you're worried because you don't know what will happen. He knows you're concerned about your wife and children."

He nodded, and I continued with the story.

"To the woman's astonishment, Jesus began moving in her direction. The press of the crowd seemed to shove her toward him, and her outstretched hand clutched the edge of his garment. Instantly, she was healed.

"'Daughter,' Jesus said, looking at her with love and acceptance, 'Your faith has made you whole.'

"Jamal," I asked quietly, "do you believe Jesus can heal you?" I knew it was a risky question.

He was quiet for a few moments and then responded. "Yes. Yes, I believe." My heart soared with praise and the assurance that God would reward Jamal's simple faith.

Soon after that touching exchange, Jamal received a lung transplant. He recovered quickly and went home to his family. He sent me photos of his children huddled around him, his young boy hanging on his back, and he even visited the hospital to express his gratefulness!

He tells me that the devotionals I send to my friends each morning are such a blessing to him. And he calls me his sister because I prayed for him and helped him.

What a difference Jesus and a touch of faith have made in his life!

*Name has been changed.

This article was adapted from the MENA Total Employment newsletter.

Tentmakers

Our church faces tremendous challenges in sharing Jesus in closed countries, countries that have shut their borders to organized churches and traditional missionaries. But a tentmaker can bypass these barriers! Total Employment is the Global Mission tentmaker program.

A tentmaker is an Adventist professional who chooses to follow the example of the apostle Paul. Paul supported his ministry with his tentmaking trade, and as he talked with his customers, he looked for opportunities to lend a listening ear, meet a need, and share the good news of the gospel.

Like Paul, tentmakers mingle with people in the secular workplace while engaging in intentional, personal outreach. They form long-lasting relationships that enable them to touch hearts for Christ in ways they never could if they were official church workers.

Your donations to Global Mission help encourage and equip tentmakers by providing them with much-needed coaching, training, and spiritual support.

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

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Is God calling you to be a tentmaker?

Hundreds of Adventist professionals of all types are needed. To learn more, please visit TotalEmployment.org.

To see what's happening in mission in the Middle East and North Africa Union Mission, visit m360.tv/middleeast.



A Day in Cryosurgery

Combating the Silent Killer of Albinism



Crystal Earnhardt is a writer for Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International.

It was just another day at the cryosurgery treatment center sponsored by the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) for albinos in Tanzania.

Richard, the first patient of the day, had already been diagnosed with skin cancer and had returned for treatment.

“Tell me about yourself,” Dr. Janeth Peter said as she entered the room and prepared her patient for treatment.

“There’s not much to tell,” Richard replied as he held out his arm. It was splotchy and reddish. Dr. Peter had no doubt that this patient would be dead by age 40 if he didn’t receive treatment.

Albinos are predisposed to skin cancer and poor vision due to reduced production of melanin. This lack of melanin leaves their skin with very little color and very little natural protection from the sun.

Unfortunately, their white skin and hair make them oddities in Tanzania. Spiritualists perceive them as ghosts. Witch doctors believe that their body parts contain special powers, so they’re

willing to pay top dollar for an arm or a toe, and even more for a heart.

After swabbing Richard’s arm with rubbing alcohol, Dr. Peter looked him in the eye. “There will be a slight pinch when I inject the anesthetic,” she said. “But believe me, you’d rather feel this than that.”

Dr. Peter then reached for a needlelike applicator called a cryogun. “Now, tell me what you do for a living?”

“I lost a good-paying job at a motel,” Richard began. “Fewer people traveled after our city was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. For the time being, I’m delivering parcels on my *boda boda* [motorcycle]. Sometimes people pay me to take them places. On a good day, I can earn five thousand Tanzanian shillings [US\$2].”

He winced as the doctor applied liquid nitrogen on his arm at a temperature between -346 and -320°F.

“There are worse things than losing employment,” Richard said before taking a long pause. “Being an albino in Tanzania is like being sentenced to a life of fear and discrimination. Some people think I’m cursed.”

1

It’s no secret that people with albinism (PWAs) in Africa suffer from discrimination, superstition, poverty, human rights abuse, and protection issues, making them one of the most marginalized and vulnerable communities.

Since 2006, at least 73 PWAs were murdered because of superstition, and hundreds were targeted for ritual killings. Frequent attacks on PWAs forced the government to establish “temporary holding shelters” and special boarding schools to protect and educate albino children. While the shelters keep them safe, they exclude these children from society.

Dr. Peter nodded. “Tell me about your family.”

“I have a little girl,” Richard continued. “She’s so cute! I’m glad she didn’t get this curse.”



“Oh, it’s not that bad,” Dr. Peter said. “I think we’ve nailed this cancer before it spread.”

“I meant, I’m glad she’s not an albino with a price on her head,” Richard insisted.

Dr. Peter nodded and patted his shoulder. The treatment was over.

Weeks later, Richard returned for a follow-up examination.

“Thank you!” he said, holding out his arm for the ADRA staff to see. “My skin is so smooth and healthy now. Look! There are no more spots like I had before.” His excitement brought cheer to Dr. Peter and the staff at the center.

ADRA has supported people with albinism over the past four decades, focusing mainly on education and coordinating with the government dermatology department services and Tanzania Albinism Society for community mobilization.

According to the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation, about 1 in 18,000 to 20,000 people in the United States have a form of albinism, but in Tanzania, that number increases to 1 in 1,400 people.

“Piloting cryosurgery cancer treatment for persons with albinism in Tanzania is a new project,” said James Bisheko, programs manager for ADRA in Tanzania. “Each person is screened and treated for skin cancer and receives skin protection supplies, including sunscreen lotions and hats.”

The project began in January 2020 and has already assisted hundreds of people.

“The new pilot project, which gives the most relief to recipients, removes precancerous or noncancerous skin lesions and does a vital work

of stopping skin cancer in its tracks,” Bisheko explained. “ADRA’s goal is to promote prevention using radio, public meetings, and SMS messaging.”



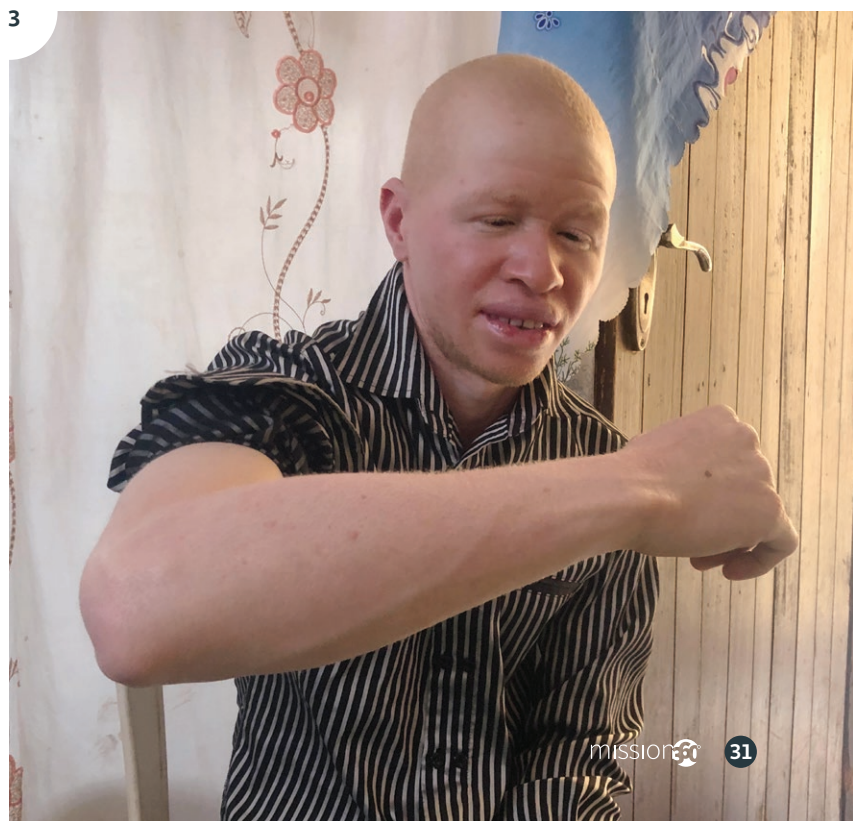
The Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) is the global humanitarian organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Through an international network, ADRA delivers relief and development assistance to individuals in more than 118 countries. For more information about ADRA’s efforts to help people with albinism, visit [ADRATanzania.org](https://www.ADRATanzania.org). To learn more about ADRA, visit [ADRA.org](https://www.ADRA.org).

To watch ADRA mission stories, visit the Mission 360° ADRA page at m360.tv/adra.

Thank you for supporting ADRA through your weekly mission offering and, in North America, giving to World Budget.”

- 1 Patients wait outside a local health center
- 2 Dr. Janeth Peter is a dermatologist who works at Morogoro Regional Hospital
- 3 Richard shows off his good skin three months after his treatment at the ADRA clinic

Photos courtesy of James Bisheko



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